



AHURT SO GOOD

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A Hurt So Good

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Chapter 1

Arya

“I think this is going to be really good for you,” mom tells me as we drive.

“Just until I get back on my feet. I can’t believe that asshole wiped out my bank account,” I whine a little.

“Not all men are like him, Arya. You’ll find a good man one day and settle down.”

“Like you found Jarrod?” I ask, looking over at her. She smiles and glances at me briefly before looking back at the road.

“He is a good man.”

“What about his kids?”

“He has three boys. They don’t live at the house, though. In fact, I’ve only met one of them since I’ve been living there.”

“Where do they live?”

“Jarrod said mostly with their mothers.”

“Mother’s? As in more than one?” Mom shifts her eyes to me slightly before looking back at the road again.

“He used to sleep around a lot.”

“What? Does he still?”

“No, he doesn’t. That was a long time ago, when he was younger, Arya. And I expect you not to bring it up either.”

“So none of the boys live there then?”

“No. They have rooms in the basement, and Jarrod said when they do come around, they mainly stay down there and to themselves.”

“Are they not close?”

“Yeah, they are. He talks to them often on the phone, but they each have their own lives going on. I don’t think you’ll have to worry about them,” she tells me. I sit back in my seat,

thanking God for that. I don't know if I can handle any man after the hell I just went through with Jason.

Yeah, Jason. That fucker. We lived together for two years. We were saving up money to buy a house. Or so I thought. Turns out, I was a fucking idiot. He had no intentions of buying a house with me or staying with me, for that matter. He put on a good show, though. I believed that bastard. I believed he was with me because he loved me. I was wrong. So wrong.

We built up our bank account together. I would stash all my money in there, and I did it with happiness.

One day, I came home from work, and there was a note on the table. A goddamn note of all things! He didn't have the balls to tell me to my face because he knew I would have beaten his ass. Or at least tried.

So, the note basically said, thanks for being stupid and handing me all your money. By the way, I didn't love you. I didn't know if I wanted to cry or gouge his fucking eyes out. Maybe both. But never the less, I picked my pride up off the floor and called my mom, even though we don't typically get along all that well. She offered to let me stay with her and her new husband, Jarrod, for a while until I could get back on my feet. It was a nice gesture, although I don't know how I'm going to like living under her roof again.

I can't say growing up with her was that bad because it wasn't. She wasn't home much, and that left me alone most of the time, which didn't bother me. I don't mind being alone. There's something about silence that just sits right with me.

"What are you thinking about doing?" she asks, interrupting my thoughts.

"I don't know. I was thinking about taking you up on your offer." She offered to let me run her online boutique and all her social media. My mom, Julie, is a huge name in the fashion industry. She's a fashion designer and a damn good one at that.

"Really? You're thinking about it?" She sounds pleased.

“Yeah, I am. It means spending time at the house a lot, but I’m okay with that,” I tell her. I’d actually prefer that. People and I just don’t click most of the time. And after Jason? I sure as hell am not looking for a new boyfriend.

“I think you’d be great at it. You do wonderful work, Arya.”

“Thanks. I just don’t want to mess anything up,” I admit.

“You won’t. You’re a smart girl.” I smile at her, and she smiles back as we pull into a driveway. It’s a long driveway with trees and flowers down either side. It’s actually beautiful if you’re into that sort of thing, flashy things, which I’m not.

When we pull up in the round driveway, mom parks the car and climbs out. I climb out behind her, and we walk to the back of the car to grab my things.

“You don’t have people that do this?” I ask sarcastically.

“We do, actually. I just figured you wouldn’t want them to,” she tells me.

“You’d be right. I can’t believe this is where I’m going to be staying,” I tell her. I’ve never been a fan of the flashy, rich life. Of course, my mom makes millions of dollars, but I moved out of her house as soon as I could. Call me a minimalist, I guess, but I don’t see the need for all this. Why do you need people to wait on you hand and foot? Can you not get your ass up and do things for yourself?

“It’s not as bad as it seems, Arya.”

“It’s not? So you’re going to tell me there’s no lavish pool out back, and I can’t see the ocean from the damn window?” Mom laughs, but I don’t. I know how she likes to live, and this is no different.

“Okay. So it might be as bad as it seems, but I think you’re going to like it, Arya. Give it a chance.” I nod my head as I heft my bag over my shoulder, dragging a suitcase behind me. I follow her up the steps just as the front door opens. Then I stop in my damn tracks. The man standing in the doorway is fucking gorgeous. He has dark hair and even darker eyes that seem to pierce right through me. He takes me in, eyeing me up and down before a smile crosses his face.

“You’re Arya,” he states, stepping toward me.

“Yeah, I am.”

“I’m Jarrod. I’m glad I’m finally getting to meet you,” he says, extending his hand to me. For a long second I just look at it. This? This is the man my mother married? What in the holy fuck? He’s ... hot!

Shaking the thoughts from my head, I reach out and take his hand in mine.

“Nice to meet you, too. Mom’s told me a lot about you.” He turns his gaze to hers and smiles but doesn’t let go of my hand.

“I’m sure she has. Let me take that for you,” he says, finally pulling his hand away from mine and grabbing my suitcase. He turns and walks inside as my mom motions for me to follow.

“Jesus, Mom!”

“What?”

“Could you find a hotter man to marry?” I ask her. She laughs as we follow Jarrod through the house and up another set of stairs.

“We’re on the other end. I figured you’d want some privacy, and your mom agreed. You have this whole wing to yourself,” Jarrod explains before stopping at one of the doors. He reaches for the knob and turns the handle, pushing it open before ushering me inside. When I enter the room, I saw exactly what I expected. Overpriced shit.

I sigh. At least I have a home for now.

Chapter 2

Denz

“What day?” I say into the line. I’m not sure how I feel about a family dinner just because his new wife’s daughter is here. I don’t really give two shits about who it is he’s fucking this month. And she isn’t the first sister I’ve had to meet. Not that I called the other’s sister. They weren’t around long enough for that, and I assume this one won’t be either.

“In a week or two. I want Arya to get accustomed to being here first before I bombard her with you three,” he laughs into the line.

“We’re not that bad,” I tell him with a smile on my face.

“Not at all. How’s your mom?” he asks, knowing he doesn’t really give a shit about her.

“As good as she can be.”

“Does she need anything?” he asks, and I nearly roll my fucking eyes.

“No, I got it handled. Listen, I’ll tell the other two, but I don’t know about this.”

“Show up, Denz, and make sure Harlon and Warren both show up, too.” The line goes dead, but I know that was a demand. We better show up. I blow out a breath and light up a joint before turning and walking down the street. It doesn’t take me long to get home, where I see my little sister, Sasha, standing out front arguing with another girl. I walk closer and lean against the tree, watching her.

Sasha is sixteen and a smartass. We share the same mom but not dad. We don’t really know who her dad is and don’t care to know. She doesn’t need his ass in her life. She has me.

“You’re a two-faced bitch. I don’t even know why you’re standing in my damn yard right now, Rachel. In fact, if you don’t get the hell out of here in the next ten seconds, I’m going to drop your ass,” she yells at the girl. I chuckle, which catches

their attention. They all turn to look at me, but I shrug my shoulders.

“Really, Denz? You’re going to let your sister talk to me like that?” Fucking Rachel. We dated, no, we didn’t date. We fucked. That’s all we did. And now she thinks she has some strange claim on me, which is laughable.

“Is she wrong?” I ask as I smoke my joint and walk closer. When I’m close enough, Sasha pulls the joint from my fingers and brings it to her lips, inhaling. She turns her head and blows the smoke directly in Rachel’s face, causing her to gag.

“Of course, she’s wrong! She’s being a brat. You need to put that little bitch on a leash,” Rachel smarts off. I reach over, grabbing my joint out of Sasha’s hand right before she throws the first punch. Rachel doesn’t back down. That’s not how she is. Rachel has her own little gang of girls who could easily take Sasha if they wanted to, but I don’t let that happen.

Rachel swings back and knocks Sasha back a step before Sasha roars and pounces on her. Now, a good brother would stop this. A good brother would intervene and make sure his sister was okay. But that’s not me, and that’s not how we are. Around here, you have to learn to fight, and that’s exactly what I’m letting her do.

The two girls go at each other as I eye the other girls, making sure they don’t get into it. That’s when my brother’s walk up.

“What the hell is happening here?” Warren asks, nodding toward the girls.

“A little catfight,” I tell him. Harlon laughs as he cheers Sasha on. None of us share the same mom; it is just us guys who share the same dad. That doesn’t mean they don’t treat Sasha any differently; she’s just as much their sister as she is mine.

“Damn, Sasha! Keep your hands up like I taught you,” War yells at her. Sasha steps back and raises her hands in the air, keeping them in front of her face before she fires another shot. When the blood starts to flow from both of them, we move in. I finish my joint and scrub it out on the concrete before stuffing the roach in my pocket. By the time I’m done the

other two already have them pulled apart. Sasha smirks at Rachel as blood drips down her lip.

“Let me catch you out by yourself, bitch!” Rachel yells. War moves instantly, coming to a stop in front of her, right in her face.

“And you’ll do what?” He challenges her. She looks up at me before looking at the two of us and back to him.

“You can’t protect her all the time, War.”

“No? Maybe I can’t, but the three of us can. You lay one fucking hand on her, and I will gut you, Rachel.” War doesn’t make idle threats. When he says he’ll do it, he will.

“She’s not even your sister!”

“Doesn’t matter if she’s my blood or not, she is my sister,” War reminds her. “Now run your ass back down the street before I call the probation office and tell them you’re smoking again.” With that, she spins on her heel and storms down the street. War just shakes his head and turns back to follow the rest of us into the house.

Chapter 3

Warren

“Nice throw, little sis,” I tell Sasha as she drops down onto the kitchen chair. Harlon is grabbing some ice from the freezer and filling a bag with it to put on her eye. When he’s finished, he walks over and passes it to her.

“That was a good throw. You’re learning,” Harlon tells her. She grins up at him.

“You didn’t think I could do it?”

“Fuck that, Sasha. We knew you could do it. We just haven’t seen you in action in a while. You haven’t come down to the gym. Where’ve you been?” I ask her.

“After school detention.” We all laugh except for Denz. He looks pissed.

“What did you do?” Har asks her.

“What didn’t she do?” Denz chimes in.

“It wasn’t that serious, Denz. Fuck,” she snaps.

“Watch your mouth,” he snaps back. Sasha rolls her eyes and then looks back at us.

“I told Tracy Hawkins I fucked her dad.” Now, we all burst into laughter. Even Denz cracks a smile.

“What did she say?”

“She ran to the principal and got me put in detention.”

“You’re not even old enough to fuck anyone,” Har comments. Sasha glares at him before Denz moves. He snatches her off the chair and drags her around in front of him.

“Why are you looking at him like that? You better not let me find out some little shit’s been touching you, Sasha!” The kitchen grows silent as we all watch this unfold.

“Yeah, okay, Dad.”

“I mean it. I will fucking gut his ass, and you’ll never see him again,” he warns her. Her eyes widen because she knows we’d do it. Denz releases his hold, and Sasha steps back.

“I haven’t done anything, Denz,” she says softly.

“Keep it that way. Go and do your homework. I’m getting pizza for dinner.”

“Pizza again?” she whines. Denz smirks.

“What do you want then, Princess?”

“Don’t call me that, and I want burgers from Burger Town,” she tells him. He nods his head before we all pull her into a hug. She makes gagging sounds and pulls away, hurrying off to her room.

“That one is going to have us in so much trouble,” I mumble under my breath.

“She already does,” Harlon adds as we walk to the front door. “How’s your mom?” he looks toward Denz.

“About the same. She doesn’t eat much, but she can still down a fucking forty in seconds.” None of us laugh. We all know she’s dying. It’s just a matter of time now. And we don’t really know what will happen to Sasha after that. No one knows her real dad, and Denz has been arrested so many times we don’t know if he could gain custody of her. I know that weighs heavily on him.

“You working tonight?” I ask, changing the subject.

“You know I am. I have to at least keep a fucking job for more than a week to prove I can take care of her,” he says. I nod my head as we walk down the block. We all have cars, but around here, we choose to walk. We own these streets and have for a long time.

Our dad may be rich as fuck and live the fancy life, but our moms weren’t. Where he even picked them up is beyond me, and I don’t care enough to ask. Harlon and I spend most of our time at Denz’s house. I don’t get along well with my mom, and neither does Harlon. They’re both greedy money hungry bitches. They’re constantly trying to come up with a way to

take what our dad has, and neither of us are interested in that shit.

“Dad called,” Denz announces the closer we get to Burger Town.

“What did he want?” I ask.

“In a week or two, we’re supposed to go for a family dinner. His new wife and daughter have moved in,” he says, not sounding too thrilled about the idea. We’ve all been there and done that before.

“What’s her name?” I ask, scrunching up my nose as I try to think.

“I think this one is Julie? Or Julia? I don’t know. I told him it wasn’t a good idea, but he demanded we be there.”

“Free food. I’m all for it. Besides, it’s summer, and I sure as hell could use some time in the pool,” Harlon adds.

“No shit. That’s about the only thing that house has going for it,” Denz says. We continue talking about random shit as we walk into Burger Town and order. We’re standing at the counter waiting for our food when the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. A chill works its way down my spine as I glance over at my brothers, who no doubt feel it, too.

The three of us turn at the same time to face the door and see a rival gang member. He’s on the wrong side of town, and we won’t have that. A red bandana is tied around his head while blue hangs from our pockets. We eye each other before Denz tells the girl we’ll wait outside for our food.

As we step toward the door, the others move outside and wait for us.

“This is going to be fun,” Har mumbles under his breath.

“Looks that way,” I add. There are a few more of them than there are us, but that doesn’t mean we couldn’t have people here in minutes. One phone call is all it would take, but we don’t need the help right now.

“What the hell are you doing around here?” I ask Robert.

“We heard some things and wanted to touch base.”

“A phone call would have done,” Denz tells him. He smirks at us.

“That’s the thing, I don’t do phone calls when it’s personal.”

“What the fuck are you talking about?” Denz snaps at him, tired of him being here in our space.

“The word rape has been thrown around, but the girl is too scared to say which one of you motherfuckers it was.” Now I laugh.

“We don’t have to rape anyone, Robert. The pussy comes to us,” I remind him. “And why would you care anyway?”

“She was one of ours!” he roars. Now, the three of us laugh together.

“You think that we’d have to stoop that low? That we can’t find pussy on our side? Come on, Robert. I thought you were smarter than that,” Harlon tells him, pissing him off further.

“You calling her a liar?”

“That’s exactly what we’re calling her.”

Chapter 4

Harlon

I stand with my arms crossed over my chest but ready to move at a second's notice. I keep my eye on the asshole because you never know when one of them might try something. He's a sneaky motherfucker who doesn't like to lose and will pull a weapon quick as fuck.

"You're going to pay for that," Robert growls. It takes seconds, literal seconds, for everyone to move. They come at us, ready to fight. And that's exactly what we give them.

Fists fly through the air, but I move toward the asshole I see pulling his knife. My brothers are too busy with the other guys to see it coming. So I jump in the middle as he goes for Denz's back. The knife barely nicks me before I grab his arm and twist. The knife falls to the ground, and I punch the asshole in the face. He stumbles back, pulls another knife from his pocket, and flips it open. I smirk at him. I'm not afraid of a knife, and I'm not afraid to die for my brothers.

"Come on, bitch. Bring your little knife," I taunt as I motion for him to come at me. He comes fast as fuck, but I'm ready. He steps in, and I slap his arm away. He repositions and tries a second, then a third time. I nearly laugh in this asshole's face.

My brothers and I train nearly every day in the fucking gym. Hell, Denz can even do jujitsu. This is nothing for us. They are nothing for us.

"Get him, Joe!" I hear Robert yell, and it causes me to smirk.

"Yeah, Joe. Come on." I taunt the asshole. He moves to come at me from the left but fakes to the right. I'm ready. I ball my fist up and pull back just as he steps into me. Then I swing.

"Oh shit!" I hear War laughing. Joe hits the ground, and I quickly move in on him. I put my boot on his throat, cutting off his air supply.

"You know, Joe, it was fun. But if you fucking come to our turf accusing one of us of something else, I'm going to have to

kill you,” I warn him. The guys laugh as Robert and his guys pick up their friends off the ground. I lift my foot from his neck and watch as he coughs and gasps for air. Then I spin around and walk back into Burger Town to grab the food.

“Thanks, Bree,” I tell the woman at the counter. She smiles and nods her head as I turn and walk back outside.

“Food’s ready,” I announce, holding the bag up. We watch as Robert and his losers pile back in the car they arrived in and leave.

We start walking back toward the house, just shooting the shit. It’s easy as fuck being around my brothers. We’re alike and all in the same headspace. I like to think that’s my dad in us.

We’re walking past the old abandoned house when we hear a scream. The three of us share a look before we take off running toward it. War kicks the door in, and we rush inside. I set the bag to the side when I saw what was happening. Anger flares in my chest as Ron, some loser in our neighborhood, holds his hands up.

“I didn’t do shit,” he yells.

“Then why is she naked?” War asks, nodding toward the girl on the ground in tears.

“I don’t know, man. I didn’t do shit,” he says once more, trying to stand to his feet. I walk over and kick him in the chest, knocking him back down before moving to the girl. I offer my hand and help her up before she grabs her clothes and holds them to her chest.

“He ... he ...” She can’t get the words out, and frankly, I don’t care if she does.

“I know what he did. Put your clothes on and sit over there,” I tell her, nodding toward the corner. She does as she’s told while the asshole in front of me keeps begging me to believe him.

“I don’t know, War. What do you think?” I ask him, glancing over my shoulder at him. He smiles, and it’s not a normal smile. It’s dark, it’s deadly, and it’s fucking lethal. War glances

around the room before he moves to pick something up. Then he starts toward the asshole as I step back.

“This is going to hurt,” War tells him in the calmest tone I’ve ever heard. War yanks the asshole to his feet, grabs his cock in his bare hand, and jams the rusty screwdriver into it. The man screams, and the girl screams. He pulls the tool free and smirks as Ron tries to run. We watch him move toward the door when War moves and yanks him back. He drives the screwdriver into his back, between his ribs. Ron continues to scream in pain as War stabs him repeatedly.

Denz has moved to the girl, clamping his hand over her mouth so that she stops screaming. He forces her to watch what War does to him. When War is finished, he drops Ron’s bloodied body to the floor and steps over him.

“He won’t be doing that again,” he remarks casually as he walks out of the house. I huff out a laugh and walk over, grabbing our bag of food off the floor and following him out. The girl knows not to say anything. Everyone in this fucking neighborhood knows not to say shit about us, or they deal with the consequences.

We finish our walk back to Denz’s house and head back inside. Sasha comes rushing out of her room, grabs the bag, and runs to the kitchen. We follow her.

“Hungry?” I ask.

“Hell yeah. I haven’t eaten since lunch and school lunch is disgusting,” she says as she pulls burgers from the bag, passing us each one. She pulls the wrapper from hers and scrunches up her nose. “Are you serious?”

“What?”

“Is that blood? You got blood on my burger?” she huffs. War grabs the burger with his still bloody hand and trades her.

“Here, this one is clean.” Sasha doesn’t need to be told twice; she rips it open and starts eating.

“Why is there blood on that burger?” she asks through a full mouth.

“None of your business.”

“Why is War bloody?” she asks, looking at me this time.

“None of your business.”

“So it’s none of my business, but you tried to feed me a bloody burger?” she asks, raising an eyebrow.

“There was an incident, and now it’s handled,” Denz tells her.

“And you’re just going to eat it?” She looks at War with disgust. War rolls his eyes, peels off the bloodied part of the bun, and tosses it in the trash.

“Better?” he asks.

“No! That’s still disgusting. It’s on your hands.”

We all sit back and eat our food while talking with Sasha about school and how much she hates it. Not that it matters; she isn’t dropping out like we did. She’s smarter than we are and has more to offer than us.

And I’m damn proud of her for it, too.

Chapter 5

Arya

I wander around the house, although there isn't much to do. I mean, of course, there's a pool out back, and the beach is just a short walk away. I've already looked around at everything I could find inside, but not this last room. I grab the handle and turn, stepping into the library. I gasp as I look at all the books. I can't believe there are so many.

I step in and take a closer look when I hear someone come in behind me. I look over my shoulder and see Jarrod.

"This is amazing," I tell him. He smiles, slipping his hands into his pockets as he walks closer.

"Back in the day, I loved to read. Eighteenth-century poets mostly."

"Really?"

"Yeah. Alexander Pope, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. You name it, I read it."

"Do you still read?" I ask. He shakes his head and walks over to the books, sliding his hand out of his pocket to run his fingers along the spines.

"I don't have much time for that anymore. Work keeps me busy, and any downtime I have, I try to spend with my family." I lower my head because I don't remember a time we did things as a family. "Do you read?"

"Not as much as I probably should."

"Why not? Not something you're interested in?"

"Not really. I'm more like my mom. I like the fashion scene and the online work."

"You don't seem to be the fashionista your mom is. Anything designer, and she has to have it," he observes.

"I'm not. I'm not into flashy things. I do like to look at it, but wearing it? It's not for me," I laugh. Jarrod smiles as he steps closer to me.

“You know, your mom is away a lot.”

“Always has been,” I tell him. He reaches up and brushes a piece of hair away from my face as he smiles. His finger caresses my cheek, and I lose all train of thought. His cologne is an intoxicating scent, making my head spin.

“You don’t like it?”

“I do, actually. We don’t always get along that well,” I tell him. He keeps his fingers caressing my cheek as we stare at each other.

“She can be hard to get along with,” he adds. I nod, but I don’t know what else to say here. He’s ... so close to me. And it’s my mom’s husband. I start to open my mouth, but his fingers slowly slip over, pressing against my lips.

“I want you to know I’m here for anything you need, Arya. Do you understand that?” Oh my God. He’s coming onto me. My breath catches in my throat as I slowly nod my head. “We’re all adults here.” Once more, I nod my head. Jarrod runs his finger along my bottom lip before biting his lip between his teeth. Then, as quickly as he came, he pulled away and left the room. I’m left standing here in shock. I don’t know what to do. Surely, I can’t tell my mom about this, not that she would believe me anyway.

When I was younger, I had one of her men come onto me, but a lot stronger than Jarrod just did. I told her about it, and she called me crazy and said I was overreacting.

Shaking myself back to reality, I turn and walk out of the library and down the large staircase. I turn down the next hall and continue toward the kitchen and then out the back door. The wind off the ocean is cool as I walk down the stairs and past the pool. I take the short walk to the beach, pull my shoes off, and step onto the sand. It’s been a while since I’ve been to the beach. Mom took me once when I was younger, and I went once a few years ago, but I forgot how much I enjoyed it.

“Beautiful, right?” I glance over to see who’s talking to me and see a blond guy standing behind me.

“Yeah, it is.”

“You should come out at night. When the moon’s high in the sky. It’s peaceful.” I nod my head and widen my eyes because I don’t know what this man wants or why he’s still here. We stand in an awkward silence before he speaks once more.

“I’m Cale.”

“Arya,” I say as he turns to face me now, offering his hand.

“That’s a unique name. I like it. You new here?”

“I just moved in with my mom and her new husband for a little while,” I tell him, not wanting to give him too much information.

“Nice. I live three houses down if you get bored. I have a sister probably around your age,” he adds. Does that make a difference?

“Uh, okay. I should get going,” I answer, hoping like hell that he’ll leave. But he doesn’t.

“I can walk you back,” he offers.

“I’m sure you’re a great guy and all, Cale, but it’s literally a few steps into the backyard,” I say, motioning behind me with my thumb. Cale looks past me and then nods his head.

“Point taken. If you’re up for it, and I’m not that creepy, there’s a bar not far from here. Medesto’s. We all hang out there at night if you want to come.” Did he just ask me out? Although the thought of getting out of this house does sound nice.

“What time?”

“Around eight.”

“Okay. I’ll probably see you there,” I tell him. Cale smiles and turns, nodding his head as he walks back down the beach. I’m not sure how I feel about that little encounter, but it couldn’t hurt to make some new friends while I’m here. It will give me something to do besides sit in this damn house.

I turn and head back toward the house when I catch a glimpse of Jarrod. He’s standing in the window of their bedroom, pulling his button-up shirt down his arms, and then he pulls his

undershirt over his head and tosses it to the side. I stand here watching him in awe. I knew he was built under that shirt. He turns and gives me a clear view of his abs and chest. Damn. That man is built, and he knows it. I keep walking, tripping over a pool float and nearly falling on my face, but I catch myself at the last minute.

“Are you okay?” I hear his voice floating over me like silk. I look up to see him standing outside on his balcony now.

“Yeah, I’m good!” I call back to him. I can’t look up at him now. I’m too damn embarrassed. Oh, who the hell am I kidding? I lift my head, and our eyes lock, and all the air leaves my lungs. That man is a tease. A massive flirt, so why the hell do I like it so much?

“You want to go for a swim?” he asks, nodding toward the pool. I debate it. I truly debate getting in the pool with that man, but I know how it would end. Or how it would possibly end, and I can’t do that to my mom.

“Actually, I was going to go down to Medesto’s if that’s okay.” Jarrod smiles and nods his head.

“You don’t need my permission, Arya.” Fuck me, the way he says my name sends a chill down my spine.

“I ... okay. I mean, I didn’t want to come home late and disturb you,” I tell him.

“Trust me, you wouldn’t be disturbing me.” Jesus. Can this man be any more sexual? Even from here, I can see the glisten in his eyes. I smile back at him and quickly walk inside and up the stairs to my room. I walk inside and lock the door behind me, although I highly doubt that would keep him out.

Walking to my oversized closet, I pull the door open and step inside. Mom made it a point to buy me a ton of ridiculously priced clothes as well as some of her work. I run my fingers along the clothes, but there’s nothing I want to wear, so I opt for my cut-offs and a tank top.

I change quickly and pull my hair up on top of my head in a messy bun before adding some eyeliner. My blue eyes pop

with the dark liner around them, and I find myself smiling in the mirror.

Grabbing my cell and keys to the car mom left for me, I head out of my room.

“Is that what you’re wearing?” I immediately stop when I hear Jarrod’s voice. I turn to look at him, then at my clothes, and back to him once more as I furrow my brows.

“What’s wrong with this?” I ask, not sure what’s wrong with it. Jarrod doesn’t speak as he stalks toward me slowly. When he’s within reach, he runs his finger under the hem of my short shorts. I suck in a breath at the feel of his hands on my flesh.

“These are really short,” he says softly, his face too close to my skin. He’s bent over, his lips near my arm. I can feel his breath as it dances over my arm.

“That’s the point.”

“Of what? Attracting men?” He slips his finger further up under my shorts, and I gasp.

“It’s ... hot,” I manage to get out. He turns his head and looks up at me with those dark brown eyes and I nearly lose myself. Then his fingers move further, sliding under my panties. The feel of his fingers stirs a need in me. Fuck, I shouldn’t be doing this. I shouldn’t be letting him do this, but he feels too damn good touching me. Jarrod looks me in the eye before murmuring, “Spread your legs.” I do as I’m told and spread my legs for him. His finger sinks inside me, and I nearly come from just the contact. Slowly, he glides it in and out, and I feel like I’m on fire.

He keeps fingering me until I’m panting and needing more. Then he pulls his finger free and finds my clit. Like it was the fucking magic button to my orgasm, just one little touch is all I needed. I come, my knees locking up as he circles my clit slowly. My body trembles as he wraps his free arm around me to hold me in place as I calm myself down.

“You’re right. It is hot, but maybe I should send some security out with you,” he says, pulling away from me completely. My

insides tremble as I look at the man who made me come, barely touching me.

“I don’t think that’s necessary.”

“Why is that? Plan on finding a man tonight?” he asks, his eyes full of questions. I shake my head slowly before I find a way to answer him.

“No. In fact, I don’t plan on finding one any time soon after the last one,” I admit. He nods his head, a smile crawling across his face as if my answer satisfies him.

“Good. Smart girl,” he says before turning and heading back to his room. I watch him go, bringing his fingers to his lips and licking them as I watch until he goes in and closes the door behind him.

I release a big breath before turning and rushing down the steps and out the front door. I don’t know if I could handle another second of him without stripping and fucking him. I’m not a whore, but I’m certainly not a prude either.

Once I’m in the car, I enter the address into my GPS and drive out of the driveway. I turn onto the main road and follow the directions as I listen to rock music blasting through the speakers.

The drive is nice. Not hearing my mom is nicer. Being out of the house? The best. Not that I don’t enjoy it there, I’ve only been there a few days, but it can get boring when it’s only me at home.

When I arrive at the bar, I remember I’m not twenty one yet. I wonder if that makes a difference. I know places back home don’t care or ID you. Maybe this is one of those places.

I find a place to park in the packed parking lot before I climb out, grabbing my purse as I go. A man greets me at the door of the bar.

“Id?”

“I don’t have it with me,” I tell him. He eyes me up and down, taking me in just like Jarrod did. His lips pull into a smile before he nods his head.

“Next time, bring it with you. Go ahead,” he says, nodding toward the door. I smile at him and mouth ‘thank you’ before stepping inside. It’s loud, from the music playing and people talking and laughing. I glance around to get a feel for the place. The bar is in the center of the room with tables and a patio on one side, and the other has a dancefloor. I smile as I walk around looking for Cale.

When I don’t spot him, I spin around, about to leave, when a head full of blond hair catches my eye. I lean around the people in front of me and check to see if it’s him. When I step out onto the patio, he turns his head, a smile on his face. He says something to his friends before turning and walking toward me.

“You came.”

“I did. Did you doubt me?” I ask him teasingly.

“I did a little. I wasn’t sure if you’d come or not.”

“Well, I’m here,” I tell him. He smiles and offers me his hand, which I take. He leads me over to the table where a bunch of people are standing and pulls me up next to him.

“Hey, guys. This is Arya. She just moved here. Arya, this is Tracy, my sister, Jon, Mikey, and Sam. We’re still missing a few, but they should be here soon,” he says. I say hi to everyone, and they say hi back before Cale hurries off to the bar for drinks.

“So you’re new?” Tracy asks.

“Yeah. I’m only here for a few months,” I reply.

“Why is that? You don’t like it here?”

“I do so far. I’m staying with my mom and her husband until I get things settled. Long story, ex-boyfriend issues,” I explain. She makes a face as if she understands before nodding her head.

“Well, enjoy it while you’re here. It’s a pretty great place,” she says.

“It seems that way so far.” Cale comes back with drinks for everyone, including me. We drink, and I listen as they talk and

just have a good time. It isn't as bad as I thought it would be. Cale and his friends are actually pretty nice. Just as I'm having a good time, my phone chimes. I slip it out and see a text from an unknown number.

Unknown: Look at you making new friends. Don't get too cozy.

Chapter 6

Denz

“Denz, I’m serious. I don’t feel well,” Sasha complains as I sit next to her on her bed. I reach out and feel her forehead, and she does feel pretty hot.

“Let me find the thermometer,” I tell her as I shove off the bed. I walk out of her room, and down to my mom’s and step inside. I hate coming in here. I hate being around her like this.

“Mom,” I call and wait as she pries her eyes open. She looks over at me, glazed eyes and all.

“Huh?”

“Sasha is sick. Where’s her insurance card?”

“How the hell should I know!” Instantly, I roll my eyes and dig through her drawers. Sasha doesn’t get sick often enough for me to know where this shit is, but after digging a little more, I find it. I slam the dresser drawer on purpose before storming out of her room and back to Sasha’s room.

“Get up. Let’s go.”

“Where are we going?”

“To get you checked.”

“I don’t want to go,” she whines. I know she hates going to the doctor. I hear the front door slam shut, and I know the guys are here.

“Yo, Denz?” War calls out.

“Hold on,” I call back. I turn to Sasha and help her sit up before grabbing her shoes and putting them on her. She’s weak, and that’s not a good sign. I help her down the hall, and when we step into the living room, the guys stand from the couch quickly.

“What’s wrong?” Har moves quickly to her side.

“She’s sick. I’m taking her to get checked,” I tell them.

“Shit. We’ll go with you,” War says. I shake my head.

“Nah, I got this. You guys go ahead and go out,” I tell them.

“We’re family, Denz.”

“No shit, but they’re only going to let one of us back there anyway. You might as well go hang out,” I tell them. The hospital isn’t the greatest considering what side of town we’re on, but they still have rules.

“Fine. Call when you find out something,” Harlon says before leaning down and pressing a kiss to the top of Sasha’s head. War walks over and does the same before we all move out of the house.

The guys climb in their SUV and take off as I lead Sasha to mine. I help her inside before I go around and climb in, too. I start it up and look over at her, and she doesn’t look good.

“Don’t throw up in my car,” I tease her a little.

“Fuck off, Denz. I’m too sick for this,” she tells me. Sasha never complains about anything, so I know she isn’t feeling well.

I pull out and take off down the road when she reaches over and slaps me.

“What the hell?”

“Why are you speeding, you idiot? You want to get pulled over?” I chuckle at her and slow down, careful when I go over the bumps in the road.

The hospital isn’t far, and I’m thankful for that. Once we arrive, I park and help Sasha out, leading her inside. We stop at the desk and the nurse hands me paperwork to fill out. I walk to the chairs, settle Sasha into one, and begin to work on it.

“Sasha, when was your period?” Her head snaps around in my direction and the nastiest look I’ve ever seen crosses her face.

“What?”

“You want to talk about my periods, Denz?”

“I just need the date,” I tell her.

“Last month. And it was heavy. I had cramps like a bitch, and you still made me go to school. Did you know a female’s cramps are equivalent to a fucking heart attack, Denz?” She narrows her eyes at me, but I just shrug.

“I don’t know about that shit, Sash.”

“You should know about it, you man whore,” she mumbles, causing me to laugh. I fill out the rest of her forms and return them and then we wait.

And we fucking wait and wait and wait. Because this hospital is a piece of shit, but because Sasha only has state insurance, it’s the one we have to use. Sasha finally lays her head on my shoulder and falls asleep. I’m kind of glad as we’re still sitting here.

It takes two hours for them to call her back. By now, she feels hotter than she had, and she’s complaining about stomach pain. I help her walk to the back and climb on the bed the nurse directed us to.

“I need you to take your clothes off and put this on,” she says, passing her a gown. Sash rolls her eyes and snatches the gown from her hand.

“A dress, Denz? They want me, of all people, to put on a dress.”

“It’s a gown.”

“It’s a dress. Turn around,” she says. I do as she demands and look away while she changes, but I hear her whimpering, and I can’t help but want to do something for her. For Sasha, there isn’t anything I won’t do. I’d burn the fucking world to the ground for her.

“You can look now.” I turn back around and sit in the chair next to the bed. Sasha lays her head back but slips her hand over and grabs mine. That’s another way I know she isn’t feeling well.

The doctor comes in and checks her out, taking blood and urine samples from her. Then they send her off for an xray and cat scan. I don’t know what the hell all of that means anyway.

I send off a quick text to the guys, letting them know we're still here and what's going on. Then, I sit back and flick through my phone for a while.

I listen to the people on the other side of the curtain laughing and carrying on. They're only here to get drugs, their words, not mine. I couldn't care less what they do as long as my sister gets treated.

The tests seem to take forever, and the nurses are pretty much bitches here. I've asked a million times if she's okay or not. They never know shit. So when another one walks by, I grab her wrist and pull her into the room.

"I need to know what the hell is going on with my sister. They took her an hour ago," I growl in her face. She looks scared, and she should be.

"I'm not her nurse."

"Yeah, I know. Her nurse is a cunt and won't tell me shit," I tell her. She nods her head and looks down where my hand still holds her wrist. I let go and she nods her head.

"What's her name?" I tell her, and she walks away, heading for the little desk in the center of the room. I watch her type on her computer for a second before coming back to me.

"They're still waiting for a space. We're backed up," she tells me.

"For a fucking xray?"

"I'm sorry, sir. We're completely backed up. You're lucky your sister got a room and not a hallway," she adds. I nod my head but don't thank her. She didn't really do shit. I watch her walk away, noting her ass in the tight scrubs she has on before taking my place back in the chair.

I get back on my phone and click through social media and check messages, but there's nothing of interest aside from the guys writing me back, saying let them know when I hear something. That'll be another two fucking hours around this shit hole.

I close my eyes and lay my head back on the back of the chair, listening to everything around me. It's noisy as hell back here. You can hear kids crying and adults yelling. Lifting my head, I watch the nurses as they move from bay to bay. There aren't rooms back here only a curtain separating the beds.

I spot a hot little nurse across the room and eye her up and down. She isn't bad looking, and she must have her shit together to be a nurse. Not someone who would be interested in me, that's for damn sure, but I know if I wanted to hit that, I could. It's just a fact.

I keep my eyes on her as she makes her way around the room before my eyes grow heavy. I still have to go to work later tonight, and I haven't slept all damn day.

Finally, I let sleep pull me under.

Chapter 7

Warren

The party is in full swing as Harlon and I lounge on one of the couches. Some redhead is straddling his lap and grinding on him while he sucks on her neck. I smirk and bring my joint to my lips as I take in the scene.

There are a lot of people I know here, but also some new faces. I keep my eye on a few of them, not knowing what they're doing here. A hot little blonde walks up and sits down next to me. She's clearly drunk off her ass and looking for a good time. Too bad she isn't going to find it with me.

"Hey, War," she slurs as I turn my head to look at her.

"How do you know my name?"

"Everyone knows your name," she smiles. She starts to reach for over to put her hand on me, but I quickly slap it away.

"Don't touch me."

"What's wrong with you? Don't you want to have a little fun?" She moves in to do it again, and this time, I snap. I shove her hand away and grab her jaw roughly in my hand, squeezing.

"I said, don't touch me. Do I look like I want to have fun with you?" I ask her, squeezing until I see tears leaking down her cheeks. She shakes her head as best she can with the grip I have on her. "Then don't put your fucking hands on me again, or I will cut them off and hand-deliver them to your mom." Her eyes widen as I release my hold. She moves quickly, getting up and rushing across the room.

"You could ease up a little," Harlon tells me. I turn my head and look at him over my shoulder before shaking my head.

"You have to give these bitches boundaries, Har. If you don't, they think they can do whatever they want."

"By trying to fuck you?" he asks confused.

"Something like that." With that, I turn back to my joint and bring it back to my lips. I don't know how long we sit here

when I see someone coming toward us. Harlon sees him, too.

“Oh shit. He looks pissed,” Harlon says, shoving the girl off his lap and standing as I stand. I cross my arms over my chest as the man comes closer, anger in his eyes. The closer he gets, the more I know this is going to end badly. For him, anyway.

“You put your hands on my sister?” The man roars before slamming his hands into my chest, attempting to shove me back a step. Too bad that doesn’t work.

“Fuck, man. Why do you want to ruin a good party?” Harlon asks him. He turns his gaze to Har and smiles.

“You want some of this too?” he asks. Harlon chokes out a laugh which seems to piss the guy off a little more. The dude raises his hand in the air and motions for someone as we watch. I lean around him, unamused, and see two more guys walking over.

“Three of you? That’s all you got?” I ask him. The other two step up next to him, and I almost laugh in their faces.

“You put your hands on my sister, and now I’m going to beat your ass,” he tells me once more.

“Little blondie, is your sister?”

“Yeah, that’s her.”

“Next time, keep the little whore off my cock,” I tell him before I pull back and swing. Harlon’s ready. He moves as soon as I do. I don’t know what it is about fighting that I love. I’ve been like this since I was younger. It allows me to let off some steam, but it also gives me a rush. Not to mention, I get to hit assholes who think they can hurt me.

Fists fly through the air as people gather around to watch, just like fucking high school. You hear them cheering and carrying on, but I focus on the task at hand. Beating this guy’s ass.

It doesn’t take long to have the three of them laid out on the floor.

“Looks like the party is over,” Harlon announces as he steps over one and moves toward the door. I follow behind him

when I see the little blonde who started it all. I raise my eyebrow at her, and she quickly scurries away.

We head outside just as my phone chimes and I slide it out, seeing a message from Denz.

“Fuck. She’s having surgery,” I mumble as I read the message.

“Who? Sasha?”

“Yeah. Denz said it was her appendix.”

“Fuck, man. Let’s head over there then,” Harlon says as we make our way to the car. We climb in just as I hear sirens.

“You think they called?” I ask, looking at my brother as he starts the car and pulls off.

“More than likely. They’re a bunch of bitches.” I snort a laugh as we take off down the road toward the hospital. It doesn’t take us long to get there and find Denz.

“Why do you have blood on your hand?” Denz asks, but I just shrug.

“Just a little incident.” Denz laughs, knowing what our little incidents are. He nods his head as we sit down in the waiting room with him.

“Heard anything?” Harlon asks.

“No. Not yet. They said it was pretty bad and needed to come out as soon as possible.”

“Shit, Denz. This is something her mom should be here for,” Harlon adds. He isn’t wrong. However, she cares more about her liquor bottle than anything else. Even her kids.

“Fuck her. We’re all she needs,” he snaps. I slap a hand on his shoulder, letting him know we’re all here for her and him. That’s what we do. We’re brothers.

It seems like hours pass by, and we don’t hear anything until, finally, a doctor comes out looking for us. We stand and listen to what he has to say. Sasha did well and is on her way to her room. He said we can go up there and see her. Denz blows out a big breath. I know he was worried about her; we all were.

“She good, Denz,” I remind him.

“I don’t get scared, War. Of nothing but thinking about losing her, I can’t, man.”

“You’re not going to lose her. She’s good, man. Nothing to worry about,” I remind him. He nods, and we follow the directions to her room. When we walk in, she glances over with groggy eyes.

“All of you are here?” she mumbles.

“You want us to leave?” I ask. She smirks a little.

“Not a chance in hell.” We all chuckle as we move closer to the bed. Denz takes one chair, and I take the other. Harlon leans against the wall, smiling at her.

“How you feeling?”

“Like they cut me open even though it was just a little spot,” she says.

“That little spot will still hurt,” Denz tells her. She nods her head when her eyes go to Harlon.

“Will you lay with me?” She asks him. He doesn’t even have to answer. He moves toward the bed, and she scoots over the best she can, and he climbs in next to her. Out of the three of us, Harlon is the softer one. He’s the more emotional one, and that’s who Sasha looks to when she isn’t feeling well. He knows how to handle it better than we do.

“How’s that?” he asks, sliding his arm under her neck. She moves in closer to him and her eyes slowly flutter closed. Denz chuckles at how quickly she fell asleep.

“At least she only has to be here for a day or two,” I say as I stretch my arms above my head.

“Yeah. I don’t know how long I can sit in this damn room without going insane,” Denz adds.

“No shit. It’s like a jail cell.”

“So what happened at the party? Who was there?”

“Basically, the same people. There were a few I didn’t recognize, but that’s about it. I kept an eye on them.”

“And?”

“And what?”

“What else happened,” he asks, motioning to my hands. I sigh and lean back, put my hands behind my head, and grin at him.

“Some bitch was trying to be all up on War, and he wasn’t having it,” Harlon chimes in.

“So what? Who’d you fight with?”

“Her brother,” I tell him.

“That’s why you’re never going to have a girlfriend,” Sasha mumbles. Denz smirks, and Harlon laughs, but I just smile at her. She’s probably right.

“You might be right there, but I don’t like people touching me,” I remind them all.

“You don’t mind us touching you,” Sasha adds.

“That’s different. You guys are family.” And that’s the truth. They’re my family, and I have no issue with my family touching me. I just don’t like random people putting their hands on me. I don’t know why I am the way I am. I don’t know what made me this way, but this is me.

We sit in silence while Sasha sleeps, each of us lost in our own world. We sit on our phones until the other two fall asleep. Not me, though. I have insomnia most nights and can’t fall asleep. It’s been this way for as long as I can remember.

I’ve seen a doctor about it, but all they want to do is put me on medicine, and I’m not into that shit. I’d prefer to stay awake than sleep if that’s what I have to do. My mom gave me medicine when I was younger, and I hated the way it made me feel. Yeah, I slept, but the next day, I felt like shit.

I scroll through my phone, smiling at some of the pictures people have posted. There isn’t much on social media, so I shove out of my chair and sneak out of the room. I walk down to the elevator and head down to the main floor as I grab the

pack of cigarettes from my pocket, shake one out, and grab it with my teeth. I'm stepping out of the elevator when security stops me.

"You can't smoke in here," he says, nodding toward the unlit cigarette hanging from my lips.

"It's not lit," I remind the asshole as he narrows his brows at me. ,

"Take it outside."

"Where the fuck do you think I'm going?" I snap at him. He jolts a little from the thunder in my tone, but I just walk past him, shoulder-checking him on the way. As soon as I step outside, I pull my lighter out and light it up, leaning against the wall of the hospital.

I inhale deeply, sucking nicotine into my lungs before blowing smoke into the air.

Sometimes I think about life. My life. What the hell I'm doing with it. My dad has offered us a place in his business more times than I can count, but that doesn't feel fair to me. I haven't earned my place in the company, and I sure as hell didn't graduate high school. Nevertheless, I haven't done shit else with my life.

I work in a goddamn factory making shit money, same as my brother's. I can't see stepping up and going to my dad even though he has accounts set up for us boys. None of us have touched them. I guess we think along the same lines. We didn't earn it, and dad has always taught us to earn what we want. Not that he cares if we touch the money; he doesn't. He reminds us of that all the time. He always tells us that's what it's there for.

Maybe it's my pride standing in the way. Maybe it's the fact I'm stubborn and pretty set in my ways.

Whatever it is, something is missing inside me. And I haven't found anything to fill the goddamn void.

Chapter 8

Harlon

Sasha went home from the hospital yesterday. The doc said everything was looking good, and she should recover just fine. We were all glad to hear that, but tonight my dad has the goddamn family dinner planned.

“What the hell do you mean you’re not going?” I snap at Denz.

“I have to work. Sasha’s insurance isn’t going to cover everything,” he tells me. I blow out a breath as I run my hand through my hair.

“We’ll all help,” War chimes in. It’s not like we can’t afford it with the accounts my dad has in place, but none of us have touched those yet.

“I know, but it’s not going to be cheap, so I picked up some extra hours. You guys can go,” Denz says with a smirk. Asshole.

“You could, too. I don’t know why we have to suffer through this shit,” I smart off. I don’t like going to his family dinners. None of them ever stick around that long, anyway. It makes no sense for us to pretend to be a family when that’s the farthest thing from the truth.

“Can you guys go by and check on Sasha before you go?”

“Yeah. We have to pick up our new sister, too,” I say with fake enthusiasm. Denz snorts a laugh.

“I’m sure she’ll be great.”

“Like the last one?” War asks.

“What was wrong with her?” I ask.

“Aside from being some sort of witch? Don’t you remember when we caught her out by the pool house summoning demons?” he laughs, and the two of us join in.

“I do remember that. Dad kicked their asses out pretty quick after that shit.”

“No shit. He didn’t want that shit around the house.”

“Maybe this one won’t be so bad,” Denz adds. I shrug, not giving a shit either way. They won’t be around long, and that’s all I can bank on for now.

“Fuck it. Let’s go,” I say, slapping War in the chest with the back of my hand. He nods, and we walk over and climb in my SUV.

“Wait, where is she going to sit?” War asks as he turns his head and looks at the custom speaker boxes taking the place of a back seat. They aren’t high; in fact, they sit as low as the seat would if it was still in here.

“On there,” I nod toward the box. War grins and shakes his head before we pull off and head for our dad’s house.

The ride doesn’t take long at all. I kill the engine, and we both climb out, laughing and joking around as we walk inside.

“Hey, Ezra,” I say when I see one of dad’s maids. She beams with happiness when she sees us. She comes over quickly, pulling us both in for a hug.

“It’s been too long since I’ve seen you boys. You need to come around more often,” she scolds, grinning up at the both of us.

“We will. Do you know if our new sister is ready?” She slaps at me and nods her head before calling for her. War and I move further into the house, standing near the staircase, talking shit. Then War nudges me and nods toward the stairs. I turn and see the girl coming down.

She’s wearing a red silk dress that hugs her body, and what a fucking body. War and I both turn around and take her in. She doesn’t look up, watching what she’s doing as she walks down the steps until she makes it to the bottom.

“Can either of you zip this, or can you only stare?” she asks, looking between the two of us. Honestly, I’m a little shocked when War moves first. He moves to stand behind her, sliding the zipper up on her dress. She turns and smiles at him.

“Thank you.”

“Trust me, it was my pleasure,” he grins at her.

“I’m sure it was.”

“So you’re Arya?” I ask, watching as she turns to look at me, her long blonde hair tumbling over her shoulder from the movement.

“That’s me. And you are?”

“Your new brother.”

“I gathered that. What’s your name?”

“I’m Harlon. That’s Warren,” I nod toward my brother.

“Nice to meet you both, I suppose.”

“What the hell does that mean?” War snaps at her. She turns to face him and smiles.

“It means I’ve heard all about you three from my mom. Trust me when I say you’re the last ones I would have chosen to pick me up,” she snips. I watch War narrow his eyes at her, and I can see the darkness swirling in them. If she were careful, she’d watch the way she talks to him.

“So, mommy dearest doesn’t like her new sons?” War asks, crossing his arms over his chest.

“She didn’t actually say that. Just to be careful around the three of you because you’re nothing but trouble. And trust me, I’ve had enough of that to last a lifetime. Now, are we going?” She challenges him back, and I crack a smile. I think I’m going to like her.

“After you,” I say, motioning for her to go first. She turns on her heel and walks toward the door while War and I check out her ass. It’s a nice ass too.

She reaches for the doorknob and pulls it open before stepping outside and waiting for us. I walk past her and down to the car, where War climbs in the front seat. I open the back door, and she looks inside before looking back at me.

“Where am I supposed to sit?”

“Right there,” I tell her, nodding toward the speaker box.

“On a speaker box?”

“Yeah. It’ll hold, I promise.”

“You have two options here, little bird. Either you sit on that box, or you sit on my goddamn lap. Ladies choice, of course,” War tells her as he looks over his shoulder at her. She seems to be debating it, and the thought amuses me.

“Fine. Guess your cock is going to be hard the whole ride,” she says before she moves around and climbs into the front seat and settles into War’s lap. My eyes widen as his lips curl into a devious grin. I watch her squirm around on his lap, no doubt to aggravate him. I shut the back door and walk around, climbing into the driver’s seat.

“You sure about this?” I look over at War. He cracks his neck from side to side to release the tension I can see in him.

“Yeah, Warren. You sure about this?” Arya asks, smiling over her shoulder at him.

“Oh, I’m very sure about this,” he responds quickly. Arya’s phone chimes and she slides it out of the little purse as I put it in drive and take off. Suddenly, she looks a little stiff but I don’t keep my eyes on her. I keep my gaze on the road and let War handle that girl.

Arya keeps looking at her phone with a strange look on her face, but she doesn’t make a move to text back.

“You keep squirming like that, and I’m going to give you a reason to squirm,” War warns her. Arya turns her head and looks over her shoulder at him.

“You think you can?”

“I know I can.”

“Is that a bet?”

“Only if you want to make it one, little bird.” Something flashes in her eyes, and I watch her squirm a little more. Then I see War grab the side of her dress and hike it up her thighs. His fingers glide over her flesh, and she sucks in a breath.

“Oh, come on, little bird. Don’t give up just yet,” he coos. Arya hardens her stare and straightens her back as he slips his hand under her dress. Another gasp leaves her lips when War

finds what he's looking for. I try to keep my eyes on the road and not on them, but goddamn, I can't believe what War is doing right now. I just watched him beat the hell out of a guy over his sister touching him, and now this girl we don't even know is on his lap, and he doesn't seem to mind.

War groans as he begins to finger fuck her right here in the front seat. Arya doesn't move, but I can see the look in her eyes; she's enjoying this.

We make it to the other side of town while War keeps doing his thing. Arya looks up and asks, "Where are we?" I don't miss the little hitch in her voice, either. She's close. Damn close.

"Are you going to finish her, War, or do you need my help?" War growls, but Arya glances over at me like I wouldn't do it. I lean on the middle console and slip my hand under her dress with War's. He's busy shoving his fingers in and out of her dripping wet pussy, so I get to work on her clit. After a second Arya starts rolling her hips. War growls low in his throat since she's still on his cock.

The two of us keep going until Arya has her nails digging into War's arms.

"Just do it, little bird. You know you want to. Just fucking come all over us," War whispers as he nips at her ear lobe. Before I know what he's doing he leans down and bites into her shoulder. Hard. She screams out in pain and pleasure as she comes all over our hands. We keep stroking and touching, drawing it out as she rocks her hips. Then we both pull away from her, and War brings his fingers to lips, licking them clean.

"You lost the bet, little bird."

"I feel how hard you are, and I'm the only one who came. Maybe I won."

Chapter 9

Arya

The guys climbed out of the car and went inside while I stood outside in this sketchy neighborhood in the driveway. I needed a minute to regain some sense of self-control. I can't believe I let them do that to me, but damn were they hot. They don't look like Jarrod, but they are certainly not lacking in the looks department.

"Who the hell are you?" I hear a female voice behind me. I spin on my overpriced heel and come face to face with some girl.

"Who are you?" She scoffs and steps closer to me. Shit, I'm going to have to fight this girl while wearing one of mom's expensive dresses.

"You're standing on my boyfriend's driveway," she smarts off. I look down and then at the house behind me before turning back to her.

"And your point?"

"My point is, what the hell are you doing here?" She yells louder this time. I hear the screen door behind me close. I turn to see Harlon coming out and looking between us.

"I see you've met the neighborhood slut," he says, eyeing her up and down.

"Fuck off, Harlon."

"You wish any of us would fuck you."

"Who is she? Where is Denz?" she asks. Harlon chuckles and shakes his head before turning to me.

"You think you can help us out really quick?" he asks. I nod my head when he ushers me toward the door, resting his hand on the small of my back. A shiver runs down my spine as I step inside the house. "Down at the end of the hall," he says. I nod and walk down the hall, glancing into one of the rooms. Harlon moves quickly behind me and pulls the door shut so I

can't see anything. I don't turn to look at him; I just keep walking.

When I step into the last room, I see War sitting on the edge of the bed with a girl lying down.

"Who is she?" the girl asks, staring me up and down.

"This is Arya. She's going to help you to the bathroom," Harlon says. I smile and give her a little wave before she rolls her eyes.

"I said I don't need a goddamn babysitter," she snaps, looking to War. He just smirks and helps her stand from the bed and leads her into the bathroom.

"Put your hands on the sink," he orders her. She reaches out and places her hands on the edge of the sink, but I can see her wince. "You want me to put you on the toilet?"

"Fuck no, I do not. Get out, War," she snaps at him. War steps out and motions for me to go in, which I do. The door closes behind us, and the girl rolls her eyes.

"They're annoying."

"They're men, of course, they are. What do you need?"

"My period's going to start. I need a pad, but I even though my surgery was laparoscopic, it still hurts like a bitch to bend," she tells me. I nod my head as she scoots her way over to the toilet and sits down. I bend over and search under the cabinet until I find the pads and pass her one. "Thanks."

"Need help putting it on?" I ask. She tries to bend to do it but winces again. I reach for it, take it back, and unwrap it before sticking it in her underwear for her.

"I feel like a fool."

"Nah. We all need help sometimes."

"I'm just glad it was you and not one of them. I'd never hear the end of it," she says.

"They're your brothers?" I ask her. She nods as she finishes up, and I help her stand and move in front of the sink.

“We’re not technically family, but they are Denz’s brothers. Which by default makes them mine, too.”

“I don’t get it,” I blurt, feeling confused.

“It’s a long story, but basically, all the guys have different moms but the same dad. Denz and I have the same mom, different dad.” I nod my head as I try to understand, but that’s a lot to take in. “I’m Sasha, by the way.”

“Arya.”

“I like that name,” she says, smiling over at me. We finish, and I help her back out into her room, where two of the guys wait. Harlon rushes over and takes over, helping Sasha back into her bed. Once they get her settled, they both tell her goodnight and lean down, kissing her forehead.

War turns to me and says, “You ready to go, little bird?”

“That depends. Where am I sitting?” I tease. He winks at me, and we both walk out of the room and back down the hall. The both of us step outside and walk back to the SUV.

“She’s your sister?” I ask, glancing over my shoulder at him.

“Technically, she’s Denz’s sister, but we’ve been around since she’s been born.”

“She seems to really care about you guys.” War nods his head, looking around before dragging his gaze back to meet mine.

“We’d do anything for her. She’s family.” I nod my head, wishing I had that. The last family I had stole everything I had worked so hard for. I wouldn’t know what having people like that in my life would be like. I saw how happy she was even though she acted like she was annoyed. I could see how her eyes brightened when she looked at them.

“Is she going to be okay by herself?” I ask as we walk closer to the car.

“She’ll be fine. Denz will be home later,” Harlon says. As we’re about to pile into the SUV, the girl comes back, stomping down the road. Harlon sighs as she walks right up next to the SUV and stares daggers at me.

“He in there?” she asks, not looking at either of the guys.

“Why don’t you knock and find out,” I smart off to her. Harlon chuckles, but War just stands tall, watching the showdown.

“If you lay one fucking hand on my boyfriend, I will gut you,” she warns me. Now, I choke out a laugh. I take a few steps toward her, getting right in her face.

“If you think you can take me, try it. I’d love to get my hands dirty.” The guys must see my hands curl into fists because Harlon moves quickly back around the car and wraps his arm around my waist, pulling me back against his hard body.

“You can’t go messing up that pretty dress before dinner. We’d never hear the end of it,” he says in my ear.

“You think I care about this damn dinner?” I ask him in return. He chuckles and lowers his lips to my ear.

“I don’t either, killer, but our parents do, and I, for one, don’t want to deal with my dad’s shit tonight.” I suck in a breath and nod my head. I can be good if I need to be. Harlon doesn’t release the hold he has on me when War moves to stand in front of us.

“You know he’s working. Why are you down here trying to start shit?”

“Who is she? That’s all I want to know,” the girl says, crossing her arms over her chest as she glares at War.

“She’s none of your concern. That’s who she is. Get the fuck out of here before I do something I won’t regret later,” he warns, his tone harsh and deadly. A shiver runs down my spine as Harlon lets go of me. He walks back around the car and climbs in right before War does the same. Thinking better of the whole situation, I open the back door and climb in, sitting on the goddamn speaker box. War glances over his shoulder and chuckles but doesn’t say another word.

In fact, no one does as we drive across town and end up at the restaurant.

As soon as we pull up, a valet is there and waiting. The guys climb out as I do the same, smoothing out my dress.

I trail behind them, neither of them bothering to look in my direction as we make our way inside.

The woman at the desk smiles brightly as she looks between the two, eyeing them both up and down. I roll my eyes as she motions for them to follow her, again I trail behind them.

She walks us through the restaurant and out the back door to where my mom and Jarrod sit. Jarrod sees us and immediately stands, hugging both his sons before moving to me next. He wraps his arm around me, pulling me into a hug before whispering in my ear, “You look gorgeous in that dress.” My cheeks heat as he pulls away and takes his seat.

“Arya. You look lovely,” My mom greets me, even though she has barely looked at me.

“It is one of yours.”

“And that’s all the better,” she smiles as she grabs her glass and takes a drink. My cell chimes in my purse, and I quickly pull it out while everyone orders drinks but me. Looking down at the screen, I cringe.

Unknown: You look amazing in that dress. Too bad all I want to do is rip it off you and strangle you with it.

My head jerks back as I glance around quickly. I don’t know who the hell this is or what they want. Strangle me? What the hell?

Harlon bumps my arm with his elbow, my eyes quickly looking at his.

“She’s waiting,” he says, nodding toward the server. I quickly rattle off my order before excusing myself and going to the bathroom.

Once inside, I examine the text again. Maybe they have the wrong number. Maybe they don’t know it’s me. No, that can’t be. They know what I’m wearing. My stomach cramps at the thought of someone out there watching me.

I shove the phone back in my purse and look at myself in the mirror. I don’t have a lot of friends, but I sure as hell don’t have enemies, either. I don’t bother people. I don’t talk to

them, so why the hell would someone send me something like that? I could tell my mom, but what good would that do? She would say to delete it and move on which is exactly what I should do. I slide the phone back out and delete the messages before slipping it back and turning to leave the bathroom.

Just as I'm about to step out the door, a large body blocks my exit. I look up and see War's eyes burning into me.

"What the hell are you doing? This is the women's bathroom."

"You think I've never been in a woman's bathroom before?" he asks, raising an eyebrow.

"I wouldn't know, nor do I care. Move," I say, trying to brush past. But he doesn't move. He stands there like a goddamn brick wall of muscle.

"What happened?"

"What do you mean?"

"You ran off after your phone chimed."

"And?"

"And I wanted to know what happened," he replies casually, as if we've been best friends for the last hundred years. I roll my eyes and try to make my way around him once again, but he doesn't let me. Instead, his hand reaches out, wrapping around my throat as my eyes widen.

"What the hell are you doing?" I snap at him, reaching up and trying to pry his hands off my neck to no avail. He's too strong, much stronger than I am.

"Call me curious, little bird, but I want to know what has you running from the dinner table," he explains calmly. I snort a laugh, and his grip on my throat tightens. "This would be so much easier if you just told me what I wanted to know."

"There's nothing to tell. I had to piss," I squeeze out the words around the hold he has on me. He cocks his head to the side and studies me before laughing manically. Then his face changes. He looks ... deadly. Evil.

“Fine. I’ll let it slide for now.” Now he releases my throat, and I raise my hand, rubbing at the spot his large hand had held hostage.

“For now? None of what I do is your business, War.”

“As your older brother, it’s my job to keep you safe,” he says, smirking at me. Oh my God. He is not pulling the brother card.

“The thing is, my mom likes men. So many men. I highly doubt we’re going to be around for very long, so there’s no need to worry yourself over me,” I say as I smile politely at him. He doesn’t know how to respond to me. I can see the confused look in his eyes.

War finally nods his head and steps back when another woman approaches and tries to get into the bathroom. I give her a thankful smile as she looks between the two of us. After she passes, I step out and find my way back to the table with War right behind me. I take my seat, and he does the same, even as Jarrod glances between us.

“So, how is work, Arya?” he asks.

“It’s fine. I’ve been working on a new website for Mom. Her old one was a little outdated,” I tell him as our dinner is sat in front of us.

“And it looks fabulous,” mom chimes in, resting her hand on Jarrod’s arm. “She is very talented.”

I don’t acknowledge her. She’s just making small talk because we all know she hasn’t even lifted a finger to look at any of my work. As long as she keeps making money, that’s all she’s concerned with.

“I’m sure she is,” Jarrod adds, his eyes finding mine. I give him a soft smile before looking back down at my plate.

The guys and Jarrod continue talking about working and why the guys won’t just join Jarrod and work for him. I’ve learned from my online searches he owns multiple companies as well as nightclubs. He even has stock in some of the biggest security companies in the world. I’m not sure why the guys don’t work for him, and I didn’t care to ask.

“Arya, have you made any new friends yet?” I look up when I hear Jarrod say my name.

“Uh, yeah, a few. Cale and his sister Tracy are pretty nice,” I tell him. Harlon stifles a laugh, but Jarrod cuts his eyes at him, and he stops.

“The Lancaster’s are a good family. Good kids as well.”

“I’ve only hung out with them once, but Tracy texts me a lot.”

“She’s a nice girl. I’m sure you two would have a lot in common.” I shrug my shoulders because I’m not so sure we do. She seems nice and all, but I don’t know.

“I also met the guy’s friend, Rachel. She seems great,” I say sarcastically. Harlon and War share a look before going back to their food.

“Rachel? I don’t recall that name. Maybe you should bring her around,” Jarrod remarks, looking at both his sons.

“Yeah, that’s more a Denz thing,” Harlon chimes in.

“I’m sure it is.” I can feel the tension in the air after I brought that up. I wonder why. Who the hell is Rachel to them?

Shrugging it off, I finish my dinner and watch as the waitress cleans the table. When dessert is offered, I decline, but the others have something. They carry on a conversation between them as I sit here like a fool. I have no interest in being here. I have no interest in learning about the guys, either. We all know we’re not going to be around that long, so it’s pointless.

“Well, I think I’m calling it a night,” Harlon announces as he stretches, the seams of his suit jacket straining against the muscles in it. He catches me looking and winks at me before I turn and look the other way.

“I’m glad you guys made it, and thank you for picking up, Arya.” Jarrod looks at Harlon.

“It was nice meeting her,” War says as he licks chocolate off his fingers right here in front of everyone. My mouth falls open before I quickly snap it shut. I watch as Harlon and War stand and excuse themselves, leaving me with mom and Jarrod.

Chapter 10

Denz

My muscles ache from the gym today. I worked out like crazy. War gave me a fucking run for my money in there, too.

“I’m going to take a shower,” he says, walking past me and into the house. I nod my head and lean against the house, lighting up a joint. This last week has been hell, but I don’t care because Sasha is taken care of. I’ll work my ass for that girl, and I’ll break myself while doing it so she has a good life.

My sister means everything to me. Since the day she was born, she’s been by my side. Mom has always been a drinker, and that’s her first love. That’s why she and my dad didn’t stay together. She wanted alcohol more than she wanted a family, and I accepted that at a young age. But when Sasha came along, I couldn’t understand how anyone wouldn’t want a family. When she came into the world weighing a tiny five pounds, and thick dark hair, she became my world. Mom drank all through her pregnancy, which didn’t surprise me, and Sasha ended up spending time in the hospital. Why anyone in their right mind would give that baby back to a drunk was beyond me, but I took her in and raised her. And regardless of what some might say, I think I have done a damn good job so far.

I blow smoke from my lips into the night sky as I look up at the stars. There isn’t much to see tonight as the clouds roll in.

“Yo, Denz? Go grab some drinks,” Harlon calls out from inside the house.

“Yeah, I got it,” I call back. I finish my joint and head down the road to the liquor store. I know I shouldn’t drink after everything I’ve seen with my mom, but I don’t drink daily the way she does.

I crack my neck from side to side as I walk past the abandoned house where we killed that man. The smell coming from it is enough to make you gag, but no one has reported him missing, and I’m sure they won’t. Even if they did, the cops don’t like

coming around here anyway. It would take a fucking miracle to get them to come down to this side of town.

I glance in the liquor store and see a few assholes I don't feel like dealing with tonight, so I walk off to the side of the building and light up a cigarette. I close my eyes for a long second when I hear someone speak to me in a hushed tone.

"Hey," they say. I pry my eyes open and look at the girl standing in front of me. She has a pair of cut-off shorts on and a huge T-shirt that hides what I'm sure is a nice body. Big blue eyes stare back at me as she tugs her long blonde hair up on top of her head and ties it with something.

"What?"

"I need help."

"And?" she rolls her eyes. Okay, I'll bite. I shift on my feet to stand up taller as I eye her. "Okay, I'll play. What do you need?"

"A gun." I burst into laughter as she stares at me like I've grown two heads. Why the hell does she think she can come over here and ask some random person for a gun? Is she crazy? A cop?

"A gun?" I ask. She nods her head, keeping her eyes on me.

"And you think I have a gun to sell you?"

"I don't know, asshole, that's why I'm asking."

"Do you always go out on the streets and ask random people to buy a gun?" She huffs out a breath and turns to walk away, but this is too much fun. I reach for her, grabbing her wrist and pulling her back a few steps. She turns to look at me, a pissed look on her face.

"If you're not going to help me, then I'll find someone who will," she snaps at me before glancing down at where I still hold her wrist. I don't release her. Fuck that shit.

"You don't live around here, do you?"

"No."

“That was obvious. Let me explain a few things to you. Every couple of blocks, you’re going to find someone new. Over here, where I live, they’re called gangs,” I talk to her in the most condescending tone I can muster. The girl rolls her eyes once more. “Now, if you venture into another gang’s territory, it could be bad.”

“How could it be bad? I wandered into yours, and I’m fine.”

“That’s because I’m being nice. And you’re wearing blue,” I say, noting the color she has on. She looks down at herself before glancing around and dragging her gaze back to meet mine.

“And?”

“And that is the only reason I’m being nice to you.”

“Then don’t fucking be nice to me, asshole. I don’t need your help anyway,” she snaps snatching her arm away from me and starting to walk down the street. I follow behind her because this is kind of amusing for me.

“You know, you don’t listen well,” I tell her.

“And you’re annoying.”

“I’m being helpful.” She keeps walking letting out a laugh before I stop walking. She glances over her shoulder to see I’ve stopped walking and then fully turns to face me.

“You’re done following me?” she asks, raising an eyebrow.

“I don’t go past this road unless I’m ready for a fight,” I tell her, nodding toward the sign.

“Why?”

“I just told you. Different gangs.”

“And if I go over there?” I shrug.

“They may let it slide, seeing how you don’t know shit about shit.”

“Or?”

“Or they may beat your ass and rape you,” I tell her truthfully. She seems to think it over before turning back like she’s going

to walk over there when I call out to her again.

“What do you need a gun for anyway?” She turns back to me before walking toward me again.

“Protection.”

“And you couldn’t ask your rich lawyer daddy for protection?” I ask, raising an eyebrow at her.

“Maybe if I had a rich lawyer daddy, I would.” I like her already. I like her little mouth and the way she can’t seem to keep it shut.

“Who do you need protection from?” I ask, stepping into her space. I can tell I’m making her nervous as I reach up and grab a strand of her hair that fell from the top of her head. I twirl it around my finger as she smirks at me.

“What difference does that make?”

“It makes all the difference. Maybe a gun isn’t what you need.”

“Oh really? What do you think I need?”

“I learned a long time ago your hands are your greatest weapon if you know how to use them,” I answer as I keep twirling her hair. Before I know what’s happening, she pulls back and swings. My head snaps to the side as she pulls away from me and runs. I smirk and run behind her.

She’s fast, I’ll give her that, but she isn’t fast enough to outrun me. I keep up behind her, letting her think she’s winning when she cuts down the alley. Her footsteps stop and I know she’s trying to hide from me. What she doesn’t know is I like the chase. I’ll be the predator. She can be the prey.

I stalk slowly down the alley, listening intently. When I reach the old garage with the door half open, I slide under it, knowing she’s in there. Slow, calculated steps, I make my way inside. It’s dark, but I’ve been in this garage before. I know what’s in here.

“Although I already had my workout today, I don’t mind a little game of cat and mouse,” I say into the silence. You can

hear the bass from the speakers from a party down the road, but that's all.

I walk around the stack of tires just as she's about to run again, reaching out and snatching her by the hair. She yelps as I pull her toward me. Her body bounces off of mine, her hands fighting to get free. She begins to kick and scream as if that's going to help her.

"I do love a fighter," I tell her. She stops fighting and looks up at me with anger in her eyes. '

"This would have gone so much smoother if you would have just said no."

"I did say no."

"Then you should have let me walk away," she snaps at me. I smirk.

"And miss all the fun?" I taunt her. I remove my hand from her hair and wrap it around the back of her neck instead before shoving her roughly against the wall of the garage. The air leaves her lungs in a whoosh as her eyes meet mine.

"And here I was worried about the others going to rape me." I laugh at her little comment as I lean down closely to her face.

"I don't rape anyone. When I get pussy, they want it." I reach down and let my fingers slide along the smooth skin of her thigh and up to her little cut-offs. She sucks in a breath, and I smile, liking the reaction. She doesn't say anything, just watches me as I keep my hand moving until I feel her panties. Sliding my hand between the fabric of her shorts and her panties, I can feel how wet she is.

"Hmm," I hum. "Why are you so wet?"

"I'm sweating, you idiot," she sneers at me.

"That isn't sweat. I know what wet panties feel like. I've felt them more than once," I remind her.

"I'm sure you have, but obviously, you don't know the difference between sweat and when a girl is wet."

“I bet if I leaned down a little more, I could smell the difference.” I watch her lips part, and then I do it. I lean down as I pull my hand from her shorts, and when I’m almost close enough, she brings her knee up and hits me right in the mouth. I can taste the blood on my tongue as she tries to get away, but I’m faster than she is.

I grab her and jerk her back in front of me, an angry scowl on my face. Then I bring my free hand up, swipe the blood from my lip, and force my finger into her mouth. She tries to clamp her lips shut, but I don’t let her. I reach up and grip her jaw in a fierce, vise-like hold, not letting her move even a little.

“You might as well enjoy this,” I tell her as I shove my fingers down her throat. She gags a few times before I pull my fingers free. I release the grip on her jaw, and she instantly comes at me. I like the fire I see in her eyes as she darts toward me with her hands balled into fists.

“You’re going to pay for that,” she warns me. I laugh in her face.

“With what? Your gun,” I tease, chuckling at her. She swings, but I easily block it. I shove her back a step and turn to leave the garage. She trails behind me, cursing as she goes.

“Really, though. Why do you think you need a gun?” I ask over my shoulder.

“Does it matter?”

“You shouldn’t be out here searching for a gun. Any of these assholes could sell you something used in a murder, and if you happened to get caught with it, you’d go down,” I explain, trying to take the high road and be a better person. I snort a laugh at the thought.

“What do you care if I go to jail?” Now, I turn around and walk backward so I can see her.

“I don’t care. I’m just saying. This isn’t the best area,” I tell her, motioning around us right when the sounds of shots being fired rip through the night air. The girl freezes as I run for cover. She stands there in the middle of the fucking road, her blue eyes round. I hear more shots popping off, and they seem

to be getting closer. I have two options here. Leave the bitch and get my ass covered or get her.

Against my better judgment, I run back out into the road and grab her hand in mine, dragging her along with me.

“You’re going to have to run,” I growl at her. Something seems to spark inside her, and her instincts kick in because she starts running with me. I keep a hold of her hand as we dodge behind and in between houses. I’m not sure who the hell is shooting, and it may not even be at us, but I’m not going to wait around to find out since I actually don’t have my gun on me.

We move behind houses through their yards until we make it to a friend of mine’s. Without knocking, and as usual, I let myself inside, dragging this girl behind me. I slam the door shut as my friend, PJ, comes around the corner.

“That you shooting?” he asks as he looks between me and her.

“No. Don’t know who it was, but I was a little too close to the reds to think about it,” I admit.

“Why the hell were you over there?” he snaps at me like a parent scolding a child. I glance at the girl and raise an eyebrow.

“She isn’t one of them, is she?” Now I laugh. As if I’d bring one of those bitches around here.

“Hell no,” I tell him before turning to her. “Wait here,” I tell her. She nods her head as I grab a gun from the top of PJ’s shelf and walk past her. I step outside and take in the area. A few people come out of their houses to see what’s going on, but for the most part, everything seems to have quietened down.

I walk slowly down the road, just checking things out as I go before turning and heading back. PJ stands on the porch with the girl next to him, both looking around, confused.

“I don’t see shit, and I don’t hear it anymore. Stay with her while I get my car,” I tell PJ. He nods, and I shove his gun down the back of my pants before jogging toward the house.

It's only a few blocks down, and when I get there, Harlon and War are standing outside smoking.

"You hear that shit?" War asks. I nod.

"Yeah. Didn't see anything, though. I think we're good," I tell them as I walk over to my Mustang. If there was anything I loved in this world aside from my family, it was this car.

"Where you going?"

"I have to drop someone off. I'll be right back." They nod as I climb in and rev up the engine. Then, I pull out of the driveway and head back over to PJ's house. He walks the girl down the steps and pulls my car door open, ushering her inside.

"I'm not going anywhere with him," she snaps, nodding toward me.

"Calm down. I'm taking you home."

"There is no way in fuck I'm telling you where I live!" She stands her ground, crossing her arms over her chest. It's cute but annoying.

"Then I'll drop you off right outside of this area." She huffs out a breath and climbs in the front seat, buckling herself in. PJ salutes me and shuts the car door before I take off, speeding down the road.

I take the curves and corners fast as she grips the seat with her hands.

"What the fuck is this? Nascar?" she snaps.

"You don't like my driving?"

"Are we running from the cops?" she asks.

"No."

"Then what the hell are you in such a hurry for?" I like her. I do. I slow down just for her and watch as her white knuckles ease up on the seat. She watches out the window, not saying anything as we continue to drive.

"Where do you want me to drop you off?"

“Anywhere is fine.”

“You sure you don’t want me to take you home? Since you need a gun, I assume you’re not safe,” I tell her, stifling a laugh. She cuts her eyes at me, and fuck, is it hot as hell.

“I could always knee you in the mouth again,” she sneers.

“Did you like tasting my blood on your tongue?” I aggravate her.

“Speaking of, I probably need to be tested for hepatitis or some shit,” she grumbles under her breath. I laugh this time and shake my head.

“You’re good. I get tested all the time for the gym.” That seems to shut her up.

“Right here’s fine,” she says, nodding toward the corner. I glance around, not sure if I want to drop her off here. If she were my sister, I would be pissed that someone left her on the side of the road. I couldn’t see myself not killing the person who ever tried to do that to Sasha. Fuck.

“I’ll drive you home,” I tell her.

“Stop the fucking car, or I’ll jump.”

“You’d do it too, wouldn’t you?” I ask her as I slow down.

“Yeah, I would. I’d rather jump from a moving car than have some psycho know where I live.” Fair enough. I pull over to the curb, and she opens the door, ready to climb out, but right before she does, she turns back to me.

“Hey. Thanks for not killing me,” she smiles.

Chapter 11

Warren

When I got off work, I decided to see my dad after I slept for a while. It's been a little over a week since the dinner, and I haven't really talked to him much.

Harlon and Denz were both asleep when I got up, so I opted to go myself. I park my car in the round driveway and jog up the steps. The door opens and Ezra stands there smiling at me.

"Hey, Ezra," I say as I walk up and lean down to hug her.

"Warren. What are you doing here so early?"

"It's two in the afternoon," I remind her. She laughs, throwing her head back.

"I know, and that's early for you. Where are your brothers?"

"At home sleeping. Is dad around?" I ask her.

"No. He had a meeting. He should be back in a few hours. Your new sister is here, though," she informs me as if I give a shit about her. Then, I decided differently. I should give a shit because she's hot as hell. I could fuck with her. Play a few games with her.

"Where is she?"

"In the pool," she replies before turning and walking away. I head through the house and out the back door, heading straight for the pool. I pull out a cigarette and light it up when I see her. She's in the shallow end, her head tipped back, eyes closed. The more I look at her, the more I notice. Is she wearing a T-shirt in the pool? What kind of person does that?

I stride down the walkway and drop into one of the lounge chairs, just taking her in. I blow smoke circles into the air, but she doesn't even notice me. When she finally lifts her head, she opens her eyes and startles a little.

"Why the fuck are you staring at me?" she snaps her me. I smile at her.

"Why not?"

“Because it’s weird for one.”

“And two?”

“You’re a prick.” That gets a laugh out of me. I shove out my chair and put my cigarette out before pulling my shirt over my head and kicking my shoes off. I strip my pants off and walk to the deep end, diving in. I stay underwater before popping back up when I see her starting to climb out. She’s in shorts, too? What the hell?

“Where are you going?”

“Away. I don’t know how to swim anyway.”

“Don’t want to have some family bonding time?” She sighs before climbing out of the pool and turning to sit on the step.

“What do you want?”

“Is that any way to talk to your brother?” I tease her.

“I don’t have a brother. What do you want, War?”

“For one, why are you wearing clothes in the pool? I’m pretty sure your wardrobe includes a swimsuit.” She narrows her eyes at me but doesn’t answer. I take that for what it is; she isn’t going to. “How’s work?”

“Why are you asking? Why are we sitting here pretending like we’re friends or family?” she asks, sounding pissed at the thought.

“I figured if you’re going to be around, I should get to know you,” I grin at her.

“Well, don’t. There’s nothing to know. I’m only here until I make a little money, and then I’m out,” she says in a hurry.

“Your mom is loaded. Why not just ask her for money?” I ask, but I see the look in her eyes. She’s like us. She doesn’t want to ask her parents for money. She wants to make it herself.

“She isn’t my bank.”

“I get it. I don’t like taking money from my dad either.” I hear his voice, my eyes not leaving her face. Arya looks first, her lips parting slightly when she sees him coming. Oh, now this

is interesting. Dad walks our way in his swim trunks and glasses, but that's it.

"Thought you had a meeting?" I call out.

"I did. I canceled it." I watch as he takes off his glasses and tosses them onto the table before coming closer. Then I turn back to Arya. She's almost salivating at the sight of him. Wonder if she has a daddy kink.

I start to laugh out loud when my dad dives into the pool. Arya drags her eyes to mine and quickly snaps her mouth shut. Dad pops near me and looks between the two of us as he slicks his hair back.

"You two getting along?" he asks.

"Yeah. We were just bonding," I tell him. Arya looks down at her hands in the water, trying not to make eye contact with either of us. It makes me wonder more about her.

"Good. That's good. We have the gala coming up in a few weeks. I was hoping you boys wouldn't mind Arya joining us," he says. Now her head pops up, and her eyes lock with his.

"What? What gala?" she asks, keeping her eyes trained on his.

"Your mom didn't tell you?" She shakes her head. "I'm so sorry, Arya. I assumed she'd tell you about it."

"She doesn't tell me much," she adds but not seeming to give a shit. I wonder if they don't get along that well. Not that I come around here enough to know.

"Well, a few times a year, I host a gala. Mostly for charity, but it's always a good time, and tons of people show up for them. It's good for getting to know people and making connections. Your mom has told me about you, Arya, and the fact you like working for yourself. I've looked at some of the things you've done, and I think you do amazing work," he says. I raise my eyebrow, now intrigued.

"What exactly has she told you?" Arya asks, sounding a little put off her mom would even speak of her. My dad sighs and runs his hand through his hair.

“Actually, she didn’t tell me much. I did more looking into you than anything.”

“What? Why?”

“I wanted to know more about you. About what you do.”

“What do you do?” I ask, cutting into their conversation. Arya looks over at me briefly before looking back at my dad.

“You don’t think that’s weird? Checking up on me?” She’s defensive now.

“No. I don’t. I was interested in what you do, and I looked into it. If I’m being honest, I was going to ask you to do a little work on my club’s websites.”

“You’re a computer geek?” I ask, narrowing my eyes. Arya rolls her eyes before dragging that sexy gaze of hers back to mine.

“I design websites. I set up web stores and things like that. I make sure everything is running the way it should. I wouldn’t call it being a computer geek,” she snaps at me. She’s right. She’s far from a geek.

“That’s interesting.”

“Why?”

“Why are you so defensive? I just said it was interesting.” My dad laughs catching both of our attention.

“You two seem to get along well.”

“Seems that way, doesn’t it?” Arya smarts off before standing from the step she’d been sitting on and climbing out of the pool. I’m pretty sure we’re both watching her ass as she walks over to the tables the furthest away from us and sits down with her towel in hand.

“What’s with her?” I ask, nodding in her direction.

“Her mom says she’s a feisty one.”

“Yeah? Why is that? Most girls have a reason behind that behavior.” Dad shakes his head and glances over at her once more before dragging his gaze back to mine.

“Arya has a different kind of upbringing. Things weren’t always good for her,” he says.

“Meaning?” He shakes his head again.

“I’m not going to explain her past, War. That isn’t my place, but I know how you boys can be, and I’d suggest you tread lightly with that one. She can be a fighter.” Dad dips himself under the water and swims to the other end. My eyes are drawn back to Arya sitting with her head tipped back, a towel over herself.

I’ve never really given a shit about any of the girls his girlfriends have brought home, but this one interests me. And maybe that’s not the best thing for her.

I sit back and relax as my dad swims laps, and she pretends not to be watching us. Our eyes collide, a war waging in hers I can see from here. Then she grabs her glasses and slides them on, blocking my view of those gorgeous blue eyes of hers. I let her have glasses for now.

I swim a few more laps with my dad, turning it into a race until we both laugh. It’s been a long time since we’ve done any of this, and at times, I miss it. My dad isn’t a bad man. We didn’t grow up hating him or anything like that, but we did make our way of life. Instead of having him hand us the world when we were old enough, we found our own ways.

“You boys still won’t consider working with me? I have clubs in Miami and New York that are going to need management,” he says while we both catch our breath. I lean against the edge of the pool and squint into the sun.

“I don’t know. It feels like shit is being handed to us.”

“It’s not really. You’d have to put the work in. I understand you boys want to be your own men and make your own money, but look at it from my point of view for a second. I’ve built these companies and clubs from the ground up. I’ve worked my ass off over the years for this, but I’m getting old, War.”

“You’re not that old,” I laugh.

“I’m getting there, and to be honest, I’d like to travel a little and not just for business. I want to take time for me and my wife and just be free.”

“You really have thought about this, haven’t you?” He looks over at me and nods his head.

“I understand where you boys are coming from. I was just like you once. I did what I had to do to get my life in order, but I want this to stay in the family, War. What’s the point in all of this if there’s no one to take it when I’m gone?” I lower my head, understanding what he’s saying, and it’s not that I haven’t thought about it because I have. But I also like my life the way it is.

“I’ll talk to them.” He nods.

“That’s all I can ask for.”

“So, the gala? We really have to go?”

“Yeah, you need to be there. I want Arya to have a good time. It’s her first one, and if you’re there, then she’ll know someone at least.”

“You got a thing for her?” I decide to ask. Not that I care. He can do what he wants and with who he wants. He glances over at her and smiles, and she quickly turns her head away.

“She’s something to look at, isn’t she?”

“That didn’t answer my question.”

“I don’t have a thing with her, War. Just a little tease here and there,” he replies casually. I grin at him now.

“You haven’t fucked her yet?” Now he laughs. A deep, hearty laugh.

“No, son. I haven’t, but feel free if that’s what you want.”

“Since when? I thought our little sisters were off-limits?” All the others he’s dragged in here have been off-limits, so why not this one?

“That is very true, but I have a feeling Arya is different than they were.”

“How so?”

“Her upbringing, for one, and the fact that she lets it happen.”

“What do you mean?”

“You know what I mean, War. If I, or you, were to go over there and touch her right now, she wouldn’t say no.”

“Are you saying she’s a whore?” I laugh at the question.

“Oh no. She’s far from a whore, but she has something dark in her she wants to set free. You can practically see it in her eyes,” he says. I look over at Arya, still keeping her gaze turned the other way, and think. She did let me and Har finger fuck her in the car.

Then she turns and pulls off her sunglasses, her eyes clashing with mine. And he’s right. There is something darker in that girl. I wonder what it is and if I can be the one to drag it out of her.

I sit back as dad swims, resting my elbows on the edge of the pool, and just take her in. She has to know she’s nice to look at, but she’s also hiding something under that shirt. That’s what all the girls do, right? They hide what they don’t want you to see? Except now she’s caught my attention, and I don’t know if that’s such a good thing.

Dad climbs out of the pool and gives me a quick nod before grabbing his towel and making his way inside. I climb out and grab my towel, but I don’t go inside. Not yet.

Instead, I walk over to her and pull her glasses off her face. She opens her eyes, squinting into the sun before I move to block it.

“What do you want?” she asks, keeping her tone calm and collected.

“I’m curious,” I tell her as I smile.

“About?”

“You.”

“What about me?”

“Why are you wearing a shirt over your swimsuit?” I ask her. She grins at me before biting her bottom lip between her teeth, and damn, would I like to be the one biting that lip until it bleeds.

“Because I want to.”

“Why? Women only do that to hide something.”

“What do you think I’m hiding, War?” Fuck, the way she says my name has my cock getting hard.

“I don’t know, little bird, but I’m going to find out.”

Arya snorts a laugh and holds her hand out, waiting for her glasses.

“Good luck with that,” she tells me. I hold her glasses just out of reach but she doesn’t even make a move to try and reach for them, just holds her hand out to me. Yeah, I fucking like this girl.

Chapter 12

Harlon

Dinner with the family. Those are always great times, even if they are usually with a different woman. Julie, isn't that bad. She's a little stuck up, but she doesn't seem to be around a whole lot.

War, my dad, Julie, and I make small talk while we wait on Denz. Arya sits there, ignoring everyone at the table, and it makes me wonder why. She keeps glancing at her phone with a strange look on her face as if she's trying to figure something out. She's not being rude; she will answer when someone asks her something, but that's the extent of it. Then she's right back to her phone.

"Arya, how is the web store doing?" her mom asks her. Arya nearly rolls her eyes before setting her phone on the table next to her plate.

"It's up and running smoother than before. I don't know what kind of idiot you had running it before, but they messed up a lot. You're pulling in ten percent more already from the changes I've made."

"Impressive," my dad says, smiling at her.

"I know what I'm doing." Damn, this girl is hard as hell. She doesn't take compliments well at all.

"Arya," her mom scolds her. Arya looks to her mom before flashing my dad a smile that could break hearts.

"I'm sorry, Jarrod. That was rude of me."

"No need to be sorry," he says, waving his hand dismissively through the air before refocusing on his meal. I hear the door close, and I know Denz is here. He strolls into the dining room, looking around the table until his eyes stop on Arya. Something strange crosses his features before he pulls his gaze away.

"Denz, glad you could make it this time," dad speaks.

“Me too. It’s been a while since I’ve had a home-cooked meal,” he says, walking around the table and taking his seat in the empty chair next to Arya. She glances over at him briefly before going back to her meal.

“How’s work been?”

“Good. Doing a lot of overtime, but it’s time well spent,” Denz answers, but his gaze keeps drifting back to Arya.

“I’m sorry. You haven’t met Arya yet, have you?” Dad says. Denz shakes his head and turns to face her, but something seems off between the two of them.

“I’m Denz.” He offers his hand to her, and she rolls her eyes before taking it.

“Arya.” Then I see Denz lean in and whisper something in her ear. She jerks away from him, and he smiles back at her. Have they met already?

Dinner is just that, dinner. Dad makes small talk, Julie stays pretty quiet, and Arya stays focused on her phone. Once we all finish, dad says he needs to handle a few things in his office, and Julie excuses herself.

“Let’s get a drink,” I say to the others. The guys stand and start to follow me, but Arya doesn’t.

“Arya, come on.”

“I’m good.”

“Really? It’s a drink,” I tell her. She looks up at me, our eyes locking, when she finally nods her head. I smile at her, and strangely enough, she smiles back as she shoves out of her chair and walks toward me. I let her walk ahead of me and I follow them all into the other room.

“Downstairs?” War asks.

“Yeah, in case Dad comes back out,” Denz adds. Dad doesn’t like the amount that we drink when we do drink, so we opt to go downstairs to do that.

Arya doesn’t bat an eye as she walks down the stairs. She looks around once she’s down there taking it all in.

“It’s like a separate house,” she mumbles.

“Yeah, pretty much. We each have rooms down here, but you’re right; it’s pretty much a house. It has a kitchen, living room, and everything,” I tell her.

“It’s disgusting,” she murmurs under her breath. I choke out a laugh as the other two grab drinks and set them on the table in the living room. I usher Arya in that direction before she takes a seat on one of the couches.

“What do you drink, Arya?” War asks her.

“Whatever you have.”

“You’re not into hard liquor, are you?”

“You think I can’t drink because I’m a girl?” She asks, raising an eyebrow.

“Don’t most girls like fruity drinks?” he asks her.

“I wouldn’t know. I’m not most girls.” Arya leans forward, grabbing a bottle of vodka and uncapping it. I watch her bring it to her lips and take a long pull without even flinching. The guys laugh as she passes it to me. I bring it to my lips and do the same.

“So you can drink. What else can you do?” Denz asks her, his eyes boring into hers. She doesn’t seem uncomfortable around all of us, and that makes me wonder.

“Such as?”

“Anything. What can you do?”

“I can dance. I can strip. I can work a knife when I need to,” she tells him as she licks her lips.

“Are we getting a strip show tonight?”

“You’d like that, wouldn’t you, Denz?” she taunts, standing to her feet. We watch her as she pulls her phone out and turns on some music. Then she starts moving. Her hips sway, and her hands roam over her body. The three of us sit back and watch her do her thing.

After a few minutes, I think we're all fucking hard from just watching her in her clothes. She grabs the closest bottle she can find and brings it to her lips, taking a long, hard pull. Then she's back to dancing in the middle of the room, holding her bottle in her hand. That's when I noticed dad standing by the stairs. I hadn't heard him come down, and apparently, neither did the others. I don't say anything either as he stands there watching Arya dance like the rest of us.

"Are any of you going to join me?" she asks, her eyes flicking between the four of us. She had seen him. I shake my head, my cock too goddamn hard to even move at the moment. Denz shakes his head no, but War? That motherfucker stands up and moves toward her with a darkness in his eyes. He steps up to her, and she spins, giving him her back. They move to the music, his hand on her hip and her with her bottle in hand.

I glance over at Denz as he rubs his hand over his jeans, no doubt trying to relieve a little tension, before shifting my gaze over to dad, who's currently rubbing his hand over his cock.

The two of them keep dancing when War grabs the bottle from her. He spins her around and forces her to her knees. She peers up at him under her lashes, a glossy look in her eyes. War takes a big pull from the bottle before leaning down a little and gripping Arya's chin roughly in his hands. He forces her to open her mouth and then allows the liquor to flow out of his mouth and into hers. Once her mouth is full, she closes her lips and swallows.

"Goddamn," Denz growls next to me. That's exactly what I was thinking. Arya reaches for War's jeans and unbuckles them, pulling his cock free. Then she licks her lips and wraps them around the tip of his cock. War glances at me and then nods toward Arya. He doesn't need to tell me what to do. I already know.

I shove off the couch with Denz not far behind me. I lower myself to the floor next to Arya and slip my hand into the top of her shorts and straight into her panties. She spreads her knees a little, giving me better access. Her mouth works War's cock as my fingers sink inside of her. She moans around him when Denz begins to kiss her neck. War reaches down,

grabbing her hair in his hand and jerking her head back in order to give Denz a little more room to work.

She's so fucking wet right now that my fingers are covered in her. Her head keeps bobbing as I finger fuck her faster and harder. Before I know what's happening Arya is bouncing up and down on my fingers. Moans keep falling from her lips, but the sound is muted by War's cock in her mouth. Denz is still licking his way across her neck and down her shoulder, nipping at her flesh.

Arya keeps bouncing on my fingers and I keep driving them in deeper. That's when I feel her clench, and I nearly come in my fucking jeans.

"Come on, little bird. Fucking make me come," War growls at her. She sucks harder, and I fuck her faster. She's panting and moaning, and then War roars his release as Arya swallows him whole. I keep fucking her pussy, and she keeps riding my hand until she finally tenses. War pulls his cock out of her mouth and runs his fingers along her lip.

"Come on, little bird. Come for my brother. Fuck his fingers like it's a goddamn cock and spill all over them," he tells her in a dark tone. Arya looks up at him, her lips parted when War shoves his fingers into her mouth. Her lips clamp down, sucking them as she comes all over my hand.

"Oh Fuck. Yeah, fuck, Arya. Just like that, keep coming like that," I tell her. Her pussy keeps going, milking my fingers so hard I can't even move them. She has them in a vise-like grip, and there's no way I'm pulling them out until she's done.

She rides the wave of pleasure as she pants and gasps for air. When I finally pull my fingers free, they're coated in her. The guys watch me bring them to my lips and lick them clean.

"Wonder what she tastes like," Denz says. I suck the last one into my mouth and stand up, motioning for him to open his mouth. He does, and I spit the juices into his mouth before turning back to her. She's on her hands and knees now, catching her breath.

“My cock is painfully hard right now,” I whine as I pull it out and begin to stroke it.

“Let her suck it,” War says. Arya turns her head and looks at me, stroking my cock before she turns and crawls the distance toward me. She climbs to her knees and grabs my cock in her hand, bringing it to her lips. Then I see Denz moving in behind her. He reaches down and pulls her shorts down as far as they’ll go before Arya lifts one leg at a time for him to get them off.

Denz removes them and then grips the side of her panties, shredding them from her body. Arya only moans around my cock, and I nearly lose it and unload into her mouth. I hold back as Denz moves in behind her, grabbing his cock in his hand and finding her entrance. He glances at me once, and I nod my head. I get to my knees all the while, Arya keeps my cock in her mouth. Then Denz slams into her without warning, and the suction around my cock falters as she screams.

“That’s a good girl,” Denz tells her as he runs his hand down her spine. Arya arches her back and grabs my cock, bringing it back to her mouth. She starts sucking again, and it feels like fucking heaven.

Each thrust of Denz’s hips sends my cock further down her throat. She gags a few times but doesn’t give up. She keeps going for a while when War joins back in. He sits down next to her and reaches under her body to find her clit. As soon as he touches it, she nearly bites my fucking cock off. Her body jerks and jolts as pleasure spirals through her, and I can’t hold back anymore. I come in her mouth, Arya sucking me down quickly as her orgasm sneaks up on her. War moves faster after I pull out of her mouth. She makes sounds I’ve never heard before but would love to hear again as Denz fucks her senseless.

“Please,” she begs, and the two of them chuckle.

“Please, what, Arya? You need to come? You want to soak my cock like you did his fingers?” Denz asks her.

“Yes! Please, War. Faster!” she cries out. He smirks at her and moves his fingers faster around her clit. I watch her face

contort in the most beautiful way before she releases and comes for them. Screams rip from her throat as Denz grunts and groans behind her, finding his own release. That's when we notice dad coming toward the group naked. We share a glance when he moves in behind Arya. Lifting her from the position she was in, nearly falling to the floor, he sets her on her hands and knees. Then he's thrusting into her. Arya cries out, and dad turns his attention to me.

"You can join in," he says, nodding toward Arya. I move so I'm in front of her, tugging her hair so she looks back up at me. Her eyes are glazed over, and she looks well fucked, but we aren't done with her yet.

Dad keeps pumping into her as I shove two fingers into her mouth. She starts sucking, causing my fucking cock to get hard again. I jerk my fingers out and replace them with my cock, and she gladly accepts it.

The harder dad pounds into her, the deeper she pulls me into her throat. It doesn't take long for me to come again with the way she's sucking me off. Dad growls as he reaches around her and finds her clit. He toys with it just enough to get her to come, and then he releases as I shoot my load down the back of her throat. Dad pulls out of her and leans over her, pressing a kiss to her shoulder before he stands and walks away. I watch him grab his clothes before heading back up the stairs.

When everyone is sated, we drop onto the floor, laying back. Arya rolls, and it happens to be toward me. Her eyes are heavy as she gazes up at me. I smile back.

"You want me to hold you?" She seems to think it over for a long second, a strange look on her face, but then it smooths out, and she nods her head. I hold my arm out to her, and she scoots the rest of the way toward me before resting her head on my chest. It doesn't take long for her to fall asleep in my arms. And what's fucked up about it? I like her being here. I like holding her. I like the fact she knows somewhere deep down I can do this.

We lay here until I hear snoring which startles me awake. I blink rapidly, feeling Arya still lying on my chest, sound

asleep. I slide out from under her before slipping my hands under her head and legs and lifting her off the floor as I stand. She doesn't weigh much at all, but I find it funny how feisty she is for being so small.

I move around the guys where they're still passed out on the floor and head for the steps. I keep going, taking her all the way to her room, being careful not to wake my dad or her mom.

Once I'm in her room, I walk over and gently lay her on the bed. She groans and rolls over while I search for a blanket. When I find one, I move to cover her up and leave, but she stops me.

"Har?" she calls out softly.

"Yeah?"

"Will you stay with me? Just for a minute?" she slurs.

"Yeah. I will." I walk back to the bed and climb in behind her, wrapping my arm around her. She snuggles in closely, and I hold her as close as I can.

"Har?"

"Hmm?"

"You're the nicest one of the three." I chuckle lightly.

"I appreciate that comment."

"Promise you'll always hold me," she grumbles. I don't think she has any clue what she's saying right now, but I give her what she needs.

"I promise, Arya. I'll always hold you."

Chapter 13

Arya

I woke up alone the other morning with memories of what I did. I'm not ashamed. I was hot and horny, and they were there.

In fact, they've been around a lot more lately during the day. I don't mind it. I guess they are starting to grow on me. I've learned more about the three of them over the time they've been here. They share things here and there, and I have to say they aren't as bad as I thought they'd be.

I wrap a towel around my body and one around my hair after my shower and reach for the doorknob. As soon as I step into my room, I see Denz lying on my bed with my thong twirling between his fingers.

"What the hell are you doing in here?" I ask ignoring him and walking to my dresser.

"The gala is tomorrow."

"And?"

"You're still going, right?"

"Yeah, I am. Why? You backing out?"

"Not a chance in hell. I get to see your ass in one of those sexy dresses." I can feel the blush creeping up my cheeks at his words, but I ignore him and go about finding my underwear.

"If you want to see my ass, all you have to do is ask, Denz." I hear the growl that comes from his throat, and I can't say that noise doesn't make me wet because it damn sure does.

"Is that right?" Instead of making the man beg, I reach behind me and slowly pull the towel up until my ass is visible to him. Denz moves quickly, coming up behind me and slapping his hand on my ass. I yelp, but damn, does it feel good.

"Look at my fucking handprint glowing red on your ass," he muses. I peer at him under my lashes over my shoulder as his hand rubs the spot he just hit.

“You like spanking girls?”

“You. I like spanking you.”

“And your brothers?” I ask, wondering what the actual dynamics are between them. They didn’t seem to mind sharing me the other night, and I sure as hell didn’t mind being shared between the four of them.

“What about them?”

“Would they spank me, too?” Denz shakes his head, wrapping his hand around my waist and pulling me into his hard body. His cock is hard, pressing into my back, and the thought of sucking it for him crosses my mind.

“No. Harlon would take care of you. Give you everything you’ve ever wanted, and then hold you close.”

“And War?”

“War would hunt you down and mark your body. He’d make sure everyone knew he’d been there.” I’m nearly breathless when I ask the next question.

“And you?”

“Me. Hmm. I would give in to every little fantasy you had. I would tie you up and force you to come when I wanted you to, and not until then,” he coos in my ear. My body shivers from the idea of any or all of them doing that to me. They’re all so different, but each has something I crave.

“So you would torture me?” I ask as his lips slowly dance over my shoulder.

“If that’s what you want to call it. I call it delayed satisfaction,” he whispers, nipping at my shoulder. Heat coils inside of me when someone knocks on the door. Denz pulls away from me quickly and turns, heading toward the balcony. I glance over my shoulder and see he’s gone. When I walk over and open the door, it’s to see my mom standing there with a dress in her hand.

“Good. You aren’t dressed. I need you to try this on,” she says, stalking past me into the room. I turn around and follow her until she stops.

“Why am I trying that on?”

“It’s for the gala, and I need to make sure it fits you,” she says. I nod my head and let the towel slide off me, keeping my back to the balcony just in case he’s out still out there. Then I step into the dress as mom holds it for me. She slides it up my body, and I slip my arms into the shoulder straps.

“What do you know about Jarrod’s boys?” I ask as she moves behind me to zip the dress up.

“They’re trouble. They don’t listen to reason,” she says as she tugs at the fabric.

“What do you mean?”

“Jarrod owns all these companies, as you know. He has nightclubs and things he’s opening all over the country. He’s always wanted his boys to be a part of it, but they refuse. They’re dead set on making their own money. To be honest, it’s really starting to bother Jarrod. He just wants someone to hand it down to when he’s gone.”

“That makes sense. I mean, I see why they’d want to do their own thing, too, though. They’re kind of like me,” I tell her as she keeps tugging. She hums her response and comes to stand in front of me.

“This fits you perfectly,” she says, her lips pulling into a huge smile.

“Thanks. It’s beautiful.”

“I’m glad you like it. Now take it off so we don’t ruin it,” she says. She moves back behind me and unzips the dress, lowering it for me to step out of. My phone chimes on the dresser, and as soon as she’s done hanging the dress in the closet, she leaves the room. I walk over and grab my phone taking it to the closet with me and checking the message.

Unknown: Someone has been a very bad girl with some very bad boys.

What the hell? Is this one of them? Is this War or Denz fucking with me? Harlon wouldn’t do this. Not a chance in hell, but the other two? But why?

I type out a message and send it back.

Me: Wouldn't you love to know how bad I can be?

When the phone didn't chime right away, I figured I'd won. I set the phone on the shelf and pull my clothes on when it chimes again. I almost don't want to reach for it. I don't want to look. Someone is spying on me, and I don't know who. And Denz wasn't helpful when I tried to buy a damn gun from him. Maybe now they know me better, they'd help me get one.

I pick the phone up and read the new message.

Unknown: Don't play games with me! You won't like the outcome!

A chill runs down my spine, and I quickly delete the messages. I take a calming breath and walk out of my closet to see Denz is back.

"Where the hell did you come from?"

"I've lived here off and on my whole life, Arya. I know how to get in and out undetected." He smiles, and it's the most gorgeous thing I've seen. I lick my lips as he studies my mouth. Then he walks closer, resting his thumb on my bottom lip.

"Your mouth can do some amazing things, can't it?"

"Wouldn't you like to know?"

"Yeah, actually, I would. I've seen what my brother's got, and I think it's about time you show me exactly what you can do." His eyes dance with mischief, and that's something I like to play with.

"Well, one day I might have to show you, Denz, but today isn't that day. I have to go," I tell him, running my hand down his chest and giving his hard cock a squeeze. I turn to walk away from him when he grabs my hair and pulls me back.

"Where the hell do you think you're going? I didn't tell you that you could leave," he growls low in his throat.

"As much as I'd like to stay and play, I do have to go."

"So later then?"

“Are you impatient?” I laugh a little as he presses his hard cock into my backside.

“Does that feel impatient? I want to fuck you so hard, Arya.”

“And you know what? I’d let you. But not right now.” With that, his hand loosens, and I pull away from him. I turn and give him a wink before I head out of my room and down the stairs. As soon as I make it to the bottom, Tracy is there waving at me.

“You ready?” she asks.

“I’m going to warn you ahead of time: I’m not much of a shopper. In fact, I hate it. If I can order it online and have it shipped, that’s exactly what I’m doing,” I tell her truthfully. She laughs and grabs my hand, dragging me along with her.

“Noted. We won’t get too crazy,” she says as we walk to her waiting car. I climb in as she does, and we both settle into our seats when I glance over my shoulder and see Cale.

“I didn’t know you were coming. Why are you being so quiet?”

“I have a few things I need to grab. If you don’t mind me tagging along?”

“Of course not.” I smile at him, glad someone else is coming with us. I don’t know if I can handle Tracy on my own. She seems great and all, but she’s too girly for me. Not that I’m a tomboy or anything, but I don’t get all dressed up the way she does.

Tracy pulls out, and as we drive, I watch the scenery. It isn’t as bad here as I thought it would be. Maybe that’s because I’m living in a house with the four hottest men I’ve ever known.

And maybe I’ll just stick around a little longer than I planned to.

Chapter 14

Denz

I fucking hate suits and ties. I hate these galas, too. They're for the rich to show off their money, but my dad donates it all to charity, and that's the only reason I'm going. That and Arya. Now I've had a taste of her, I want more. I know the guys do, too, and I don't have a fucking problem sharing her with them.

We stand out the front of the building where the gala is being held, waiting for our dad to arrive. War is like me, not liking the suit thing at all as he tugs at his sleeves, but Harlon can pull it off just fine.

"Stop fucking pulling on it," Harlon snaps at him.

"It's so uncomfortable."

"And you look like a fool in it, but that's the attire for tonight," Harlon reminds him. War snorts a laugh at his dig before giving him a shove. We wait, watching as cars pull up until theirs arrives.

The driver comes around, opening the door, and my dad climbs out, offering Julie his hand. She smiles as she climbs out and stands next to him. Julie isn't an ugly woman, and if my dad wasn't married to her, I might fuck her. But since he is, she's off limits. That's just not something I can get down with.

I keep watching as my dad holds his hand out once more, a smaller hand slipping into his. Then he helps Arya from the car. She's fucking breathtaking. I know my brothers are staring as well when she steps out, her long blonde hair hanging in curls over her shoulder wearing a black dress her mom made just for her. You can tell it was made just for her by the way it hugs every one of her damn curves perfectly. I bite my lip as my cock hardens in my slacks. I glance over and see War adjusting himself, too.

My dad offers each of them an arm, and I watch as Arya slowly slides her arm through his. They walk up the stairs as dad smiles at us, looking us over.

“You boys clean up nicely,” he says.

“Not too bad, right?” I ask.

“Not bad at all,” Julie chimes in. Yeah, I’d definitely fuck her.

“Do you mind?” my dad says, holding his arm out Arya is hanging onto. I step over and offer her mine, and I’m almost surprised when she moves to take it. Har steps around quickly to the other side, doing the same. Arya grins at him and slides her arm through his as well. We start to walk inside with War right behind us.

When we step in, Arya glances around but doesn’t say anything or make a face. She isn’t impressed with this shit, and that’s something else I like about her. She doesn’t care about the extravagance of it all.

When people see we’re here, they quickly gather around to talk. I make small talk, but I keep my eyes on her. There are far too many men here eyeing Arya up and down, and I’d hate to have to fuck someone up at this gala.

Arya’s friend Tracy comes and snatches her away as I go on the hunt for a drink with the guys right behind me.

“I hate this shit,” War mumbles as we find the bar. We grab some drinks and take them down before grabbing more.

“There are too many men here looking at her,” Har announces. Glad I wasn’t the only one seeing that.

“You getting jealous, brother?” I ask him with a smile.

“Maybe. I think she’s into us,” he adds.

“I agree. But are we all willing to share her?” War asks the obvious question. We share a glance before I speak first.

“I don’t mind.”

“Me either.”

“So that’s done. She belongs to us now,” War says in a tone screaming finality. I watch as Cale, of all fucking people, asks Arya to dance. She smiles brightly at him and nods her head, taking his extended hand and following him to the dancefloor.

“I don’t fucking like him,” War growls low in his throat. “And not just because he’s touching her.”

“Then why don’t you like him?”

“I don’t know. Just something off about the asshole,” he adds.

We pretty much stay to ourselves, drinking and watching Arya. We talk to a few people until my dad drags us off to speak to a few more. I’m becoming agitated. I don’t know the fuck why, but I am. Maybe it’s all these people or all this fucking wealth that’s getting to me, but it’s something.

We talk with my dad and his friends and force smiles when all I want to do is watch Arya. When he finally lets us pull away, I can’t find her.

“Where the fuck is she?” I ask, glancing around. The guys do the same, but no one sees her anywhere. “Fuck.”

“She’s probably in the bathroom,” Harlon chimes in. Yeah, maybe he’s right. I don’t see Tracy either.

“Let’s go,” War declares, walking toward the bathrooms. I don’t put it past War to barge in there and make sure that’s where she is. I smirk at the thought.

Once we reach the bathrooms, we stand outside the door for a few minutes, waiting for her to come out, but she never does. That’s when we see Tracy coming toward us.

“Hey guys,” she says, waving at us.

“You seen Arya?” War asks quickly.

“No. Not since earlier. She’s probably dancing with Cale.” War nods his head, and Tracy walks into the bathroom. Harlon curses under his breath before we all stalk down the hall toward the event room once more.

“There she is,” Harlon says, pointing toward the exit door, but who the hell is that with her? She wouldn’t just leave the party with anyone. We watch for a long second when we see her stumble.

“Fuck. She isn’t going willingly,” War growls when we take off. Whoever it is with her must sense we’re coming. The man

turns his head and sees us before releasing his hold on Arya and running.

“I got him!” I yell as I round the corner and chase the man. He’s fast as fuck and already has a head start. I can still see him, though, as he jumps the fence behind the building. I rush behind him, doing the same and running as fast as I can. He ducks into the tree line, and that’s when I lose sight of him. Fuck where did he go? Which way did he go?

I stop and listen. The only sound I hear is my rapid breathing; otherwise, there’s silence.

“Fuck!” I roar before turning and heading back to the building. Once I’m inside, I text Har to find out where they are. He tells me they’re in an upstairs bathroom, so that’s where I go, even though the stairs are blocked off.

I take the stairs two at a time and then find the first bathroom. When I step inside everyone looks at me except her. Arya sits on the floor, her head swaying from side to side.

“You get him?” War asks. I shake my head, pissed I didn’t.

“Lost him in the trees,” I tell them.

“She’s drunk,” Harlon reports as I move closer to her. I lean down and grab her chin roughly in my hand, causing her to wince as I jerk her face toward me. Her eyes come to meet mine, and that’s when I know.

“Where’s the drink she had when we saw her?” I ask.

“Right there. She refused to leave it,” Har says, pointing to the glass sitting on the sink. I release her face and walk over, grabbing the glass in my hand. I bring it to my lips and take a small drink before spitting it in the sink.

“She was drugged,” I tell them.

“What? No fucking way,” War snaps.

“That shit is drugged. Someone fucking drugged her,” I scream before slamming my fist into the wall. Over and over, I punch the wall in anger. How did we miss that? How didn’t we see that shit happen?

“Calm the fuck down, Denz!” Warren yells at me. My nostrils flare as I slowly turn around and take deep breaths.

“Who the hell would drug her?” Harlon muses.

“I don’t know. She doesn’t even know anyone here,” I add.

“This makes no sense. You think they got the wrong girl?” War asks more to himself than us. Arya moans, and we turn to look at her, her head bobbing slightly. She lifts her head and looks at me, and I see the ghost of a smile on her lips.

“What are you smiling about, troublemaker,” I ask her. Her drugged and drunken smile only gets bigger.

“You like me like this,” she slurs her words.

“Drugged?” I ask, raising an eyebrow. She attempts to shake her head, but that doesn’t work out so well.

“Horny,” she slurs once more. I can’t help but grin at her. She’s fucked up and has been drugged, but the girl is still turned on.

“I don’t think we’re going to dick you down in this bathroom right now,” I tell her. She pouts, and it’s the cutest thing I’ve ever seen. And I don’t think shit is cute.

“War will,” she adds, trying to turn her head to face him. War flashes his teeth in a snarl. I know he’s as pissed as the rest of us are.

“We need to get her home. Take her out the back. I’m going to tell Dad she drank too much and isn’t feeling well,” Harlon says as he climbs off the floor and stands, wiping his slacks. War stands as Har leaves the bathroom and we help Arya to her feet. She launches herself into War’s arms, wrapping her arms around him while kissing his neck. He jerks his gaze to me and shakes his head, a pissed-off glint in his eye.

Instead of both of us trying to help her, War lifts her in his arms and follows me out of the bathroom as I make sure no one is out there. When it’s clear, I motion for him to follow me. We head down the staircase and out the back door while Arya moans loudly. I glance back at her once more and shake

my head as we head for the SUV. War climbs in with her still in his arms, and that's when she moves.

She turns to straddle his lap, grinding against him with need. She whines to herself and sucks the flesh of his neck into her mouth.

"War," she whines as if she can't take it anymore. He looks at me, and I shrug, not knowing what he should do with her right now. Harlon comes out fairly quickly as Arya works to get War's slacks undone. Finally, War gives up and does it for her, pulling his cock free. He hikes her dress up, and she quickly takes him inside her. She's still not steady, but she's doing a damn good job riding his cock right now.

"You feel so good inside me," she sighs as she takes him deeper. War growls and grabs her hips, shoving her down his length. I can't pull my fucking eyes away from the show she's putting on. Her hands come up and cup her breasts through her dress. War reaches up and slaps them away. He pulls them free of their confines and leans in, biting her nipple so hard she screams.

"Do it again," she begs in her altered state. War grins as he leans in and does the same to the other one. Arya keeps screaming as War sinks his teeth into every single part of her chest and shoulders. She's going to have marks and bruises on her tomorrow, but I highly doubt she's going to care.

They keep fucking until I hear her cry out with her orgasm. We're almost home when War lifts her off his cock and tucks it back in. She falls over on the seat next to him, her legs spread as cum slithers down onto the seat. War groans at the sight.

"Let's get her ass inside," I say when we pull into the driveway. We climb out, and I open the door to pull Arya out. She collapses in my arms, but then she starts to kiss my neck.

"You want to taste my pussy, Denz?" she asks me. Fuck, she has no idea what I want to do to her. I want more than to taste her pussy right now, and I don't even care my brother's cum is running down her thighs.

“As much as I’d love to, you need to rest and drink some water,” I tell her.

“Aww, are you taking care of me?” she slurs as she looks up at me with those glossed-over eyes.

“Yeah. We’re going to take care of you, and you know what?”

“What?”

“That means you’re ours, Arya. You belong to the three of us now.” She seems to think about those words, but in her fucked up state, they mean nothing. She laughs as I carry her inside and up to her room.

Harlon follows along after a few minutes with water for her to drink. We tip it to her lips and make her drink some before laying her on the bed. I roll her onto her stomach and unzip her dress, trying to pull it down, but she protests.

“No! Don’t do that,” she screams as she bunches the dress in her hands and holds it to her body.

“We need to take this off,” War tells her.

“No. I don’t want it off. I’m not ready for you to see,” she says as she starts to drift off.

“See what?” Harlon asks, as confused as the rest of us.

“All of me,” she whispers before falling asleep.

Chapter 15

Warren

I'm in Dad's home gym beating the shit out of the bag, trying to keep my rage under control. After we got Arya in bed, I had to clear my head, and this is where I've been for days. She's clouding my goddamn judgment, and I don't like it. She's making me rethink things in my life, and that pisses me off.

I'm mad.

At her.

For nothing!

I should be mad at myself for getting too close to her. I should have taken a step back and let the other two have her, but I couldn't. There's something about Arya that calls to me like a goddamn drug, and I need my fix. The things I want to do to her though? The way I already marked her flesh. It might be too much for her.

I keep swinging until sweat drips down my temples, and my arms feel weak. Then I stop and let my head drop forward while grabbing the bag with my gloved hands.

"Something you want to talk about?" I lift my head and look over at my Dad as he comes into the room.

"No."

"You seem pissed," he adds.

"I am pissed."

"Why?"

"I don't want to involve you in this," I tell him. He nods his head before sliding his hands into his pockets and coming toward me.

"This about Arya?" He knows. He always knows, and maybe that's what a Dad is supposed to do. Know shit.

"Maybe."

“You’re sharing her, would be my guess.” Now I jerk my eyes to his, and he can see the truth. He nods his head. “I won’t say I didn’t see it coming; I did. Arya is a different breed.”

“Meaning what?”

“Meaning nothing. I honestly don’t know if she’s good for you boys,” he says, pissing me off a little further. How the fuck would he know what’s good for me?

“Why do you say that shit? Like you didn’t fuck her!” I snap at him. He smiles at me and shakes his head.

“Don’t get me wrong, War. I think she’s a good girl in general, but I think there’s something else going on with her. Her mom said she’s been acting strangely lately. And yes, I did fuck her, but that means nothing. Nevertheless, something is going on with her.”

“How so?”

“She doesn’t really want to leave the house for one. Almost as if she’s afraid of something.”

“And you think that something might get us in trouble?” He smiles now and nods his head.

“That’s exactly what I’m worried about. I can’t tell you how to feel, and I don’t know how you feel about her, but I want you to keep your eyes open for any sign of trouble.” I nod my head as I pull away from the bag.

“We’ll be careful,” I tell him.

“War, I know you have different tastes as far as what you like to do. Are you sure she’s going to be okay with that?” I shrug my shoulders. I don’t know if she will be or not. I honestly don’t care either way because we already claimed her as ours.

“I’ll be careful.” He nods and turns, walking toward the door as Denz is coming in. Dad slaps him on the shoulder on his way past.

“Too much tension?” Denz asks, nodding toward the bag.

“I need to kill someone. Make someone bleed,” I admit to him. Denz nods his head.

“I get it. It was ecstasy.”

“What?”

“Harlon got the doc to sneak over and do some bloodwork. That’s what came back.”

“Who the hell would want to give her that?”

“I don’t know, but we need to find out. I didn’t tell you guys about this, but I didn’t think it mattered until now. Before I knew who Ayra was, she came to the neighborhood and was looking to buy a gun.”

“What the hell for?”

“She said protection,” he tells me.

“From who?” He shrugs.

“Wouldn’t tell me that, but now I’m wondering if this is all connected.”

“We need to do some digging.”

“Yeah. It looks that way,” he says. I nod my head and pull my gloves off before heading to the shower. It doesn’t take me long to wash and redress. I head up the stairs and find Harlon in the living room with his laptop out.

“What are you doing?”

“Checking into things. I want more information,” he says without looking at me.

“Me too. How is she?”

“She’s fine today. A little confused about the bite marks on her body,” he says with a smirk.

“Guess I should go explain them, huh?”

“Probably not a bad idea,” he adds. I turn and head up to her room, and when I open the door, I see her sitting on the balcony with her laptop opened up. She looks to be lost in her work. She doesn’t even look up when I come to stand next to her.

“You look good with my marks,” I declare, scaring the shit out of her. She jolts in her seat and raises her hand to her chest.

“Did you have to scare the hell out of me?” she snaps at me.

“Maybe I like it when you’re scared,” I tell her.

“So you did this to me?” she asks, pulling the front of her shirt down so I can see the bruises I left on her. I bite my bottom lip because fuck, do they look good there.

“I don’t think you remember when you were riding my cock like a little whore.” She raises her eyebrows at me and then stands from her chair. She walks over, coming to a stop right in front of me.

“You bit me.”

“You liked it,” I remind her.

“I’ve never had anyone bite me.”

“Glad I was your first,” I say. She looks up at me, a strange look in her eyes.

“I have bruises, War! Not one, but multiple. I can’t even wear my regular shirts unless I want my mom to see them!” She snaps this time. I wink at her, but that only serves to piss her off more. She pulls her fist back and starts to swing but I catch it easily in my hand.

“Ugh.”

“What?”

“What kind of sick fuck bites people to the point of leaving marks?” she asks while I still hold her fist in my hand.

“What kind of sick little bird likes it?” I ask in return.

“I was drugged, in case you don’t remember.” Anger skates through me, pissing me off further. She must see my eyes darken because she pulls her hand away from me and takes a step back.

“Oh, I remember, little bird, and when I find the motherfucker who drugged you, he’s going to wish for a quick death, but that’s not what he’s going to get.”

“What? What do you mean?”

“I mean, when I find him, I’m going to kill him.” Her lips part, and a gasp escapes her. I don’t move. I just stare at her. She seems to be thinking this over, and she isn’t sure what to say.

“You aren’t going to kill anyone,” she gives a half-hearted laugh.

“You don’t think so?”

“No. You’re not a killer, War.” Now I laugh. I step closer to her, and she takes a step back until she hits the rail, and there’s nowhere else for her to go. I crowd her space, resting each of my hands on either side of her, caging her in. She looks up at me but isn’t sure what to say.

“What if I told you that I’ve killed before?” Now, her eyes widen.

“No. You haven’t.” I chuckle and lean down closer.

“Oh yes, little bird, I have. And do you know what? I fucking liked it,” I whisper in her ear before nipping the lobe. Arya sucks in a breath and reaches up, trying to push me away, but I don’t move.

“Get away from me.”

“I can’t do that.”

“Yes, you can. Just move, War.”

“Why would I want to do that? I’m quite happy right where I’m at,” I tell her. She looks up at me, fear in her gaze.

“You’re not lying to me, are you?” I give her an evil grin and shake my head. “Are you going to hurt me?”

“Haven’t I already?” I ask, reaching up and running my fingers over the bruises on her chest.

“Are you going to hurt me again?” she asks.

“That’s my plan.”

“I want no part of your plan. Get the hell away from me, War!” She yells this time. I chuckle darkly and shake my head before raising the hand that lingers on her chest and wrapping

it around her throat. Her eyes widen as she looks me in the eye.

“Have you thought maybe you’d like what I have to offer? Maybe you’d enjoy it?”

“Being bruised?”

“Not bruised, little bird. Marked. There’s a difference.”

“There’s no difference, War.”

“Yeah, there is. Those marks are mine. That means every time another man, aside from my brothers, looks at you, comes near you, or even thinks about touching you, he is going to see them and know I was there.” Her lips part, but no words form.

“You don’t care about sharing me with your brothers?” she asks, sounding a little confused.

“No. We’re family. And each of us can give you something different, Arya.”

“But you want to hurt me?” she asks, even as I tighten my grip around her neck.

“So fucking bad,” I whisper. Arya isn’t sure what to say. She doesn’t know what she likes because she hasn’t been with a guy like me before. But I can give her pleasure; she just has to get through the pain first.

“What if I say no?”

“Will you say no, little bird?” I ask, eyeing her.

“I ... I don’t know.”

“Exactly my point. You don’t know what you like until you’ve experienced it, Arya. And I plan on exploring all sorts of things with you.” I can feel the pulse in her neck thumping against my fingers rapidly. She can stand here and deny it all she wants, but she wants to see what I have to offer. She wants to know what I want to do to her. Neither of us moves, standing in a stare-down that neither of us is willing to break.

“And the others? They don’t mind sharing me?”

“No. In fact, we already claimed you.”

“What the hell does that mean?”

“That means you’re ours now, Arya. It means if another man puts his hands anywhere near you, I will cut them off and make you watch. Do you understand?” She nods her head slowly, but I don’t think she fully understands I would actually do it.

“You’re crazy.”

“You think I don’t know that?” I ask her. I pull my hand away from her, and she dips under my arm and goes around me. She doesn’t run like I thought she would but instead goes back to her laptop and sits down. I move around the table and sit across from her.

“Are you going to watch me work?”

“I like to look at beautiful things, so yes, I am.”

“It’s a little weird while I’m working, War.”

“And I don’t care, Arya. Now that you belong to the three of us, I can do whatever the hell I want to do. This isn’t the first time I’ve watched you,” I remind her.

“What does that mean?” I ignore her question, not willing to tell her I’ve come into her room more than one night to sit and watch her sleep. It’s kind of my thing now when I’m here.

“You’re ours. That’s all you need to know.”

“Did any of you three think to ask what I wanted?” she asks, staring me in the eye.

“Does it matter?”

“Yeah, it matters!”

“Okay. Go ahead and tell me you don’t want us, and I’ll let the guys know,” I challenge her. She looks down at her laptop before looking back at me.

“That’s all I have to do?” I throw my hands up and rest them behind my neck as I nod my head.

“That’s it. Say the words.” She chews her bottom lip for a long minute while I wait. I almost think she’s going to say it, but

then she releases her lip, looks back down at her laptop, and gets back to work.

I knew she fucking wanted us.

Chapter 16

Harlon

I'm coming up blank with my search for anything. There's nothing there. Except one thing. Arya's dad. He's in prison for the attempted murder of Arya. Now I know what secrets she hides under her shirt. I was able to find information about his arrest and conviction, but I don't know if I should share that with the guys just yet.

I want to know more. I need more. None of this is making any kind of sense to me, and that pisses me off. I'm the one who finds things, the one who gets what we need, but not this time.

"Yo, Har. We're swimming," I hear Denz holler at me. I close my computer, rubbing my eyes. Maybe I should give this a break for a while. I set the laptop off to the side and stand, heading out the back door. I see the guys stripping down to their shorts before Denz rushes toward Arya. At first, I laugh until I hear Warren yell.

"She can't swim!" It's too late now, though. They're already in the water. I run down the steps and toward the pool just as War dives in. I can see Arya, her arms moving and flailing around. Denz comes up for air on the other end just as War gets to Arya.

"She can't swim, dumbass," I yell at him. His eyes move quickly to where War is pulling her out of the water. He holds her up as she coughs and sputters, swimming with her to the shallow end where she can put her feet down. Denz is there in seconds, grabbing her face in his hands, a look of pure panic in his eyes.

"I didn't ... Fuck, Arya. I didn't know," he tells her. She reaches up and wipes the hair from her face, smoothing it back after she catches her breath.

"I didn't tell you. It's not your fault," she says. War turns an angry gaze toward Denz as I strip out of my clothes and climb in with my shorts on. War's about to move toward Denz when I step in between them.

“All’s good, right?” I ask, looking between them. War flashes me a nasty glare before nodding his head.

“We’re good,” Arya says as she moves toward the steps. She spins around and sits on the middle step, the water nearly coming to her chin.

“Why have you never learned to swim?” I ask her.

“I don’t know. It never appealed to me. Don’t get me wrong, I love to sit in the pool and relax, but I don’t care to swim.”

“That’s what a pool is for. Swimming,” Denz adds.

“Yeah, maybe one day I’ll learn.” I watch Arya as she leans her head back and closes her eyes, letting the sun hit her face. Once the other two go off and swim, fucking around, I move to the step next to her.

“I wanted to talk to you about something,” I tell her. Arya lifts her head and looks over at me.

“What is it?”

“I’ve been doing a lot of research trying to figure out who might have drugged you, and I came across something.”

“What did you come across?” she asks, interested now. I glance down at the two of them swimming and dunking each other before looking back to Arya.

“I know your dad tried to kill you.” She sucks in a breath and starts to stand, but I reach over and pull her back down next to me.

“Let me go.”

“No. I’m not going to do that.”

“Why? I don’t want to be here,” she says, nearly sounding like she wants to cry.

“I didn’t tell them yet, Arya. And I didn’t plan on it.” She looks at me in confusion for a long second before dragging her gaze down to them.

“It was a long time ago.”

“I know, and we don’t have to talk about it. Is that why you keep yourself covered up?” I ask her. I know I’m pushing her, and maybe that’s what she needs.

“Partly.”

“And the other part?” Now, she pulls her face back to meet mine. I can see tears in her big blue eyes as she nods toward the pool house. She stands and climbs out, and I follow her. Once we’re inside, she locks the door, making sure no one else gets in.

“I’ve never shown anyone this,” she says softly. “And I don’t want them to know yet, Har.”

“That’s fair enough, but they’re going to find out,” I remind her.

“I know, and I’ll tell them. Just not right now.” I nod my head and watch her as she slowly pulls her shirt over her head, dropping it to the floor. That’s when I see them. Scars. Not just one but tons. I start to reach for her, but then I stop.

“These were where he stabbed me,” she explains, touching six of them. “These were from surgeries.”

“Surgeries? You had more than one?”

“I had three. He ... uh ... he did a lot of damage,” she says, choking on a sob.

“And the others?” Now, her eyes come to meet mine, and I can see the pain in them. She cuts herself. That’s her way of coping.

“Those are mine,” she says in almost a whisper. My heart fucking breaks for her. I don’t even know what the fuck to say to her right now. I step closer, and she looks up at me, tears building in her eyes, but she quickly blinks them back.

“You know it’s okay to cry,” I tell her. She sniffles but shakes her head.

“I ... I don’t want to cry over it. I cried so much back then, and I kept telling myself there was no reason for it.”

“There was a reason. There still is, Arya.”

“No,” she says, shaking her head. “Back then, I’d cry and ask myself why he’d do it. Why did he hate me so much that he wanted me dead? I was ten, Harlon. What ten-year-old deserved that?” She’s about to break, and I can see it all happening right in front of me.

“Arya, cry. Cry, baby.” She shakes her head, holding back tears that I know she needs to cry.

“I can’t!” She screams.

“Arya, you can’t hold this in. You’ve held it in for so long, and it’s killing you,” I tell her. A sob rips from her throat, and I slowly step closer to her. When I reach for her, she loses it completely. The saddest sounds I’ve ever heard fall from her lips as she grabs onto me and holds me tightly. She cries. And not just any cry. This is heart-shattering sobs. Her body shakes as I keep her tucked into my chest.

And we stay like this. We stay just like this until she can’t cry anymore. When the shaking subsides, she pulls back and reaches up, resting her hand on my cheek.

“Thank you.”

“You don’t need to thank me. You needed to get it out,” I tell her. She nods her head before her hand slips down and into my trunks. She grabs my cock in her hand and slowly begins to stroke it.

“This isn’t the time, Arya.”

“Are you going to deny me?” she sniffles, wiping her cheek with her free hand. I let her yank my shorts down my legs and play with my cock. It feels so fucking good having her hand wrapped around me the way it is. I groan, and when I can’t take anymore, I reach for her shorts and yank them down her legs. I drop to my knees in front of her and spread her pussy lips. Then I lean in and lick her from back to front. Arya gasps, her hands finding their way into my hair. I flick my tongue over her clit and watch as her knees shake.

When I can’t wait any longer, I pull her down with me. I sit on the floor, pulling her into my lap. She raises up, and I hold my cock while she slides down the length. I groan at the feeling of

having her wrapped around me. Arya pants as she takes me all the way in. Then, slowly, she begins to ride me. She rises and falls down my cock, and I can't think straight. My hands move to her hips, gently holding her as she takes what she needs from me. Up and down. Over and over. My mind is reeling as Arya uses me.

"Fuck, baby. You feel so fucking good wrapped around my cock. You like riding my cock?" I ask her breathlessly.

"Yes!" she cries out as she moves faster and harder. Her body bounces up and down, and I can feel that tingle running along my spine.

"Baby, you're going to make me come faster than I planned on," I admit to her. She moans and keeps moving as if that's exactly what she wants from me. She rides me harder until I feel her pussy clench around me, and that's when I let go. I fucking come harder, growling her name.

"Oh God," she cries out as her orgasm washes over her. She leans forward and rests her head on my shoulder as I run my fingers along her spine. Her breath tickles my neck as she breathes heavily.

"I don't think I'll ever get enough of you," I tell her. She laughs a little before pulling back and standing.

"Think I should clean up, or should I wear your cum out there?" She winks at me, nodding toward the door.

"Fuck, Arya. You think I'm not going to get hard as hell knowing my cum is leaking into your bottoms?"

"That's the point, isn't it?" She smiles at me, and it takes my breath away. I watch her redress as I stand and pull my shorts back up. Then she walks over and wraps her hand around mine, intertwining our fingers.

"You ready?" I ask her. She nods her head, and I unlock the door, holding it open while she walks out, but she doesn't let go of my hand. She tugs me along with her as the guys look up and see us. Denz smirks but War just looks at us.

"Thank you for letting me do that. I think you're right. I was holding it in for so long I didn't know how to deal with it," she

tells me. I pull her around in front of me, gripping her face in my hands.

“You should know by now I’m a good listener. If you ever want to talk about it, I’m here.” She nods her head before wrapping her arms around my waist and hugging me. Everything in the goddamn world feels right with her in my arms.

When she finally pulls away, we walk back over to the stairs and climb back into the pool. The other two swim toward us.

“Hey, Arya. What do you think about spending the night with us at my mom’s place?” My eyes widen as I look at Denz. I can’t believe he even asked her that. The area is shit, but we’re used to it. She isn’t. Not like she wouldn’t be protected because she wouldn’t leave our sight, but it still surprises me.

“Sure. I don’t mind,” she says with a shrug.

“Sasha has been dying to have you over,” Denz tells her.

“She seemed really nice and mouthy. We should be good friends,” she laughs.

“She is mouthy as hell.”

“Are you sure your mom won’t mind?” she asks. The three of us share a look before Denz licks his lips.

“The thing is, my mom, she’s a drunk. There’s no use in going around it. It is what it is, and she is what she is. She’s always been a big drinker, and it’s slowly killing her.”

“I’m sorry, Denz.”

“Don’t be. She did this to herself. The only thing I’m worried about is Sasha and what will happen to her after she does die.” Arya slowly moves toward him, wrapping her arms around his neck.

“I’m so sorry. Sasha is going to be okay,” she whispers to him, although we all heard it.

I don’t know how this girl can go from hot to cold in a matter of minutes or how she can smart off and be a little shit to this.

But I'm finding I like all fucking sides of her. And the guys do, too. I can see it in their eyes. I can feel it.

This girl is will either good for us, or she's going to be our downfall.

Chapter 17

Arya

There isn't much to Denz's house. It's a small three-bedroom house in bad shape. It's such a difference from Jarrod's house.

Nevertheless, it's theirs. And I can appreciate that.

The guys are all talking and messing around while I stand here, just taking in the area. I was only here once before when Harlon and War brought me to help with Sasha.

I walk over and run my fingers along the Mustang Denz drove me home that night.

"You like that car?" War asks.

"It's not bad. I'm not really a car kind of girl."

"Yeah, I get that. It's Denz's baby, though. Worked his ass off to get that car," he adds, leaning against the side of it, staring at me.

"What?" I ask when I can't take any more staring, and when I look up at him, I see the darkness in his eyes.

"Just thinking."

"About what?"

"What I want to do to you when I get you alone." I swallow hard, not sure I want to know. War has made it clear he wants to hurt me in some way, and I'm not sure what way that might be.

"And when is that?" I ask, trying to keep my breathing under control. These three set off some kind of nerves in me that I didn't know were there.

"Take a walk with me," he demands. He doesn't ask, and he sure as hell doesn't wait. He starts walking, tossing Denz the football they were throwing back and forth. I glance over at Denz and Har, but they just nod their head to follow him.

I'm not sure if I should, but slowly, I do. I follow him and slowly catch up to him. He slows his steps to wait on me.

“My mom lives about four blocks over,” he says, nodding in that direction.

“All of your parents live nearby?”

“Not Harlon’s mom. She lives about thirty minutes from here.”

“War?”

“Hmm?”

“When was the last time you saw your mom?” I can feel and hear it in his tone. He doesn’t talk to her, and I’m not sure why, but now I’m curious.

“I snuck in about a week ago.”

“What do you mean you snuck in?”

“Harlon’s mom didn’t want kids, so Har was basically a loner. My mom? She wanted a kid just for the money, and when that didn’t come in, she took it out on me.”

“Your dad didn’t give her money for you?” I find that hard to believe. War turns to look down at me, and a sick, evil grin tugs across his face.

“Oh, he sent money. She just didn’t get it,” he says.

“What do you mean?”

“I took it. I shredded every last fucking check he sent that bitch.”

“Why would you do that?”

“Denz’s mom is a drunk, and mine’s a junkie. Back then, I thought I was doing her a favor, but it turns out I was only hurting myself. When she couldn’t get the money for drugs, she’d beat the shit out of me. The scars, the round ones?” he says, nodding toward his arm. I’ve seen them and felt them, but I’ve never commented on them. “She would put her cigarettes out on me.”

“Jesus, War.”

“Don’t give me the pity shit either, Arya. I don’t want it. I never gave a shit what she did to me.”

“But you sneak back in now?”

“I don’t want her to see me. There’s a part of me that just wants to see if she’s still alive I guess.” I don’t know what to say to that.

“I ...”

“I want her dead, Arya.” I gasp at his words. That’s not something I thought I would hear come from his mouth. War stops walking and turns to face me.

“Do you know how many times I sat over here with my gun in my hand? How many times I’ve thought about shoving a knife through her chest?” Jesus, this man is darker than I thought. I don’t say anything because, frankly, what the hell do you say to that? I just stand here, stunned by what he’s just told me, and stare at him. When War has had enough, he grabs my hand and tugs me along back the way we came.

“Are these abandoned?” I ask, changing the subject and nodding toward the houses lining the street.

“Yeah, most of them are. This whole fucking neighborhood should be condemned. But that house right there,” he says, nodding toward the one on the corner. “I’ve killed in there. Hell, the body might still be in there.” He’s so fucking casual about saying it that I don’t know how to respond. And when he tugs me toward the decaying house, I freak out a little.

“What are you doing?”

“We’re going in,” he says.

“No, the fuck I’m not.”

“Are you scared, little bird?” he asks, looking me in the eye. Am I scared? Fuck, yes, I am. He admitted to killing someone in this house and that the body may still be inside, and now he wants to take me in there, too. Fuck that shit. I jerk my arm, trying to get away from him, but he doesn’t let go. In fact, he keeps pulling, forcing my feet to move. I think about screaming, but what fucking good would that do me in this neighborhood?

“War. Please don’t.”

“Here’s the thing, little bird. We want you. And we plan on keeping you, right? But in order for you to understand me, you need to understand the dark parts of me.” My heart is hammering in my chest as he drags me unwillingly into the house. As soon as we step inside, I bend over and heave. The smell is horrible, unlike anything I’ve ever smelled before, yet War keeps his grip on me, so I can’t run.

“I can’t breathe,” I tell him as I cover my face with my free hand.

“That, little bird, is the smell of death. Once you smell it, you’ll never forget it.”

“War, please.”

“You see, the asshole who used to lie right there,” he says, pointing to what looks like rotten meat on the floor. “He was raping a girl. She was so scared when we walked in and found it happening.” Oh my God. He isn’t lying. He killed that man. I keep my hand planted firmly over my nose and mouth, trying not to breathe in the scent, but it isn’t working. I gag as War laughs.

“Don’t have the stomach for it?” he asks, looking down at me. I shake my head rapidly. “You’ll learn, Arya.”

“I don’t want to learn. I want to get out of here,” I mumble behind my hand. A normal person would try to run, but I can’t do that because he has a bruising grip on my wrist. Nevertheless, I tug at it and try.

“He wasn’t my first kill,” he adds, looking back at the rotten body on the floor. “No. He won’t be my last either.” Now, I really start to struggle. I pull my hand from my face and try to pry his fingers off me. I jerk and pull to no avail as War just laughs. In seconds, he lifts me and slams me against the wall. My head thumps off it as I narrow my eyes at him.

“The thing is, if you ever try to leave us, little bird, you might end up like him,” he says, nodding toward the spot on the floor. I don’t know if that’s fear I feel at his threat or what it is, but I want no part of it.

“You’re insane,” I hiss at him.

“I might be. I might not. Who the hell are you to say?” he asks me, lowering his lips too close to me. I swallow the urge to vomit from the smell when he moves his head slightly and leans closer to my neck. Instead of letting him kiss me like I think he plans on doing, I turn my head and sink my teeth into his neck until I taste blood. War roars, but he lets go of me. Immediately, I start for the door, but he grins and blocks it. I can see the blood dripping down his neck as I plan my next move.

I turn and run toward the stairs. I’m blonde; it’s our signature move, right? I start up the steps and stumble, crashing to my knees. I can hear War right behind me as I start climbing on my hands and knees. I don’t make it far when I feel his hands on me. He jerks me down, my chest smashing into the stairs and knocking the air from my lungs. I cough and try to suck oxygen back in as he tears my shorts off my body. I start to scream, and he laughs darkly.

“Scream, little bird. I want to hear you sing,” he growls as he tears my thong in half. Before I can say a word or make a move, he’s burying himself inside me. His piercings hit every angle as I scream once again. I try to push up on my hands, the edge of the steps digging into my ribs, but there’s no use. War isn’t letting up, either.

He grabs a handful of my hair and jerks my head back until I cry out for him. The man pounds into me with no letting up, and I can’t say I don’t like it. The pain I feel morphs into pleasure, and the harder he goes, the more I want. I’m not one of those girls who says I should be ashamed of liking it the way I do because I’m not. I love every single thing War is doing to me right now.

“Oh my God,” I cry out when he rotates his hips.

“Tell me, little bird. Tell me you’re not leaving us,” he roars behind me. He keeps plunging, thrusting, getting deeper with each one. Tears prickle the backs of my eyes from the intensity of War.

“Say it!” he screams louder.

“I’m ... I’m not leaving you!” I yell back at him as he fucks me into the steps. I can feel the edge of the steps digging into my skin as he fucks me harder and harder, but I can’t seem to get enough.

“War!” I call out his name, and I don’t even know why. Do I want him to stop? Do I want him to keep going? My head is spinning as lust dances inside me.

“Shut the fuck up and take my cock like a good little bird,” he growls. His free hand that isn’t tangled in my hair clamps down on my hip so hard I know I’m going to have bruises later. Then I feel him lean forward, and his teeth sink into my shoulder, causing me to scream even louder this time. Even through my shirt, I can feel the goddamn burn.

My body is wound so fucking tight I feel like I’m about to explode. A few more thrusts of his powerful hips, and that’s all I can take. I come hard, I come fast, and I come in a blur of haze. My body is still strung so tight as my orgasm rips through me. I can feel War pulsing inside of me as he grunts behind me. My breathing is rapid as I try to calm my racing heart. War pulls out of me, releasing my hair at the same time, and my head flops forward onto the step in front of me. After a few minutes, I stand and grab my shorts, pulling them back on as War fixes himself.

“Can we go now?”

“Why? You don’t like it here?”

“The smell is killing me, War.”

“And the cock?” he asks, with cockiness.

“I’m not going to dignify that with an answer,” I tell him. He releases a laugh before coming closer to me.

“You’re going to be wearing my marks again,” he reminds me, running his fingers over my shoulder where he bit. I don’t answer him; I just walk back down the steps and out the front door with him behind me. As soon as we step outside, I suck the clean air into my lungs.

War begins walking back down the street as I follow behind him when we both hear someone.

“Fucking all of them now?” Ugh, I’ve heard that voice before. War and I both turn to see Rachel standing there with her girl gang.

“What do you want?” I ask her, not in the mood to deal with her shit right now.

“Simple question. Are you fucking them all?” I glance over at War, but he keeps his gaze trained on Rachel.

“And what if I am?”

“I knew you were a whore,” she snarls. War growls low in his throat, the sound vibrating out of him.

“Are you jealous? You’re not getting shit, and I am?”

“You better watch your back,” she says as her girls laugh.

“If you come near me, I will fuck you up,” I tell her. She just laughs and takes a step toward me. That’s when I pull back and swing. I crack her right in the jaw, causing her to stumble back, but when she starts to come toward me, her girls behind her, War steps in between us.

“I don’t need your help!” I roar at him. He looks over his shoulder at me and grins before turning back to them.

“I think you know how this goes, Rachel. You lay a fucking hand on our girl, and I’ll end you.”

Chapter 18

Denz

I look up as Arya storms through the door looking highly pissed off, with War grinning behind her.

“I didn’t need your goddamn help, War. You need to stay out of my business!” she snaps at him. I glance over at Sasha and Har, but they’re both too into what’s happening right now.

“I never said you needed my help.”

“Then why would you get in the middle of it?”

“There were seven of them, little bird. One of you.”

“And? You think I can’t handle myself?” she snaps back at him.

“I didn’t say that, but you were outnumbered,” he tells her, keeping himself calm. Arya stares him down before turning on her heel and marching toward the couch where I sit. She drops down next to me, and I throw my arm around her shoulder, pulling her into my side.

“What happened?”

“Your girlfriend happened,” she snaps at me, causing me to chuckle. Rachel is not my girlfriend, no matter how much she wants to be.

“She come at you?”

“She tried to but Arya punched her in the face,” War chimes in. Arya lifts her hand and flips him off before relaxing back into me.

“Good for you. She needs her ass beat.”

“I say we jump her, Arya,” Sasha chimes in now.

“I agree,” Arya says.

“We’re not jumping anyone,” Harlon tells them both.

“You don’t own us, Harlon. We can do what we want,” Sasha tells him. He laughs and grabs her, pulling her to his side.

“You’ve lost your mind.”

“Have not. I’m so sick of Rachel and her little bitches. I debated throwing a mazel tov cocktail through her damn window and watching her burn.” I glance over at my sister and just stare at her till she looks at me and says, “What?”

“Stop hanging out with War,” I tell her. The two of them laugh, but I don’t. I have enough trouble with Sasha as it is.

“What are we doing tonight anyway? This is fucking boring,” Sasha smarts off.

“Go to bed,” War tells her. She flips him off, grabs the controller, turns the TV on, and then searches all the channels. I lean down and whisper in Arya’s ear, “You okay?” She drags her eyes up to meet mine and nods, but I can tell something is off with her. I just don’t know what it is. Instead of asking her again, I shove off the couch and motion for War and Har to follow me outside.

We step out, and I close the door behind us.

“What’s wrong?” Harlon asks first.

“Do you think Arya is acting a little off?” War snickers.

“That’s probably my fault,” he says. “I took her into the abandoned house.”

“Why?”

“Why the fuck not?” Har shakes his head, running his hand through his hair.

“I don’t think that’s it. She’s been acting a little off lately.”

“I don’t know. I haven’t really paid much attention, I guess,” Harlon adds.

“Maybe it’s just me. I’m still on edge about the whole drugging thing.”

“We all are, but we got her covered,” War says. I nod my head. He’s right. We’ve been spending more time with her lately and have been hanging around at my dad’s too.

“Maybe I’m just paranoid,” I mumble.

“You’re good, Denz. Just worried about her,” Harlon adds. He’s right. I am worried about her. The thing is, I didn’t think I’d give a shit about anyone the way I do Arya. Sure, I’ve been with other girls, but none like her. And none I actually liked enough to share with my brothers.

“What do you want to do then?” War asks me.

“Nothing. Let’s just go in and watch the movie. Sasha is probably having a shit fit by now.” The guys nod, and we all head back inside. Sasha is lying on the floor, her face plastered to the screen. War joins her because she’s watching an action movie, and Harlon goes back to his chair. Arya is laid out on the couch, her eyes glued to the screen when I walk over and lift her legs, dropping down to sit. I rest her legs over mine, and I get a quick smile before she goes back to the movie.

I try to watch it. I truly do, but the way Arya keeps jerking and clenching her legs at the bad parts has my cock getting hard. I know I can’t fuck her here and now, not with Sasha being here. So I slide my hand up her leg. Without needing to be told, Arya spreads her legs open just enough to fit my hand under her shorts. She isn’t wearing panties, and I can only assume that was War’s doing.

Arya looks over at me, but I shake my head and nod toward the TV, bringing one finger to my lips, silently telling her to be quiet. She turns her head back to the TV as I slip my finger inside her. Slowly, I begin to work it in and out of her while she bites her bottom lip between her teeth but keeps her eyes on the screen.

She’s so fucking wet but also full of War’s cum, and I couldn’t give a shit that she is. I caress her insides, finding the spot that nearly has her leap off the couch, but she quickly settles back in. I keep moving my fingers in and out, dragging the tips across her sensitive spots. Arya’s pussy clenches around my fingers, and I have to bite back a groan.

I make sure my fingers are nice and wet before I slide them out of her and find her clit. As soon as I touch the little swollen nub, she jerks. I don’t stop. I work her clit with my

fingers as she slowly rocks against my hand. The faster I go, the closer she gets, and I'm wondering how quiet she can be.

I look over at her, her eyes on the TV, her lip still between her teeth, her nostrils flared, and I smirk to myself. She's about to come for me. A few more rough strokes, and she's done. I quickly shove my fingers back inside of her just to feel the way her pussy spasms with her orgasm. I wish it were my cock inside her, but for now, this will do.

I keep rubbing softly at her insides, dragging out her orgasm. When I'm finally done, I slide them out and lean over, shoving my fingers into her mouth. I watch her hooded eyes as she licks them clean before glancing at me. Fuck, this girl is trouble, and I'm all here for it.

I caress her leg as we go back to the movie. After a while, the girls fall asleep. That's when I hear a noise. No, we all hear it. The guys turn their heads, and we all share a look. It's coming from the back of the house. War is on his feet as I slide out from under Arya's legs. We all move toward the back of the house, creeping slowly.

War grabs a gun from the cabinet while I go for a knife along with Har. We creep closer to the back doors, but I don't hear it now. We pause and listen, but there's nothing. That is until Sasha screams. The three of us take off back through the house, where Sasha points to the door, whoever it was bolted back out the door.

The three of us run like hell when we spot the asshole. War leaps and tackles him to the ground. Me and Harlon shove the knives into our back pockets as War lifts the idiot off the ground. Concrete sticks to his forehead as blood blooms on his cheek.

"What the fuck were doing in my house?" I roar before punching the asshole in the face. His head snaps to the side before he looks up at me.

"Who the fuck are you?" Harlon asks, his eyes darkening as he looks at the guy. Harlon is usually the lesser of the evils between the three of us, but when you fuck with family, he does what he needs to do.

The guy smirks and Har throws a punch. His head snaps once more before Harlon kicks him in the ribs. The guy screams and howls in pain as neighbors start to come out.

“They wanted her, okay? I was supposed to get her!” He yells.

“Who? Sasha?”

“No! The other one!” What the fuck? So, someone is after Arya? Who the hell in their right mind would send them to my house? With all three of us in there?

We beat the shit out of the guy when he won't tell us who. By now, there's a crowd around us watching it all unfold. Not that anyone is going to say shit, they won't. War pulls his gun and presses it to the man's head as he begs and pleads with him. I pull my knife out and that's when I hear Arya's cry. All three of our heads snap in that direction. She isn't moving, just standing there staring at the blade.

“I got her,” Harlon says, moving toward her quickly. He says something to her, which seems to calm her a little, before leading her back to the house. I turn back to the asshole in front of us.

“Stand him up,” I tell War. He shoves his gun back into his jeans and drags the asshole to his feet. I twirl the knife between my fingers before plunging it into his stomach. He cries out in pain, but that doesn't stop me. I do it twice more before grabbing his face in my hand and pressing the tip to his eye.

“You run back, and you tell whoever you're working for if any of you come near Arya again, you're all dead. Do you understand me?” My voice is low, deadly, just like War's stare. The idiot nods his head before War throws him to the ground. I step back as he holds his stomach and manages to get to his feet. He's doing his best to run as all my neighbors laugh at him. They don't question us; they never would. They don't want to be on the receiving end of our madness.

I wipe the blood on the corner of my shirt as we walk back into the house. I don't see Harlon or Arya.

“They’re in your room,” Sasha tells me. I nod my head, go into the kitchen, toss my knife in the sink, and then head to find them.

“Get some sleep. I’ll be up,” War says. I nod as I walk down the hall and into my room. Harlon has Arya wrapped in his arms, but she looks over at me when I walk in.

“Are you okay?” I ask her. She nods but doesn’t speak until she sees the blood. Then she’s pulling out of Harlon’s arms and crawling across the bed to me. She grabs my shirt, ripping it up and checking for a wound.

“You’re not bleeding?” she asks, a little confused.

“No. It’s not mine.” She slowly lowers my shirt before our gazes lock for the briefest of seconds. She sighs like she’s happy it wasn’t mine before crawling back across the bed and lying in the middle. Har is about to get up, but I shake my head no. He is her safe place. He’s the one she looks to when she needs to feel assured. He lays back down, and I pull my shirt off, climbing on next to her. I scoot close and press my lips to the back of her head as Harlon wraps his arm around her waist. I get as close as I can so she can feel me here.

And after what seems like forever, we all fall asleep.

Chapter 19

Warren

I haven't slept in days, and it's beginning to wear on me. I fucked off at work most of the night because I couldn't concentrate. I went by Denz's house and checked on Sasha, but she was having a sleepover with her friends. I thought about crashing there for the night, but I found myself driving around instead. That did me no fucking good.

Now I'm at my dad's, sitting out by the ocean smoking a cigarette. When I was younger, my dad always liked to bring us boys out here to the water. He would watch us play for hours in the ocean. I once asked him why, and he said he wanted nothing but good memories with his boys.

And for the most part, that's all we have with him. Good memories. My dad did his best when we were younger, threatening to take our moms to court and take us away, yet he never did because we would throw such a fit. Back then, it made sense to stay with our moms, even though they were worthless.

Snuffing out my cigarette, I shove myself up and brush off as I walk back toward the house. I glance up at her balcony, noticing her door is open. I'm sure she's letting the breeze filter in.

When I reach the house, I grab onto the trellis and pull myself up, climbing until I reach her balcony. I grab the rail and throw my legs over, landing near the chair. I look in and see her sound asleep in her bed. After the shit at Denz's house, we thought she could use a little break from us.

I grab the chair and carry it closer to the door, sitting it down quietly so I don't wake her. Then I drop down into it and do what I've done for a while now. I watch her sleep. She never knows I'm here, and maybe that's for the best, although the thought of fucking her sleeping body has come to mind. How would she feel waking up to me inside of her? Would she be scared?

I just sit here and think. About anything and nothing all at the same time, and before I know it, the fucking sun is coming up. I should leave, I should walk away, but I don't want to.

Arya rolls over, her face coming into view. Slowly her eyes open and then widen before softening once more when she sees it's me. At first, she doesn't speak. We sit, staring at each other like we're trying to figure the other one out. Then she moves and pulls the blankets back, scooting over to make room in her bed. I don't need to be told she wants me there. I stand, reaching over my shoulder and pulling my shirt off, tossing it to the side before kicking my shoes off. I climb into the bed facing the door when she covers me and wraps her arms around me.

"How long have you been awake?"

"Since the other day," I tell her.

"How long have you been sitting there?" she asks softly.

"Since last night."

"You can sleep here, War," she whispers as her hand slides up and down my chest. How does she expect me to sleep when she's touching me like that? How could I even try?

"We all have secrets, don't we, Arya." She sighs softly behind me.

"I guess we do."

"Will you tell me one if I tell you one?" She doesn't speak at first, but then she sighs she starts talking.

"My dad tried to kill me. That's why I didn't want you to take my shirt off. That's why I wear a shirt to go swimming," she whispers. Instantly, I tense, and I'm about to storm out of bed, but Arya tightens her grip on me and keeps me in place.

"There are scars?"

"Yeah. A lot of them. Some ... I did to myself." Fuck. Fuck! I want to turn to look at her, but I know she needs this moment alone even though I'm right here. Anger and fury war in my insides. The demon wants to be set free and is rattling his

cage, but I take deep breaths and calm myself down because right now, Arya needs this.

“I killed someone when I was seventeen. No one knows about it. It was my first kill.”

“Who was it?”

“There was this girl who lived in Denz’s neighborhood. She was sick. She was dying anyway,” I confess and feel her arm tense around me, but I keep going. “Harlon loved her. That was his first love. They were good together, but ... she was dying. I went over there one night looking for Harlon, but he wasn’t there. She asked me to come in and talk, and so I did.”

“What did she say?”

“That she hated her life. That ... it hurt so bad she couldn’t stand it anymore. She wanted a way out. A way to end things,” I whisper.

“And you helped her,” she whispers.

“I ... fuck. I put the pillow over her face. She didn’t scream, she didn’t fight. I sat there holding the fucking pillow over her face because I knew when I pulled it away, she’d be gone.”

“You helped her, War.”

“I killed her. Har came a few minutes later after I resettled her on the pillow. He lost it. He completely lost it. I’m not one for keeping secrets from the guys, but that one? That one is mine. I can’t look my brother in the eye and tell him I killed the girl he loved.”

“War, she was sick. She wasn’t going to make it anyway. What you did, you made her dying wish come true.”

“Don’t look at it like that, Arya!” I growl.

“How should I look at it?”

“The same way I do. Don’t make me the fucking hero. I’m not. I’m no one’s hero.” I feel her lips press into the flesh of my back, and I want to turn and shake some sense into her.

She keeps her arm tightly around me, keeping me close to her. I’ve never felt so at ease as I do right now in her arms. Maybe

I'm fucked up in the head, or maybe I am insane. I don't really know anymore, but I know that night changed me forever.

"He used to hit my mom a lot. I saw it. He didn't care I saw it; it didn't bother him. Then, one day, I was sick and home from school. Mom was off doing what mom did, and there I was alone with him. I remember coming out of my room and seeing him in the kitchen with a knife in his hand. I thought he was making lunch or something, but he looked so strange. His eyes were different. He held the knife in his hand, just twirling it around. I remember standing there and staring at him, wondering why he was doing it." She stops and takes a deep breath. I know this is hard for her because it's killing me to listen.

"Then what?"

"He called me into the kitchen, seeing as I was already standing there, and asked if I was hungry. He made me soup since I wasn't feeling well. We ate lunch together like we usually did when Mom was gone. He smiled at me. He fucking smiled at me," she says angrily. Her arm tightens around me, and I grab her wrist in my hand, holding on as tight as I can.

"Anyway, we cleaned up from lunch, and that's when things changed. He went on a tirade about my mom cheating on him and that she only had me to trap him. I was ten, and it didn't make any kind of sense to me what he was saying, but I stood there listening because it was my dad. Eventually, he calmed again and I thought that everything was fine. I didn't notice the knife in his hand when he walked toward me, smiling. I fucking smiled back at him, War. I smiled right before he plunged the knife into my stomach." A sob rips from her throat, but she doesn't stop.

"I screamed from the pain, and I fell onto my back. He was looking everywhere but at me until I screamed louder. Then he dragged his eyes down to mine as I cried. He dropped to his knees, almost as if he was unsure what to do. He was mumbling something under his breath, but I couldn't hear what he said. I asked him to help me. I asked him to call my mom. At the mention of her name, his eyes darkened, and he raised the knife and stabbed me two more times. I was

screaming so loud that he put his free hand over my mouth to shut me up. I must have blacked out after that, but from what I was told, he stabbed me three more times. When they took him to jail and asked him why, he wouldn't give them an answer. I never got an answer." As much as I want to turn to face her and hold her right now, I can't because my demons haunt me. My demons want to break her in ways her dad never could.

So I lay here, letting her hold onto me for as long as she wants.

And in her arms, I slowly fall asleep.

Chapter 20

Harlon

Arya finally broke down and told Denz what her dad did to her. Needless to say, we were all pissed about it. We still are, but he's in prison now, and there's nothing we can do about it.

We're all hanging out today in my dad's library. Arya is sitting on the desk with a long t-shirt on, flipping the pages of a book while we hang out. I have my laptop open, but I can't take my eyes off her. Whatever she's reading has her in a trance. Her eyes stay glued to the pages while she chews on her bottom lip. I know I'm not the only one who's noticed, either.

"What are you guys doing in here?" I look over when I hear my dad's voice.

"Just hanging out," Denz tells him. He nods his head as he slips his hands into his pockets and walks all the way into the room. He strolls over to where Arya sits on the desk and pulls his hand from his pocket, plucking the book from her fingers. He raises an eyebrow at her, and she smiles.

"Don't like my choice in books?" she asks him.

"Quite the opposite. I think this is a good book to read."

"What's it about?" War asks lifting his head from his phone now to see what the two of them are doing.

"Sex. Life. Love."

"Arya, are you over there reading porn?" Denz chuckles.

"It isn't porn," Dad responds for her. "It's about sexuality. It's about sensuality."

Dad sits the book on the desk next to Arya before stepping in between her legs. She looks up at him strangely but doesn't tell him to move. The three of us share a look before looking back at them.

"There are many ways to give a woman pleasure, as you boys very well know," he says, pushing Arya so she's lying down on the desk. Dad slides his hands up her inner thighs as she

gasps before he stops. “But there are rules when it comes to women, as I’ve taught you, boys.” He leans over her, his nose touching hers. She stares up at him, her lips slightly parted as dad moves his hand to undo his slacks. We all share a look once more, but fuck, how do I look away from this? Dad teases her entrance before slowly slipping inside her while the three of us watch. Arya gasps, arching her back.

“You want to give them exactly what they want. The pleasure. The pain. The excitement,” he almost whispers. “But what you never give them is a kiss. Because kissing for a woman is so much more; it means so much more to them. It means,” he ghosts his lips near Arya’s but doesn’t kiss her before speaking again. “That they belong to you. It means they are giving you a piece of them, and you are giving them a piece of you.” His lips hover over hers but they just stare at each other for a long time as he slowly moves in and out of her. Arya’s chest rapidly rises and falls as he takes her so slowly.

His hands move to grip her inner thighs when he really begins to fuck her. Arya grabs his shoulders as he takes her on the desk, with all of us watching in awe. It’s not like we didn’t know there was some kind of attraction there, but I didn’t realize it was to this level. Nevertheless, he keeps going, sliding in and out of her until she’s gasping for air. I watch as he tenses, and then he comes, not allowing her the chance to finish before he pulls out of her.

She whines as he smirks and leans down, running his tongue over her clit. Arya nearly leaps off the damn desk at his touch, and when he really gets to eating her pussy, she cries out for more. He dives in, licking and shoving his tongue inside her as her legs begin to tremble. Then she finally lets go and comes all over his mouth. I’m almost jealous he’s the one tasting her right now and not me.

When dad pulls away, he adjusts his slacks and turns to us, giving us a smirk before leaving the room and leaving Arya on the desk a panting mess.

Arya lies there for a long minute as if she’s thinking something, her eyes narrowed on the ceiling.

Slowly, she sits up and glances over at us. The three of us share a glance quickly before we all move. Arya raises her hand to stop us, and we all stop.

“None of you have ever kissed me,” she says softly. She’s right. We haven’t. And just as dad said, he taught us not to until we knew for sure. That we knew she was what we wanted.

Without giving her a chance to think any further, I move. I grab her around the back of her neck and gently press my lips to hers. Arya doesn’t move at first, allowing me to explore her mouth with mine. But then something changes and she starts to kiss me back. But just as we start getting into it, she’s yanked away from me by Denz. I turn my head and watch as he crashes his lips to hers. He shoves his tongue in her mouth and deepens their kiss. And just like Denz to me, War does the same to him. He jerks her around and devours her mouth with his.

This is us. This is us claiming the girl we don’t plan to let go of. This is us giving her more than we’ve ever given anyone else.

When War is done nipping at her lips, Arya sits back and looks between us. Her cheeks are red, her lips swollen from all the kissing. Her chest rises and falls rapidly as her gaze dances between ours.

“Who is going to make me come after that?” she asks. We all chuckle when I grab her off the desk and lift her in my arms. I walk back over to the couch and sit down with her on my lap. Then I sink my hand under her t-shirt and find her naked pussy waiting to be touched. I dip a finger inside her, and she moans, arching her back. The other two join us, Denz getting on his knees in front of us and spreading her legs wide. I pull my hand free and move them to her breasts, tugging and pulling on her nipples. She arches her back more while Denz gets to work with his tongue. Her head turns as War pulls his cock out and begins stroking it. She watches for a moment before motioning for him to come to her.

War walks over and stands next to the couch when she leans her head over and takes him in her mouth, pulling him deep. We all get some sort of pleasure out of this.

Arya sucks hard, moaning around his cock while Denz licks her pussy. I lean in and nip at her neck, and she groans louder. This goes on until her lips pop free from War, and she cries out her orgasm. Her body is tight, her back bowed as she lets go of everything she's been holding in. Her legs shake when Denz stands and wipes his mouth on the back of his hand.

“How's that?”

“You guys are too good,” she tells us. The three of us laugh as I cuddle her against my chest while she catches her breath.

“What do you guys have planned for today?” she asks, adjusting herself on my lap.

“I don't have anything to do,” I say.

“I have to go talk to the school about Sasha and her grades. She's failing one of her classes,” Denz tells us.

“Which one?” she asks.

“Math.” Arya groans.

“I hated math in school. You want me to go with you?” she asks through a yawn. I chuckle, but Denz shakes his head.

“I think you need a nap.”

“I was thinking about that,” she adds.

“I'm going to the gym for a while. Where are we meeting up tonight?” War asks as he cracks his neck from side to side.

“I'm staying home tonight. I need to get some work done on your dad's website,” Arya chimes in.

“Yeah, I think I'm going home and talk with Sasha about her grades when I get done,” Denz tells us.

“What about you?” Arya asks, looking over her shoulder at me.

“I'm hanging out with you if you don't mind.” She gives me a breathtaking smile and shakes her head.

“No. I don’t mind.” I lean down and press my lips to hers quickly, and her smile gets bigger.

“Well, I need to go. I don’t want to be late,” Denz says as he stands and walks over, dropping a kiss on her lips before he goes. War does the same before he leaves and then there’s just me and her.

“I should get some work done,” she says.

“So you don’t want to ride my cock?” She wiggles in my arms before climbing out of my lap.

“As much as I’d love to, I mean it. I promised your dad I would have his website ready for tomorrow.” I nod my head as Arya holds her hand out to me. I reach up and slide mine into hers, standing from the couch. We walk out of the library together and down the hall toward her room when we spot her mom. Arya instantly lets go of my hand and takes a step away from me.

“Arya. You look lovely,” she says, eyeing her up and down in nothing but an oversized t-shirt.

“Thanks. You do, too. You just getting back or just leaving because it’s getting hard to tell.” I know that’s a dig at her mom, but she doesn’t seem to pay much attention to it.

“I’m getting back. I have a few things I need to take care of here,” she tells her. Arya doesn’t say anything; she just nods her head before she starts walking. I follow behind her while Julie gives me some sort of look.

Once we get into Arya’s room, I close the door and spin to face her.

“What was that?”

“What was what?” she asks, brushing a piece of hair behind her ear and grabbing her laptop.

“Why’d you let go of my hand?”

“She doesn’t need to know all my business, Har. Besides, she warned me away from the three of you,” she informs me.

“She did?”

“Yeah. Said you were bad news, and I needed to stay away.”

“And yet the three of us fuck you when we want.” She looks up at me and gives me a lazy smile.

“Your dad has been talking about you guys a lot.”

“He has? About what?” I ask as we walk out onto the balcony. She sets her laptop down and pulls up her chair, taking a seat as I do the same.

“His businesses. How he wants you guys to get involved more. You know he’s opening new clubs in Miami and New York?” I nod. I did hear about that. “He wants you guys to get them up and running.”

“Is that what he said?”

“Yeah. We were talking about the website for the clubs, and he brought it up.” She opens her laptop and starts typing.

“What do you think?”

“About you guys opening them up?” She looks at me. I nod. “I think it’s a great idea. You guys are smart and young. The intended target for these clubs is younger adults. You three being the face of all of that will surely bring in more people.”

“Why do you think that?” She smirks and shakes her head.

“Look at you three. You’re fucking gorgeous, and I have no doubt that every girl in Miami would come out to see you guys.”

“You don’t honestly think that, do you?” She laughs, and it’s something I haven’t heard in a while.

“I do think that. In fact, I can almost guarantee that.”

Now, I stand and stalk toward her as she watches me. I lean down, gripping her chin lightly in between my fingers.

“Care to make a bet?”

“What are we betting on?”

“I haven’t decided yet.”

“You let me know, and I’ll be happy to make that bet with you.”

“You’re on, baby. I’m going to talk to my dad. Get some work done,” I tell her as I lean down and press my lips to hers. I turn and walk away with a fucking smile on my face.

Chapter 21

Arya

The strange messages keep coming, and I keep deleting them. I debated telling the guys about them, but the last week, they've been pretty busy with work and stuff. I didn't want to bother them over something as stupid as a text message.

I take a deep breath and blow it out, thinking about the short time I've been here. I feel ... better. Almost like a weight has been lifted off my chest, and I wonder if that's because I told the guys about my dad. I felt a huge relief after telling Harlon, but then, when I told the other two? It was like I could breathe again.

I've been talking to Jarrod a lot lately, too. Mostly about the guys. He truly wants them to get on board with working with him and not at the warehouse where they are now. I understand both sides. I feel the same way about having money handed to me, too. I'd rather make my own than live off my mom forever, but his opportunity for them is different. He wants this to be a family business with the guys, and I can respect that. I offered to talk to them about it more, and he agreed.

"Why do you look like you've seen a ghost?" I look over when I hear Harlon talk.

"I have cramps. Do you know how bad cramps can get? I should buy the machine to make you all feel my pain," I tell him. Harlon laughs as he walks toward me and pulls me into his arms.

"Cramps, huh?" I nod my head before resting it on his chest. In seconds, he has me lifted in his arms, carrying me upstairs and into my bedroom, kicking the door closed behind him. The next thing I know, we're in the bathroom where he sits me on the toilet seat and starts a bath.

"What are you doing?" I ask him.

"Warm baths are supposed to help with cramps, right?" Oh my God. He is not running me a bath to soak in! My heart leaps in

my chest at the kindness. I've never had a guy do that for me before or even care that I had cramps, to begin with.

"Har."

"What?"

"That's the sweetest thing anyone has done for me," I coo at him. He smirks as he puts some bubble bath in. Then he turns to me and lifts me off the toilet, standing me up. He jerks my leggings and my underwear down before kneeling on the floor in front of me. Now, I look at him strangely.

"Spread your legs," he demands.

"Uh, what are you doing?"

"Tampon?"

"I can handle that part," I tell him.

"Or I can. Spread your legs," he demands once more before pinching the inside of my thigh. I yelp and spread my legs for him, watching as he grabs the string and pulls my tampon out without batting an eye. He tosses it in the trash before standing and tugging my shirt and bra off. Then he takes my hand and leads me over to the bath tub and helps me.

"You need to relax."

"And what about you?" I ask him. He smiles.

"You think you're getting rid of me?"

"Are you just going to watch me take a bath? Turning into a stalker like War?" I tease him. He leans down and captures my mouth with his in a searing kiss that has my knees shaking. Then he lowers himself down to his knees next to the tub and slides his hand under the water and straight between my legs.

"What are you doing?"

"Orgasms help with cramps. So that's what I'm going to give you," he tells me as he finds my clit.

"I don't think that helps," I argue with him.

"Yeah, it does. I've read about it online. A proven fact that orgasms help with cramps." I'm about to open my mouth

again when he slams his fingers inside me. Instead, I gasp at the intrusion. Har has no problem finding the spots that set me off as I shift and give him better access to my body.

He finds the magic spot inside me, and I arch, wanting more. He works his fingers in and out of my pussy as water sloshes all over, but he doesn't care.

He keeps going and going as my eyes roll back, and I can feel the orgasm creep over me. It hits me hard, and I convulse in the tub.

“Shit, Har!”

“You like that?” he asks as he slowly eases up on me and pulls his fingers free. I nod my head as he stands and grabs a towel, wiping himself off.

“I'll be back in a little bit. Stay in there until I come back,” he orders me. I salute him, making him laugh before he leaves the bathroom.

I lay my head back, close my eyes, and relax. That's something I haven't done in a long time. Everything has been happening so quickly that I haven't even taken time for myself. I used to take me time a lot before I came here. It gave me time to reflect on my life, and right now, the thought of Jason pisses me off. I can't believe that son of a bitch actually stole everything from me. I thought he cared about me. Hell, I thought that bastard loved me, but it turns out I was wrong.

I sigh as memories assault me. It's not like I don't dream of that day. The day my dad tried to kill me. I do. And often, but it was the look in his eyes in the courtroom the day he was sentenced. It was that look that haunts me.

He was angrier than I've ever seen him in my life. I remember being on the stand and his eyes burning right through me. The judge kept reminding me I didn't have to look at him, and I didn't after that, but I could still feel his gaze on me.

“You ready?” I startle and snap my eyes open to see Harlon holding up a towel. I nod and stand, letting him wrap me up in it. I tell him I need a tampon, and instead of letting him do that, too, I usher him out of my bathroom. I dried myself and

got dressed before heading back into my room to find him sitting on the bed with a platter in the middle.

“What is all this?”

“Fruits that help with cramps.”

“Are you the king of cramps now?” he chuckles and shakes his head.

“No, but I do know things. Come on,” he says, motioning to the bed. I walk over and sit on the edge, grabbing some grapes and popping them into my mouth.

“These are good,” I tell him, shoving one into his mouth.

“I scared you in there. What were you thinking about?”

“My dad. Some days, I can still feel the way his eyes burned me at the trial.”

“I’m sure that’s hard to forget,” he says, grabbing some of the fruit and putting it in his mouth. Just as I’m about to say more, the door opens, and War comes stalking in. He’s wearing his signature scowl, which doesn’t surprise me.

“Do you ever look happy?” I ask him teasingly.

“When you’re riding my face, I do.”

“I’ll take it,” I say with a little laugh. He walks over and climbs on the bed behind me, grabbing some fruit, too.

“What are you guys doing?”

“She had cramps. I fixed her,” Har tells him.

“You’re right. The warm bath and the orgasm did wonders,” I wink at him.

“I told you.”

“Are you a goddamn woman now, Harlon?” War snaps at him. I reach over and slap at him.

“He was amazing. Leave him alone.”

“You know what I was just thinking?” Harlon asks.

“What?”

“That you’re the first girl I’ve seen actually touch War, and he not lose his shit.” Now, I turn my attention to War, a little surprised by that fact.

“Why didn’t you let anyone touch you?”

“I didn’t like it. It reminded me of my mom.”

“And I don’t?” He shakes his head as I smile big. Then I move toward him, crawling across the bed.

“Aww, War, you like it when I touch you?” I ask him teasingly as I climb on him and start touching him everywhere. Harlon laughs at us being playful, and even War cracks a smile. I keep going, touching and teasing him while laughing.

“Come on, Harlon. Grab him,” I tell him. Harlon doesn’t move to go after him just laughs harder. That’s when War moves. He grabs me and flips me in one move, so I’m under him now. He grabs both my hands as I wiggle and try to break free, the laughter still coming out of me. Pulling both my hands above my head, he holds them in one of his.

“Let me go!” I squeal as I buck my hips and try to get free. War just grins at me and lowers his hand to my stomach. That’s when I freeze. Where Harlon is kind, War is harsh. So when he slides my shirt up and looks down at the scars, I suck in a breath.

“That’s new,” War says, looking at the one that’s scabbed over. He doesn’t bring his eyes back to mine, and that unnerves me a little. His free hand slides over it as Harlon watches. Then he picks at the scab and pulls it off. I wince, a slight pain following.

“What are you doing?” Harlon asks now. War doesn’t answer him. I look down to see the blood rising to the surface when he leans down and licks it off. I take a shuddering breath when he raises his head and brings his lips to mine. His kiss is brutal. It’s almost as if he’s angry and taking it out on my mouth. Nevertheless, I let him and kiss him back. When he pulls back, he’s breathless. He releases my hands, and we both sit up as I tug my shirt back down.

“The only fucking marks that should be on your body are mine or my brothers. If I see another cut, another drop of blood, I will really make you bleed, little bird.” His eyes are fierce and full of rage. His body trembles with too much energy. I open my mouth to say something back to him, but what? What the hell do I say?

“He’s right. You have to stop cutting, Arya.” Tears bite the back of my eyes, but I don’t let them fall. I blink them away and clear my throat.

“I’m working on it.”

“Work harder,” War roars before standing and walking out of the room, slamming the door behind him. I risk it and look over at Harlon to see if he’s as mad as War, but I don’t see the same look in his eyes.

“I really am trying, Har. It’s just ... some days are easier than others. Some days, I feel like I’m drowning in life again.”

“Do we make you feel like that?” he asks, sounding concerned.

“No. Of course not. I just have a lot of bad dreams and memories that decide to pop up whenever they feel like it.”

“I get that, but the cutting has to stop, Arya. It isn’t healthy for you.”

“I know. I promise I’m working on it.” And I really am. It’s been a while since I cut last before this one. I’ve been doing better about it, and I think that has something to do with the guys.

“War isn’t going to let this go easily. Neither is Denz when he finds out.”

“I didn’t expect it to with War.”

“Well, Denz is a little like War in that aspect,” he adds.

“You didn’t lose your shit,” I tell him. He shrugs.

“I’m the reasonable one. I understand why you do it, but they don’t. They won’t see it the way we do.” I crawl across the

bed and right into Harlon's open arms. He wraps me up and holds me tightly as I sigh.

"Thank you for understanding at least a little bit."

"You don't have to thank me. I told you I'm the reasonable one."

"That's what I like most about you, Harlon. You're not quick to judge."

"How the hell could I after the life I've lived? It's not my place to judge, but I can't say the same about my brothers."

"I'm just glad I have you three," I say as I yawn and curl into his embrace.

Chapter 22

Denz

I sigh, running my hand over my face. I dealt with the shit with Sasha at school over a week ago, and she seems to be doing better now. So what has me so angry? I don't fucking know. Maybe the fact that we still don't know who drugged Arya or why. That shit is still weighing heavily on me. It unnerves me because of how easy it was for them to get to her.

The air is cool tonight as I walk out toward the little bonfire that Arya is at with her friend Tracy. When she told us about it, I debated telling her no, but I knew the little stubborn shit would go anyway, and who the hell am I to tell her that she can't have a little fun with her friends.

I walk out onto the sand and down the beach to where I see the fire when I spot her. There's music playing and Arya is dancing with Tracy. She has a smile on her face, and that's not something you see a lot of with her. It's good to see her like this.

I stand back and keep an eye out, pulling a cigarette from the pack I keep in my pocket and lighting it up. The tip glows in the darkness, and it's almost as if she can feel my gaze on her. She turns her head, looking around until she sees me. Her lips tug into a huge grin when she motions for me to come over there. I shake my head and nod toward her friends, letting her know that this is for her, not me. Her smile gets bigger as Tracy grabs her hand and forces her to dance again.

They do this for a long time, drinking and having a good time. I see Cale, but he doesn't see me. He walks up to Arya and she turns quickly, hugging him before stepping back. Has she forgotten that I'm over here? Is she drunk?

I watch as he slips his arm around her waist and pulls her in close to him. He whispers something in her ear, and she shakes her head. I wonder what the hell he said to her? She tries to push him away, but he holds on tighter. Now anger surges inside of me as I storm down the beach before I hear her laugh. Yet when I look up, Cale still has his arms around her.

She's smiling and doesn't seem to be in any kind of trouble, but that doesn't stop me.

I storm over there and rip her away, grabbing Cale, lifting, and slamming him into the sand.

"What the hell, Denz?" Arya snaps at me, rushing to drop to his side.

"Get the fuck up!" I roar. She looks between me and Cale before standing to her feet and stepping in between me and Cale, offering her hand. "Don't you fucking do it, Arya."

"Shut the hell up, Denz," she snaps at me. Cale refuses to take her hand and brushes it away, shoving himself up. He stands and looks at me before shaking his head.

"I don't know what kind of shit you two have going on, but keep me out of it," Cale says.

"Cale. Come on," Arya says, trying to reach for him once more. I grab her other wrist and yank her back toward me, causing her to stumble and fall into me. She looks up at me with anger in those blue eyes.

"What the hell is your problem, Denz?" She spins on me now. She shoves at my chest, but I don't move.

"You seem to forget who you belong to."

"What? For dancing with Cale?"

"No other man should be touching you, Arya!"

"He wasn't touching me, Denz! I was dancing with him. He's my friend."

"He's your ex-friend now," I deadpan.

"You can't choose my friends for me, Denz."

"I just did," I remind her. She takes a deep breath before walking around me and stomping back toward the house. I follow behind her, but I only let her get as far as the back of the pool house before I grab her and spin her to face me.

"Were you going to fuck him?" her eyes narrow, her nostrils flare, and I know whatever is about to come from her, I'm not

going to like. She doesn't respond with words. No, she pulls her little fist back, and before I can register what she's doing, she punches me in the jaw.

"Just because you like to fuck everything you come in contact with doesn't mean I do the same!" She screams at me. Again, she starts to walk past me, but I don't let her. I jerk her back and slam her back against the side of the pool house. Her head bounces off it, and for a brief second, I regret doing it. That doesn't last long, though.

"What the fuck?" she yells as she reaches up to touch the back of her head.

"You ever try to walk away from me again, and you're going to pay for it," I warn her. She narrows her eyes when I lean down and strip the bikini bottoms off her. She moves to pull them back up when I shove her back once again. Arya knows not to fuck with me, so she doesn't try again. I lower my shorts, pulling my cock free before turning her to face away from me.

"Brace your hands on the wall," I tell her. She does as she's told and places her hands on the wall. Then I lean down, spread her ass wide, and spit on her.

"What are you doing?" she asks, trying to move, but I shove her back in place.

"You want to mess around with other guys. You want to keep cutting yourself," I growl at her. She gasps at my words. "You think the guys wouldn't tell me what you were doing to yourself?"

"Denz. I'm sorry," she says softly, but it's too late for that now. I grab my cock and smear the spit around her ass before pressing the tip of my cock to it. "Denz. No."

"Why not? You need to learn, Arya. You don't fucking hurt yourself because that fucking hurts us."

"I said I was sorry." I push in a little further. Arya gasps as her nails claw at the brick of the pool house. "Denz, please."

"You're going to take my cock in your ass, Arya. You're going to be sorry for what you did," I warn her.

“I am sorry!”

“Not sorry enough,” I tell her as I shove in a little more. Fuck, I knew she’d feel good but not this good. Inch by inch, I slide into her, giving her a little time to adjust as I go. There’s no way in fuck I’m going to pull out of her now.

“Denz!” she snaps at me once more.

“What?”

“I’ve never done this before,” she tells me softly. Fuck me. I groan and reach up, wrapping my hand in her hair and tugging her back on my cock. It doesn’t matter that she’s never done this because I’m taking her anyway.

And that’s what I do. I jerk her head back with one hand and keep the other planted on her hip as I fuck her slowly at first. Arya adjusts to my size, and after a few strokes, she begins to moan. I knew she’d like her punishment.

Letting go of her hair, I move my hands to her hips and hold on tightly. Then, I really began to pump into her. I fuck her hard and fast. Her nails are bleeding when I look up at the way she’s digging into the brick wall. Fuck, I should stop, but I’m not going to. And I don’t. I keep going.

Arya screams for me, cusses at me, and I still don’t care. I slide one hand around her waist and find her clit, slapping it with my hand before toying with it. Arya can’t control herself now. She pushes back, riding my cock by herself.

“Oh fuck, Arya. Do it, baby. Ride my cock. Fill your fucking ass up with me,” I groan. She keeps moving, forcing herself down my length as I play with her clit until she can’t take anymore. She comes hard as I do the same. My fingers dig into her hips as I release everything I have in me.

We’re both struggling to breathe when I pull out of her. I reach down and pull her bottoms back into place before doing the same with my shorts. Arya turns to face me, her eyes glossed over from her orgasm. She looks freshly fucked, and I love it.

“I’ve never had anyone do that to me.”

“Did you like it?”

“I think so,” she smiles at me.

“Good. Then I’ll do it again.”

“Denz, we weren’t doing anything wrong,” she tells me as I grab her hand and lead her back toward the house.

“I know, but I’m a jealous man.”

“And you’re not jealous of your brothers?”

“No. That’s different,” I tell her. She shrugs her shoulders as we walk inside to see my dad standing there.

“Hey,” I say when he looks up at me.

“Hey, Denz. Have you guys thought any about working with me?”

“I have. I don’t know about the others,” I tell him.

“What do you think?”

“You know I don’t like shit handed to me, but you’re right. This wouldn’t be you handing things to me. I’d be working for it. So, in that case, I’ll do it.” The smile that crosses his face is one I haven’t seen in a long time. It’s genuine, and he’s happy. He moves toward me as I release Arya’s hand and pulls me into a hug.

“I’m glad you changed your mind. Now, if you can get your brothers to do the same, that would be great,” he tells me. When he pulls back, I nod my head.

“I think I can get them on board. Arya has been talking it up to them,” I say and glance over at her.

“I have been making it a point to bring it up every day,” she grins.

“And I appreciate that, Arya. You can make them see reason.”

“I’m trying to.”

“You’re doing well. The websites are looking absolutely amazing. I’ve already had comments on them.”

“Really?”

“Yes. In fact, you may be receiving a few emails for work,” he tells her. She smiles bigger and takes off, slamming into him. She hugs him, and he hugs her back, and for some reason, I don’t want to slit his throat for touching her, even though I already know he has a thing for her.

“Thank you so much, Jarrod.”

“It was all your hard work that did it. I wouldn’t mind if you’d like to accompany the guys to Miami to open up the new club either,” he tells her. She turns to look at me now and I nod my head. She releases my dad and slams into me, wrapping her arms around my neck.

“You wouldn’t care I was there?” she asks, beaming up at me.

“Of course not. Why would you think we wouldn’t want you there?”

“I don’t know. It’s business.”

“And? You’re our girl. You’re coming with,” I remind her. She hangs off my neck while dad smiles and turns to walk away. I lift her in my arms, and she instantly wraps her legs around my waist. I spank her ass and carry her down the basement stairs where the others are. I whisper dirty words in her ear and make her laugh, and it’s the best thing I’ve ever heard. She must hear the buzz of the tattoo machine because her head snaps up, and she looks over at War getting a tattoo.

“What are you doing?” she squeals as she leaps out of my arms and races over to him.

“Getting some new ink. You like it?” he asks her. She stands there staring down at the artwork on his shoulder like she’s never seen a tattoo before, but then it hits me. She doesn’t have any.

“It’s so good. Oh my God, War. I love it,” she beams at him.

“This is Jake. He’s our tattoo artist.”

“Hey, Jake,” she says, never looking up at him. Her eyes stay glued to what he’s doing to War.

“You don’t have tattoos,” I say, catching her attention.

“I wanted one, but I was never sure what to get. I couldn’t make up my mind, so I didn’t get any,” she tells me before going back to watching. She seems so intrigued by everything he’s doing.

“How bad does it hurt?” she asks, looking at Jake now.

“Not bad at all. You get used to it pretty quick,” he tells her. Now, she looks up at me and races over, grabbing the front of my shirt.

“I want one.”

“A tattoo?”

“Yeah. I want one.”

“What do you want?” I ask her as her face lights up.

“I don’t know! You guys have to help me decide.”

“Get a rose,” Harlon calls out.

“No. A rose is something all the girls get,” Jake chimes in.

“What about a bird?” War says, his dark gaze coming to hers.

“Little bird,” she says softly.

“What about a bird with three black roses in its claws?” Jake says. He knows she’s ours. We’ve talked about it enough in front of him.

“One for each of you,” she whispers. “Is that weird?” She looks back over at me.

“Why would it be weird?”

“I don’t know. It’s permanent, Denz. What if ... if you guys don’t want me later?” Now I laugh and pull her back into my arms.

“Baby, that is never going to happen. There’s never going to be a time when we don’t want you, Arya. You’re stuck with us.” The smile on her face tells me she likes what she’s hearing.

“Let’s do it then,” she says. She pulls away from me and walks over to Harlon, climbing in his lap.

“Can you design it?” She knows Harlon is good at what he does, and computers and drawing are his things.

“Of course I can.” She smiles brightly at him, and I sit here wondering if this will always be us. Will she always be this happy?

“Denz, you good?” Harlon calls out to me. I shake the thoughts away and nod my head.

“Yeah, I’m good. Talked to Dad. I told him that I was in.”

“Really?”

“Yeah. He wants to know about you two.”

“I, for one, think it’s a great idea,” Arya chimes in. Harlon tickles her sides, making her laugh before War speaks.

“I don’t know how well I’ll do,” he says.

“Don’t doubt yourself, War,” Arya tells him. He smirks at her before shaking his head.

“I guess if our girl wants in on this, we’re in,” he says. Arya laughs, pressing a kiss to Har’s lips before leaping from his lap and moving toward War. He turns his head, sensing her coming, and she grabs his face in her hands. She leans and presses her lips to his right before biting his bottom lip. War growls, and she pulls away, smiling.

“You’re going to pay for that, little bird.”

“I’ll be waiting.”

Chapter 23

Warren

I love seeing Arya like this. Nervous as fuck. Jake is going to do her tattoo, and she can't sit still. It's almost amusing to watch.

"If you move, we're going to mess this up," Jake tells her.

"Did you have to pick your damn chest for the tattoo?" Denz growls his complaint. He knows Jake isn't just touching her for no reason, but I totally understand his anger. I don't want him touching her, either.

"Where do you want me to put it, Denz?" she asks over her shoulder.

"Your shoulder."

"Then I can't see it," she complains.

"Your arm then," he adds. Arya rolls her eyes and looks back to Jake.

"Okay. I'm ready," she tells him. Jake moves to get started, and I sit and watch.

We all sit around and just talk shit for the most part and discuss the plans for Miami. I suppose if the other two are on board with it, I can be too. I'm still not one hundred percent sure I want to do this. I like making my own money even though it isn't much. It's not like I need money. I'm doing fine with what I have, but more money means more opportunity.

"What are you thinking about?" Arya asks, glancing over at me.

"All the ways I want to shove my cock in you." She grins at me, and it's the best thing I've ever seen. I don't think she understands the way I'm obsessed with her. I don't think she gets the magnitude of it.

"Too bad it's going to be a while," she says, nodding toward her chest.

“I could always make you come while he’s doing that,” I tell her. Her cheeks turn pink, and I see the way her eyes dance with lust. So, while Jake is sitting by her head, I scoot down and slide her dress up her legs. “Spread your legs,” I tell her. She doesn’t move at first, glancing over at Jake.

“Don’t look at me. I know better than to look at you,” Jake tells her, causing her to laugh. She drags her gaze back to mine and shakes her head.

“You can wait,” she tells me. Now I laugh. There’s no way in fuck I’m waiting for something I want. And making her come is exactly what I want.

“I don’t fucking think so.” I pinch her inner thighs, and she immediately slides her legs apart. I inch my hand under her dress and slide her panties to the side before slipping two fingers inside her. She moans and starts to wiggle when Jake warns her not to. She stiffens up and tries her best not to move. I glide my fingers in and out of her, coating my fingers in her wetness. I groan, needing my cock to be inside of her, but I can’t do that right now.

So, instead, I give her pleasure while Jake gives her pain. I finger fuck her until her pussy is dripping onto the seat beneath her, and when I feel her tense up, I know she’s about to come.

“Don’t move, little bird,” I warn her as she comes closer. She holds her body steady while her orgasm washes over her. Her lips part, and she pants through it, but she never moves as he continues to ink her.

I pull my fingers free and bring them to my lips, licking her off me. I see Jake shift out of the corner of my eye, and I don’t blame him. He can probably smell her scent from here.

“So about Miami,” Arya brings up.

“What about it?”

“Are we going to be able to party?” she asks, wiggling her eyebrows. Denz chuckles.

“We’re opening the nightclub. You can party all you want,” he tells her.

“Within reason,” I add. She grins at me, and I can’t help but smile back. This girl brings out the best and worst of me, and she doesn’t even know it.

“Within reason,” she agrees, nodding her head.

“You really think we can do this shit?” I ask, looking at my brothers.

“Why couldn’t we? We’re not stupid,” Harlon adds.

“I didn’t say we were stupid. This is business shit and not the warehouse work we’re used to,” I remind him.

“You guys are going to do great. Calm down,” Arya chimes in again. I stand up and walk toward her head, leaning down to kiss her before walking over to the couch and dropping down. I grab the joint that has been stuck behind my ear and bring it to my lips, lighting it up.

“She’s right. We can handle this, or Dad wouldn’t have asked,” Harlon says. I nod my head.

“Yeah, you’re right. We got this,” I say as I inhale. I lean my head back and let the weed take effect, getting lost in my head. It’s usually a dark place to be, and I hate being there at times. But Arya has changed that. It’s not like I don’t have those dark thoughts anymore; I do, but she also brings something more to it.

Someone snatches the joint from my fingers, and I let them, keeping my eyes closed. I find myself wondering more and more about this job and if I can handle it. Large groups aren’t really my thing. I prefer a few people, and that’s it. Crowds cause my nerves to fire off one by one, and I can’t seem to think straight.

I went to a club once in my life. Once. And I fucking hated every second of it. There were too many people and too much happening at one time. I prefer to sit back and stalk someone alone like I do Arya. I take a deep breath when I feel her lay her head in my lap. I don’t move to open my eyes or look down. I know it’s her. She grabs my arm and pulls it over her body as I let sleep pull me under.

I don't dream much, if at all, but lately, I have been, and they've all been about her and the time she was drugged. I hate we haven't found out who did that to her, but in time, we will.

The last dream I had of her she wouldn't wake up. She was lying there, lifeless. Denz was shaking her, sitting in that goddamn bathroom at the gala, but she wouldn't wake up. It was pure hell, and I woke in a sweat.

I dragged my ass out of bed and came all the way from Denz's house back to my dad's just to watch her sleep. I sat on the fucking patio, stalking her just to know that she was breathing.

I don't think that dream will ever leave my mind. That one did something to me. It haunts me. Because what if someone were to get too close to her again? What if they got her out of the gala that night? What would we have done

I plan on killing anyone who had anything to do with her being drugged in the first place.

Something wakes me from my sleep, and when I pry my eyes open, I see it's Arya with her lips wrapped around my cock. I groan as I look down at her and watch her take me into her mouth. She hears me groan and peers up at me under her lashes before getting back to work.

The more she sucks, the more I need to take control. I grip the back of her head and shove her down my cock. I growl when I feel it hit the back of her throat. Spit sputters out of her mouth as she gags on me, but she looks so fucking pretty doing it. I let her pull her head back and catch a little breath before doing it again. The more she gags, the more I like it. Spit slides down my cock as I reach for her hand and place it at the base. She wraps her fingers around it but squeezes it so I'll release the hold on her. She's trying her best to pull air through her nose, but it does no good. Finally, I allow her to move, and she completely pulls me from her mouth, coughing and catching her breath.

"What the fuck, War?" she snaps at her, her hand still wrapped around my cock.

“You know how we fuck, Arya. I have to make you work for it, little bird.”

“I couldn’t breathe, asshole!”

“That’s the point. Now finish what you started,” I tell her, nodding toward my cock. She looks back down and strokes me with her hand. She knows just how to do it to make it feel good, too. I raise my hips to meet her strokes, and fuck does it feel amazing. I give her a little more time until I feel like I’m going to come.

“You want my cum in your mouth or your pussy? You can eat my babies, or I’ll put one in you,” I tell her. She stops moving altogether, her eyes becoming distant before she releases my cock and stands.

“Where the fuck are you going?” I growl at her. She doesn’t listen. She just takes off running up the stairs. I curse under my breath and shove my cock back in my jeans before standing and going up the steps.

I go to her room first but I don’t find her in there. I walk out onto the balcony and see her sitting down by the pool with a bottle in her hand.

Heading back out of her room, I make my way down to the pool and take a seat next to her.

“You want me to get, Harlon?” She shakes her head. I know he’s the one she talks to about things.

“Denz?” Again, she shakes her head. I sigh and lean back in the chair, taking the bottle from her before taking a long pull and passing it back. She brings it to her lips and chugs some before setting it between her feet on the ground.

“When my dad stabbed me, it did a lot of damage. Three surgeries to repair what he did, but there was one thing they couldn’t fully repair,” she says softly, looking out at the pool.

“What?” She turns her head, her pretty blue eyes full of tears.

“I can’t have kids, War.” Fuck. Fuck!

“And I said what I said.” She nods her head and grabs the bottle, going back for more. “Do you think that changes

things?” I ask her. Now, she turns to face me, and I can see the confusion in her eyes.

“What do you mean?”

“Do you think that changes how we feel about you?” I ask her once more.

“It should. I’m sure one of you at least wants kids,” she replies.

“I thought about that once. Thought about what it would be like to have a kid of my own. But the more I thought about it, the more I was against it. I’m not a good man, Arya. There’s no way I would make a good dad.”

“And the other two? Harlon? I can’t picture him not wanting kids,” she says.

“He may. He may not. You know, there are other options, right?”

“I know, but that’s not something we’ve ever talked about either. This is all so new and so quick.”

“And we don’t have to talk about right now, little bird. We have a whole fucking future for that.” She looks up at me, a smile on her face.

“When did you become like Harlon?”

“I’m nothing like Harlon.”

“I don’t know, War, you’re being awful nice right now,” she teases. I shove at her arm, reach for the bottle by her feet, and snatch it up.

“Shut the fuck, and let’s get drunk,” I tell her. She laughs before standing and climbing on the end of my lounge chair. She scoots herself up between my spread legs and lays her head on my chest.

“Thank you, War.”

“It’s all good, little bird.”

“You made my throat hurt,” she adds. I chuckle now.

“I sure as hell hope you don’t want an apology for that.”

“Never.”

“You liked it, didn’t you? You like when I hurt you?”

“I never really thought I would. I mean, obviously, I’ve heard about things like that, but I’ve never had them done to me.”

“You’re not answering the question.”

“You’re going to make me say it out loud, aren’t you?” Now I laugh.

“You’re goddamn right I am.”

“Fine. I like what you do to me, Warren. Happy now?” I grab her chin roughly and force her to look up at me before leaning down and pressing my lips to hers.

“Yeah. I’m happy now.”

Chapter 24

Harlon

I thought California was hot, but Miami is hotter. I don't know what the difference is, but this place is like hell.

"I don't like it," Arya whines, thinking exactly what I was thinking.

"It's so fucking hot, right?" I say. She nods her head, dabbing at the sweat dotting her forehead.

"Too fucking hot."

"You two done whining?" War snaps at the two of us. I reach for Arya and pull her into my side as we walk inside the hotel. We all walk up to the desk, and Denz tells them we have a reservation. The woman at the desks looks up and between the four of us before she speaks.

"You're only booked for one room," she says, looking back to Denz.

"Yeah? And?"

"Would you like separate rooms?"

"No. We're all staying in a room together," he tells her. Once more, she looks between the four of us, and Arya tries to stifle a laugh.

"What? What's so funny?" I ask her. Arya bursts into laughter catching the attention of everyone around us.

"She thinks we're all sleeping together," she says through her fit of laughter.

"Jesus," War mutters under his breath.

"Can you just check us in?" Denz snaps at the woman. She instantly looks down and types on her computer while Arya tries to stifle her laughter.

"Why is that so funny to you?" I ask her.

"Because we're all sleeping together!" She laughs again. It's nice to see her like this. I'm glad she's laughing and not

cutting herself. I shake my head and lean down to kiss her when War grabs her and pulls her away from me. Then he leans in and kisses her, too. I hear the woman at the counter gasp as Denz grabs the key card and motions for us to follow him. We start walking when the woman calls out to Arya. She turns around and walks back to the counter, and we watch as the woman says something to her and slips her a card. Arya snorts a laugh and shakes her head, passing it back. They talk for a second longer before she turns, her face red, and walks back over to us. I throw my arm around her shoulder and pull her into my side.

“What was that about?”

“You’re not going to believe it,” she tells me. We pile in the elevator and ride it up when she speaks again.

“She slipped me a card and asked if I needed help. She thought I was being trafficked. And while it’s funny that she thought you three were kidnapping me, it’s really sweet of her to keep an eye out for that,” she tells us.

“Kidnapping you? Shit. Look at us. You’d willingly come,” Denz says, making us all laugh.

“You’re not wrong,” she adds. We stop at our floor and we head into the room to get changed. Tonight is the opening of the club and we have to be there in a timely manner.

We all break off and scatter through the large room, stripping off clothes and putting on something nicer. Arya, of course, has the bathroom so she can get herself ready.

“Are we sure about this shit?” War asks after we’re all dressed and waiting on Arya.

“We’re here, aren’t we?”

“That doesn’t mean we’re ready,” I tell them.

“Har, out of all of us, you’re the one questioning it now?”

“I’m just worried about not doing well,” I admit.

“Dad trusts us with this. We’re not going to fuck it up,” Denz adds. I nod my head as War comes out of the bedroom, ready to go.

“She ready?”

“She’s still in the bathroom,” he says, rolling his eyes.

“It’s not like she needs makeup or anything. That girl is sexy as hell without it,” I say.

“I’m glad you think so,” I hear her voice, and we all turn to look at her. My eyes widen as I take her in. She’s wearing a short black dress that hugs her curves in all the right ways. The fucking thigh-high-heeled boots make her look taller than she is, but fuck, I can’t tear my eyes away from her.

“Goddamn, Arya,” I hiss as she spins for us to see her.

“You like it?” Denz is the first to move, dragging her into his arms.

“I don’t know if we should let you go out looking like this,” he tells her as he takes her in.

“You think I can’t behave?” she teases.

“I don’t,” War answers. She flips him off as Denz leans down to kiss her. When they pull apart, we head for the door. Seeing us all dressed up the way we are, you would think we were fucking royalty. The four of us look amazing as we step back into the elevator.

“If we had more time, we’d fuck you in this elevator, so our come is dripping down your thighs all night,” War tells her before slapping her ass so hard she nearly falls forward. She turns and looks at him over her shoulder grinning like she’d like it. I bet she would, too.

When we step out of the elevator, all eyes are on us. People watch us walk through the lobby, and Arya holds her head up high. I know she doesn’t like to go out much, but she seems like she’s having a good time right now.

War is on edge. I already know that. He doesn’t like crowds, and here we are going into a fucking nightclub of all things.

We climb into the car Denz has ready to pick us up. I’m sure we’re all going to be drinking tonight, and none of us want to be responsible enough to drive back here.

The hotel is only about twenty minutes away from the club, and as we arrive, someone is waiting to greet us.

“I’m assuming you’re the Staton brothers?” The man asks as we all climb out of the car.

“We are,” Denz answers before going through and introducing all of us. The man leads us inside, but as we’re walking, there’s already a line forming outside. As soon as we step in, Arya’s eyes go wide. I know she isn’t into flashy things, but this is different.

“You like it?” I ask her.

“It’s gorgeous. The lights are amazing,” she says as we walk further into the building. We take it all in and get ourselves situated. Ben, the man here with us, starts letting the VIPs in and introducing us to everyone. Arya wanders around, checking the place out. I think it’s okay for now as long as it’s not packed in here, and we can still see her.

Ben leaves Denz and War to handle the crowd and takes me to the office to show me around. I get a feel for everything, and he takes off for the night. Where I am, you can see everything in the club below.

I sit down in the chair and take it all in. Mainly, I take her in. Arya is at the bar with War, getting drinks. I can only imagine he’s telling the bartender to give her whatever she wants for the night even though she isn’t twenty one yet.

The crowd starts to grow as more and more people come in. Denz stays close to the front door, welcoming people as they come in.

Deciding I’ve had enough watching, I walk back down to the main floor and join them. I stop at Arya first and make sure she’s good.

“You need anything?” I ask her over the music.

“No. I’m good,” she replies, showing me her drink and moving her body to the music. I smile at her before I take off to the front with the guys.

“How’s everything up there?” Denz asks.

“It was all in order. Whoever the hell Ben is, he did a good job keeping things straight. I don’t think we’re going to have an issue,” I tell him.

“Good. Everything else seems to be running smoothly,” he adds.

It seems like it takes forever before they stop letting people in. There are people wall to wall, and I’m sure War is having a fit about it, too. I don’t see him anywhere, and I hope that’s a good thing, although with him, you can never be too sure.

I wander the club, keeping an eye on things as I go. So far, everything seems to be moving in the right direction. People are having a good time and the DJ is doing his thing.

I walk through the middle of the dancefloor when I find Arya. Her hands are in the air, and she’s sweating, but damn does she look good doing it.

I step up behind her, and my hands find her hips before I start moving with her. I lean down and press my lips to her neck before she leans back and rests her head on my shoulder. I slide my hands around her waist and keep her tucked close to me.

“You’re making me hot,” she calls out to me over her shoulder.

“Isn’t that the point?”

“Not when we’re in here,” she laughs. She thinks I care we’re in the middle of everyone? This is our fucking club. I chuckle in her ear and slide my hand down her stomach to the hem of her dress. Then I slowly slip my hand under and find her panties soaked.

“Arya? Why are you so wet?” I ask in her ear.

“You’re touching me.”

“Or are you looking at other men?” I ask her as I rub her over her panties. She doesn’t answer at first, and that’s fine by me. I don’t mind if Arya looks as long as no one touches.

“Har,” she whines a little, and I smile against her flesh.

“What do you want?”

“You know what I want.”

“And I’m not letting you have it. I’m pretty sure this pussy is wet for another man,” I growl in her ear. Quickly, she spins around and grabs my face in her hands. She pushes herself up and presses her lips to mine, kissing me like I’ve never been kissed before.

Her tongue dips into my mouth, and I devour her. I nip at her lips and then pull back, staring up at me.

“Please,” she asks, but I shake my head. “Are you acting like War?”

“Does he deny you an orgasm?”

“No, but it sounds like something he’d do.”

“Go back to dancing, Arya.”

“Har. I can’t dance like this,” she whines as she tugs at my shirt. It’s a little amusing to hear her whining like she is.

“You’ll be okay, and tonight? Tonight I’m going to fuck you so hard.” Her lips part as she stares at me, but I just give her a little shove back into the crowd.

I walk away and head through the crowd and across to the bar. That’s where I settle in for a while.

Chapter 25

Arya

I'm having a blast tonight, and I didn't think I would. I'm not usually into the whole nightclub scene, but this place is on fire.

I'm sweating my ass off, but I don't care. The music is bumping, the beat blasting through me. I'm still a little pissed about what Harlon did to me, but after a few more drinks, I get over it.

I'm dancing when I feel someone come up behind me, but I'm too tipsy to care who it is. I've been dancing mainly with girls all night, so none of the guys get mad. Hands are on my hips, and I keep moving to the beat.

It takes seconds, literal seconds, for the hands to be ripped away from me. I spin around just in time to see War shoving the man away. I can see the anger and the rage in his eyes when he drags his gaze back to meet mine. Internally, I tremble. The guy he shoved walks away, but War's eyes stay trained on mine.

He takes slow, deliberate steps toward me as my chest heaves. It's almost as if I can't get enough oxygen into my lungs. He's sucking it all up and leaving me with nothing.

When he's close enough that he can reach me, he cocks his head to the side and studies me for a long second. Then his hand snaps up, wrapping around my throat and pulling me toward him. When his face is close enough to mine, he mutters one word.

"Run." I'm confused by what he's saying to me. Why would I run? Where the hell am I running to?

"What?"

"You better start running now, little bird, because when I find you, I'm going to make you pay for that." My body instantly goes tight, and a shiver runs down my spine. He wouldn't hurt me, would he? Not in a bad way, at least.

“I’m not running through the club, War.” Before I know what’s happening, he reaches under my dress and grabs a handful of my pussy, squeezing it so hard a little cry escapes my throat.

“You prefer I punish you right here, then? In front of everyone?”

“No.”

“Then run, little bird.” That was his last warning. He pulls his hand free, and I look into his eyes once more, knowing he isn’t joking right now. I turn on my heel, and I run through the damn crowd. Where the hell I’m going, I don’t know. There’s a VIP section, but that would be too obvious. So I keep going. There’s a stairway that leads up to the offices. I could go up there, but I’m sure the doors are locked, right? Why the hell do I feel like I’m panicking? It’s War. But then, I’ve never pissed him off to this point before, and I didn’t even mean to.

My other option is the bathroom, but he would look there. I turn my head from side to side and look around at where I could hide. The only place I can go is up the stairs, so that’s what I do. I run up the steps, checking behind me to make sure he isn’t back there. When I reach the top, I try all the doors and find one unlocked. I sigh and rush in, locking it behind me. I stand still, catching my breath before glancing around the room. There’s a desk, a few chairs, and a couch. Nothing I could hide behind. Maybe I should try to break into the other rooms? I debate it, only to hear the door handle jiggling. Maybe he’ll walk away since it’s locked.

I take slow steps back until my back hits the wall, but then it happens. I hear keys jingling. Why the fuck would I think he didn’t have keys? Fucking stupid, Arya. They own the goddamn club now!

I watch the handle turn as my breathing kicks up a notch. Am I afraid of him? Should I be?

The door opens and all my thoughts vanish when I see him standing there. He looks pissed. Anger rolls off him in waves that could easily drown me.

“War,” I say his name softly. He shakes his head and walks into the room, slipping the keys into his pocket before locking the door behind him. “I was only dancing.”

“With another man,” he adds, his tone dark and cold.

“We didn’t do anything,” I tell him.

“He wasn’t one of my brothers.”

“But I didn’t do anything, War.”

“Hmm. You keep saying that.”

“Because it’s true!” I say louder this time.

“I want all your clothes off. Every last fucking piece,” he says. I shake my head, but he just raises his eyebrow. The look alone tells me I need to get the clothes off in a timely manner. So I do. I pull the dress up and over my head, laying it to the side when he nods toward my panties and bra. I make quick work of them, too, and move to my boots.

“Leave those on.” I stand up straight as he looks at me intently. Then he’s stalking toward me, and I feel like I can’t breathe again. It’s too much. He’s too much. I start to open my mouth to say more, but he raises his hand to stop me. I take quick, short breaths as he continues his slow trek across the room. When he’s close enough, he grabs my hand and walks me to the window, shoving my body against it. I can see everything down below, but they can’t see us.

His breath is warm as it dances over the flesh on my shoulder.

“Oh, little bird. The things I’m going to do to you,” he whispers, and I shudder. “What you’re going to do right now is be quiet. Do you understand me?” I nod my head, not willing to say anything else. He grunts, and I hear him removing his belt. Then I feel it before I see it. He loops the belt around my neck, and instantly, I tense. I don’t want this. I don’t want to do this.

“War,” I say his name, but then the belt gets tighter. It’s not so tight that I can’t breathe, but it’s enough to be uncomfortable.

“I said no talking. The more you talk, the tighter it gets,” he warns me.

After he's satisfied with the belt, he drags me toward the desk, where he motions for me to sit. I do as I'm told and climb up on the desk, sitting and waiting for his directions. I watch him strip in front of me, his hard body on full display for me.

"Spread your legs," he demands. I do as I'm told and spread my legs wide. "Scoot down the desk toward me."

When I'm where he wants me, he pushes me back so that I fall onto the desk. Then his hand comes out and slaps my pussy. Hard. I squeal from the pain, and he does it again. Over and over, he slaps my pussy with force.

"War!" I yell at him. He gets closer and reaches up, notching the belt once more. Now, it's getting slightly harder to breathe, but still bearable.

"No talking." I lay at his mercy, not knowing what he was going to do to me. He grabs my thighs in a bruising grasp and jerks me further toward him. When I'm at the edge, he grabs his cock and teases my entrance before hitting me with his cock next. I gasp at the feeling, and he does it over and over again. My body is on fire with need, and he knows it.

"I'm going to fuck you so hard it's going to hurt, little bird. You're going to cry," he tells me. As if he hasn't fucked me hard before. He must see the look in my eyes because he starts to laugh darkly.

"You think I've fucked you hard before, right? You haven't felt shit," he tells me. Now I suck in a breath. How could he possibly fuck me harder than he has before? There's no way.

War plays with my clit with the tip of his cock, his piercing hitting it in all the right places. His pre cum coats the tip as he twirls it around and drives me crazy. I moan as he keeps going, but when I feel like I'm going to explode, he stops. I whine a little but know not to say anything or the belt will get tighter.

"How many times do you think I can drag your little body to the edge and then stop it all, little bird? How much do you think you can handle?" he asks, knowing I can't answer him. He wouldn't do that, would he? But just as I think about it, he

slams his cock into me. And when he said I hadn't seen anything yet. He wasn't lying.

He pulls my ass so it's off the desk, and he drives into me with so much force I feel like I'm breaking in two. I scream from both the pleasure and the pain. I don't know which one is overriding the other at this point. War keeps pounding into me, and I can feel my muscles slowly begin to tighten right before he pulls out of me completely.

"War!" I scold him, but he just laughs. He leans up and tightens the leather around my neck a little more. Now, it's harder to breathe. Now, I don't like it. I feel like I'm going to panic, and he knows it.

"Stay calm, and it won't be so bad," he warns me. I do my best to stay calm and take small breaths when he's thrusting back inside me. Once again, he takes me hard to the point of tears. I try to blink them back, but over and over, he denies me an orgasm. Each time he stops, I cry out again. And he doesn't stop doing it until my body is about to give out.

"War, please," I beg him as tears roll down my cheeks and my body aches. He smirks and then reaches for the belt, his cock still inside me. He unhooks it, and I think he's going to tighten it again, but this time, he jerks it hard. My eyes bulge as I reach up and try to pull it free. He shakes his head and pounds into me harder. Tears fall rapidly down my cheeks now as he keeps fucking me. I'm so fucking close once again, but he stops. He releases the belt and loosens it as I gasp for air. He pulls the belt from around my neck and tosses it to the floor.

"Get up," he demands. My legs are trembling, and I can barely stand as I rub my neck. "Get over here," he orders, nodding to where he stands by the window again. With legs like jelly, I walk over to him even as tears still stream down my cheeks.

"You're going to do what I say. You got it?" I nod my head as he spins me to face away from him.

"Hands on the floor." I bend over and place my hands on the floor when he lifts my ass in the air. "Now wrap your legs around me like this," he says. I'm facing away from him, but I do as I'm told and wrap my legs around the back of him. Then

he's inside me again. And this time, it's like nothing I've ever experienced before. At this angle, he's hitting places I didn't know existed. His cock is touching every part of me, and then he really starts thrusting.

"War! It's too much," I cry out, but he doesn't listen. He keeps going, ignoring my pleas as he fucks me faster and harder.

"It's not enough," he growls as he keeps going. One of his hands releases me, and I'm afraid I'm going to fall when he slaps my ass hard. It stings, and he knows it because he laughs and does it again and again. Each time I scream louder and thank God no one can hear me.

His piercings drag along my insides as an orgasm claws at me. Just when I think he isn't going to let me come again, he goes harder. My arms are trembling, about to give out on me, when he lifts me, causing my back to bend at an awkward angle. He walks with me like this, and his cock still in me, over to the desk where he lays me down.

"Put your legs down, but stay bent over," he tells me. I let my tired legs fall to the floor and bend over the desk. War grips my hips in his hands, leaving his marks on me, and pounds into me for the last time. We both came hard this time. Him grunting, and me screaming.

When he finally pulls out of me, I feel like all my muscles have given out on me. I hear redressing behind me when he walks over and lifts me off the desk and into his arms. He carries my naked and bruised body over to the couch, where he drops down, holding onto me.

"Never let me see another man who isn't my brothers touching you," he warns me. I nod my head before it falls over, landing on his chest. War reaches up and runs his fingers through my hair as we both catch up on our breathing. I don't know how long we sit or when I fell asleep but I pry my eyes open when I hear Denz and Harlon. Blinking a few times to get my vision to clear, they both smile over at me. I lift my head and see that I'm still cradled in War's arms, just like before.

"How long was I asleep?"

“It’s five in the morning, so about five hours,” Denz tells me. I feel like my eyes are going to bug out of my head when he says that.

“Are you serious?”

“Yeah. Looks like War did a number on you,” Har says, nodding toward me. “Now the poor desk girl is really going to think we kidnapped you.” The guys laugh as I glance up at War to see if he’s still mad at me. But when he looks down, I can see he isn’t. He reaches up and grips my chin, pressing a kiss to my lips.

“You okay?” he asks, and it shocks me a little. War isn’t one to ask that.

“I’m good. I’m sorry,” I tell him.

“Don’t be. I’m just a jealous fucker.” I nod my head and cuddle back into him.

“We were talking while you were asleep. Would you like to stay a few more days and go to the beach out here?” Harlon asks. I lift my head again and look between them.

“Really?”

“Yeah, if you want to.”

“Yeah. I’d like that.”

Chapter 26

Denz

A bikini. A barely fucking there bikini at that. That's all Arya has on as she lays on the beach, getting her body tanned. I want to cover her up because there's been more than one asshole looking at her since we got here.

Not that there haven't been girls all over us because there have, but we mostly send them away.

A few girls come up and start talking to me, and I basically ignore what they're saying when I catch Arya's gaze. She sits up, propping herself up on her elbows as she narrows her eyes at me. She looks pissed, and maybe she is.

I'm not much listening to the girls at all while my focus is on Arya. But for some reason, she shoves herself up and stands, flipping her long blonde hair over her shoulder, and starts walking. I look around for War and Harlon but they're out in the ocean.

I leave the girls standing there and jog after Arya.

"Arya!" I call out to her. She ignores me, so I jog faster to catch up. Reaching out, I grab her wrist and spin her to face me.

"Where the fuck are you going by yourself?"

"Let me get something straight here. If I so much as look at another man who isn't one of you three, I get punished for it, but you can let girls hang all over you, and I'm supposed to what? Look the other way?" she snaps at me. Yeah, she's pissed.

"In case you didn't notice, I wasn't even listening to them."

"Oh, I noticed. I noticed her with her hand on your arm, and you know what? I almost went over there and ripped it off her fucking body," she growls at me. I raise my eyebrows, having never seen her this mad before. It's fucking sexy as hell, and I like it.

"You're jealous."

“Very!” she snaps. I nod my head and reach for her chest, running my fingers over her tattoo that represents all of us.

“When we said you were ours, we all meant it, Arya. We don’t want anyone else.” Now, she raises her eyebrows and stares back at me before slapping my hand away from her chest.

“Then prove it.” With that, she storms past me again and back toward her towel. I smirk and motion for the guys to come out of the water as I walk back over to her. She bends over, and I grab her hips, rubbing my cock against her. She stands quickly and slaps at me when the other two arrive.

“What’s going on?” Harlon asks as he looks between us.

“Our girl is jealous. It seems we aren’t allowed to look at other women anymore if she can’t look at men.”

“I never said you couldn’t look, little bird. I said don’t touch,” War adds.

“He had girls touching him,” she says, pointing at me. Without thinking twice about it, I grab her and pull her into my arms, crashing my mouth to hers. I kiss the hell out of her, reminding her she’s ours and she has nothing to worry about. And when I pull away, War grabs her next, then Harlon. I hear the people around us talking shit, but I don’t care.

“Stop being jealous, Arya. No one is going anywhere,” I tell her before grabbing her once more and lifting her over my shoulder. She squeals as I carry her toward the water with the other two behind us. I reach up and slap her ass as she finally gives in and laughs.

“Don’t take me too far out, Denz. I can’t swim.”

“I know. I remember.”

“Yeah, because you tried to kill me last time,” she laughs as I set her in the water. The waves keep coming and slamming into us, but I keep a hold of her as the other two swim.

“I’d never do that, and you know it. War on the other hand,” I tell her as I reach up and run my fingers over the bruise on her neck.

“He was mad. It was my fault,” she adds. I shake my head.

“No one’s fault. We are who we are, right?”

“Next time, do you think we can bring Sasha?” She asks. I love that she thinks of her and wants to include her in things.

“Yeah, we will. I bet she’ll love that.”

“I know she will. It’ll be fun. We can do girl stuff together,” she says as the waves slam against her. A big one comes and nearly knocks her down, but I grab ahold of her and lift her in my arms before that can happen. Arya bites her lips as she looks at me, her big blue eyes burning straight through me.

“What are you thinking about?” I ask her.

“How lucky I am to have you guys.” I don’t usually get emotional or anything, but Arya brings out a new side of all of us. My chest feels full when we’re all together like this. It might be strange to some, but for us, it works.

“You want me to fuck you in the ocean?”

“There’s too many people out here,” she says.

“Not if we go further in. They won’t see shit.”

“What about the waves?”

“Do you trust me?” That’s a question none of us have asked her that I know of, and it’s important to me. I want her to trust me, trust us.

“Yeah, I do.” That’s all I needed to hear. Arya wraps her legs around my waist as I walk us further into the water. When we’re out far enough, I reach for my cock that’s already hard as a rock and pull it out of the top of my shorts. I shift her bottoms to the side and slip inside her, causing her to moan.

“This is going to be quick,” I tell her. She nods her head and slowly begins to ride me. I keep my hands planted on her ass as I jump the waves with my cock inside of her. Arya seems to be enjoying it, and that’s all that matters to me. Her eyes are closed as she moans for me.

Just like I told her, I come quickly, and so does she. I pull out of her, tuck myself back in, and adjust her bottoms, but she keeps her legs around my waist.

“What the hell is that?” she asks, looking at something over my shoulder. I turn us to look as she clings to me. “Is that a shark?” she asks, freaking out a little. I take a good look at it, and I know it isn’t, but I want to play with her a little.

“Oh fuck. Don’t move,” I tell her. She clings to me like her life depends on it, not moving an inch. We watch as the thing comes closer, and she begins to panic.

“Stop, Arya. They can smell fear,” I tell her. She grips me tighter, her nails digging into my flesh. Then she suddenly relaxes and cocks her head to the side.

“You asshole! It’s a dolphin!” She squeals. The dolphin swims right past us, and Arya can’t take her eyes off it. “Oh my God, Denz. It’s a real dolphin!”

“I liked it better when it was a shark,” I tease her. She slaps at me as she keeps looking out into the water for more. When she’s had enough, I carry her back to the shore and set her on her feet. She takes off running toward War and Harlon, telling them about the dolphin. She looks happy. Her smile is bright as she talks animatedly about what she saw and how close it was.

This is how I want her to be always. I want to see this side of her more often than not. I want her to live her life and smile. I stand back and look at the three of them together, and I can’t think of a better way to spend my life.

I walk over and drop onto her towel before she crawls into my lap. I hold her tight as she sighs into my chest.

“You okay?”

“Yeah. I’m just thinking, is all,” she replies softly.

“About what?”

“Everything. What’s going to happen when I move out?” Now I laugh. I laugh hard, too.

“As if we’re going to let that happen.”

“I can’t stay in your dad’s house forever,” she reminds me.

“I didn’t say we’d be there forever. Who the hell knows, maybe we’ll get a new house,” I tell her. She pulls back and looks up at me intently.

“Really?”

“Yeah. I mean, I’ve been thinking about it. We’re making more money working for Dad, and Sasha would love it.”

“What about your mom?”

“What about her?”

“You can’t just leave her, Denz. There’s a reason you still hang around there, and it isn’t just Sasha.”

“You can read me like a book, can’t you?” She grins at me.

“I know a good heart when I see one.”

“There are days I hate her. Days I wish she would just die already and let us live our lives. But there are others I’m reminded that she’s my mom, she’s Sasha’s mom. I know things were bad growing up, but there had to be good times, right?” Arya smiles sadly, nodding her head.

“I’m sure there were.”

“Yeah, I’m sure.”

“Okay. Perk up, I’m hungry,” she tells me. I laugh and nod my head as she stands from my lap. She grabs her shorts and pulls them on before her tank top.

“She’s hungry,” I tell the other two.

“Me too,” War adds.

We pack up our stuff and head back toward the car when Arya’s phone chimes. She pulls it from her pocket as she watches the sand she’s kicking around. She stops walking for a second, looking down at her phone with a strange look on her face.

“What is it?” Harlon asks her.

“Nothing. Everything’s good,” she says before quickly sliding it back into her pocket. She starts walking again before leaping

and jumping on Harlon's back. Me and War share a look before he speaks.

"What do you think that was about?" he asks.

"I don't know."

"She's been doing that a lot lately," he says.

"With the phone? I know. I'm not sure who the hell is texting her."

"Maybe we should take it," War says with a shrug.

"We can't just take her phone. We have to give her some freedom." He nods, knowing I'm right. I'm not the type of guy either who would take away her phone. War, on the other hand, would have no problem doing just that.

We all walk back to the car and pack it up before walking down the little boardwalk and finding a place to eat. Once we're seated, Arya glances around like she's nervous.

"You okay?" Harlon asks her.

"Yeah. Just taking it all in before we leave. I've never been here before," Arya says, plastering a smile on her face, but I know there's something else bothering her. I just don't know what.

"You like seafood?" War asks her.

"I don't know. I've never really tried anything aside from fish, and I love fish."

"So you're going to try something new today?" I ask her.

"Yeah, I am. What do you guys get?" she asks as we open the menus and start browsing.

"Fuck this, I'm getting the platter," War announces.

"What is that?" Arya asks, leaning over so she can look at his menu.

"It has a little of everything. You should get that," he encourages her. She smiles up at him and I can see just how much she really does care about us.

And God fucking help us all, but I think the three of us are falling for this girl.

Chapter 27

Warren

We've been everywhere the last two months. And I mean everywhere. We've been to New York, Chicago, and back to Miami. It's been crazy, but it's also been fun. Especially having Arya and Sasha with us. The girls get along great, and I think Arya is good for Sasha to be around. It gives her someone to look up to.

Life has been good to us. At least so far. I'm sitting at the table in the dining room looking at the work Arya has done on the websites, and I'm fucking impressed.

"What's that?" Harlon asks as he comes into the room, nodding toward the computer.

"The work Arya's done on dad's websites. The girl has skills," I tell him.

"We knew that. They do look amazing, though," he says, standing over the back of my chair and looking too. Our phones ping at the same time, and we both slide them out to see what's happening.

"Where the hell is she going?" Harlon mouths as we watch the little dot that's Arya moving across the screen. Yeah, we put a tracker on her phone without her knowing.

"She's leaving. Where would she be going?" Harlon dials her number, and she answers quickly. He asks her where she is, and she lies and says she is with Tracy at her house. Harlon hangs up, and we both move at the same time, hollering for Denz as we go.

"What's wrong?"

"Arya's going somewhere," I tell him as we walk out the front door and climb into the SUV.

"What do you mean?"

"She lied to Har and said she was at Tracy's. GPS says otherwise. She's driving," I tell him as Harlon pulls out of the driveway. He speeds through the streets and tries to catch up to

her. When we spot her car, he stays far enough back that she won't see us.

"Where do you think she's going?" I ask.

"Hard to say," Denz adds as we all watch the car. She takes a turn off the next exit and we follow behind her. The sun is going down, and it's getting dark, which pisses me off. She shouldn't be out this late by herself. I guess, technically, she isn't by herself since we're following her.

"Right there," Denz says as she turns once more. We follow at a good distance when she pulls into a neighborhood and parks on the side of the road. She leaves her headlights on as she climbs out. Harlon kills our headlights and pulls as close as we can get so that she doesn't see us, but we can see her.

"Who the fuck is that?" I growl when I see a man coming toward her. I'm reaching for the door handle when Denz stops me.

"Wait. Let's see what the hell she's doing first," he says. I nod, and we keep watching. They seem to be arguing. Her hands are flying through the air, and his mouth keeps moving. Then I see her run her hand over her face like she's tired of all this.

"What the fuck?" Harlon whispers while we keep watching. The argument seems to pick back up when the guy reaches for her. She bats his hand away, but he moves in again. This time, he grabs her and jerks her body toward him. I don't even get the chance to move first because Denz is already out of the car. He's storming down the road as Har and I climb out and follow. She doesn't even see him coming.

Denz snatches the man off Arya and slams his fist into his face. Arya screams because she doesn't realize it's us at first. She turns her head as if looking for help when she sees me and Harlon coming.

The two guys are on the ground fighting each other as I step up and watch.

"Are you going to stop them?" she yells.

"No. Why would I?"

“We’re in a neighborhood, War! They’re going to call the police,” she snaps at me. Yeah, maybe she’s right. They might call the police. But right now, that guy who had his hands on her is getting exactly what he deserves. So I do nothing but watch.

The two of them beat the shit out of each other when someone comes out of the house right up the road, yelling about calling the cops just like Arya said they would.

“How did you know where I was?” she asks as Harlon moves in now to pull them apart.

“Tracker on your phone.”

“You put a tracker on my phone?” she snaps, her hands balling into fists at her sides. I just smirk at her.

“Cops are coming,” Harlon says as Arya runs her hand through her hair.

“This is so fucked,” she smarts off.

“Is it? What the fuck are you doing with this guy?” Harlon yells now.

“He’s my ex! He called and said he was giving me back the money he stole.”

“He stole your money?” Harlon asks.

“He stole everything I had. That’s why I moved in with my mom,” she tells us. Har is pissed when he spins around and grabs the guy, punching him in the face. I just laugh.

“Stop him!”

“Nah, he’s fine,” I tell her. Harlon beats the shit out of him just like Denz did. Denz stands off the side, wiping blood off his lip onto his shirt but still watching Harlon. Arya moves to go stop it but I grab her arm and shake my head.

“He stole from you, little bird.” She doesn’t try to fight me on it. She just blows out a big breath and stands with her hands on her hips, watching. When Har’s done, I pull my knife out and walk toward the asshole laying on the ground.

“Oh my God! Don’t you dare, War! Don’t fucking do it,” Arya yells as I lean down next to him. I can hear the sirens in the distance getting closer as I open the asshole’s hand and sprawl out his fingers. Arya runs toward me, but Denz grabs her. She kicks and screams and begs me not to kill him. I’m not going to kill him with the cops on the way. I’m not that reckless.

Instead, I lean down close to his ear and whisper, “If I ever find out you come near her, text her, call her, or even breathe in her direction, I’m coming back for more.” Then I cut the piece of shit’s finger off. The asshole screams as I stand up and toss it over the ledge next to us. Arya looks shocked and doesn’t say anything else.

“I can’t go back,” Denz announces. We all know he can’t go back to jail again because of Sasha.

“We got this,” Harlon tells him. “Take Arya and get out of here.” Arya still stands there with her mouth open, not saying anything until Denz grabs her and drags her toward the car.

“We can’t leave them!” She snaps, trying to get out of his grip.

“We have to,” he tells her.

“They’ll go to jail!” She screams louder this time as she fights him. There’s our girl.

“They’ll be fine,” Denz snaps as he shoves her into the car. He gives us a nod and climbs in, pulling off quickly right before the cops show up.

It’s the same old shit on another day. Hands behind your backs. You have the right to remain silent.

“Where’s his finger?” The bigger cop asks me. I smirk at him and lean my head forward to fuck with him. I stick out my tongue and open my mouth.

“Ate it.”

“You didn’t eat it,” he sneers.

“I did. Swallowed that motherfucker whole.” Now, the cop looks sick as the ambulance pulls up. Harlon laughs as we lean against the cop car. We watch everything happen and I

couldn't care less. He fucking stole from her, he's lucky I let him live. For now, anyway.

The sniveling little shit cries as the paramedics load him into the ambulance. I laugh out loud and catch his attention, blowing him a kiss with my lips. He quickly moves his gaze away from mine, and they continue what they're doing.

"Think dad's going to be pissed?" Harlon muses.

"More than likely. But then again, it's been a while since any of us have gone to jail. It's almost a record at this point," I laugh.

"I can't believe she came here without us. Why the hell didn't she just tell us about him?" I shrug.

"Maybe she thought she could handle it herself."

"Maybe. Still fucked up," Har adds.

"I agree, but here we are."

"Come on," one of the cops says, yanking me off the car and dragging me toward the back. He opens the door and ushers me inside. I barely fit in the back of this shit, but I scoot sideways to be a little more comfortable.

"Don't kick at my windows!" he warns.

"How about I kick your ass instead?"

"Are you threatening a police officer?"

"No. If I were, I'd tell you all the ways I would carve your body up and serve it to my dog," I tell him, licking my lips. He looks uneasy, and that's exactly how I wanted him to look.

"You're sick! You're going to be locked up for a long time." I laugh hysterically this time.

"I'll be out before you get off your shift, and you know what? You better watch your ass then, Officer."

"I'll charge you for that!"

"Go ahead, but either way, I will get out," I remind him. He doesn't know what to say to me, and frankly, I don't care.

He slams the door and climbs in the front before taking off. I sit in the back humming a song just to piss him off a little more and cause a little more unease.

Once we reach the station, he pulls me out and hauls me in, with Har not far behind me.

“What were boys doing over there to being with?” the other asshole asks.

“Looking to get my cock sucked, Officer. I heard he was the best around,” I tell him with a grin.

“We could do this hard way or the easy way, Warren.”

“Oh, I do apologize, Dean, I wasn’t aware we were on a first-name basis today,” I snarl at him. Yeah, I know this asshole.

“Is this gang-related?”

“Does it look gang-related?”

“You cut off his fucking finger, Warren!” he snaps at me.

“Did I?” I ask mockingly.

“Do I need to expect a gang war?” Harlon laughs so that the asshole turns to look at him now.

“You seem a little uptight today, Dean. Is the wife not giving good head anymore?” he asks him. I see Dean’s face get redder and redder, and I can’t stop the laughter that comes out of me.

“You leave her out of this!”

“She didn’t leave my cock out of her the last time I saw her,” Harlon says. Before I know what’s happening, Dean swings and punches Har right in the face. Har comes back, growling at him as I laugh harder.

“Damn, Dean. Someone isn’t getting any pussy,” I push him a little more. His face reddens, and just like he punched Har, he comes at me. He pulls back and looks me in the eye as I stare him down. “Just remember, I like payback,” I remind him. He narrows his eyes at me before lowering his hand. I didn’t figure he’d touch me knowing what he knew about me. He

steps back and looks between us as a few other cops come up next to us.

“You deal with this shit,” Dean tells them.

“Nothing to deal with. The guy didn’t want to press charges,” one cop says. I grin like a fucking fool now. I didn’t think the little bitch would do it even after I cut off his finger. I think he took my warning to heart.

“What do you mean he isn’t pressing charges? He cut off his goddamn finger!” Dean roars.

“He said he didn’t want to press charges, that it was all his fault.” Dean turns his gaze back to mine, and I just smirk because we fucking won.

“Fuck this. Release the assholes,” he snaps before turning and quickly walking away. I didn’t think he’d stick around and wait for me to be uncuffed.

As soon as the cuffs are off, we’re out the door.

Chapter 28

Harlon

As soon as they said they weren't pressing charges, we got the hell out of there. It's not the first time we've landed ourselves in the police station in cuffs, and I'm sure it won't be our last.

"You want to grab drinks?" War asks as we walk across town. We called our dad and let him know that we were fine, and we planned on walking home so he didn't have to come and pick us up. He didn't mind after he found out what we did and why we did it. I think a small part of him is into Arya as much as we are.

"Fuck it. Yeah, we might as well," I tell him. We keep walking until we find a liquor store that's still open and head inside. War goes directly for the whiskey as I browse the shelves. I'm not too picky about what I drink when I do drink. We don't drink a ton, but when we do, we get pretty shitfaced.

"Hey, Har? You think Arya will like this fruity shit?" he calls out to me. I turn to look over my shoulder and see him holding up some pink shit.

"She's like us, War. She'll drink anything," I tell him.

"Yeah, but I'm trying to get her something nice," he chuckles.

"Trying to make up for the fact we put a tracker on her phone?" he nods, and I laugh before turning back and grabbing the first bottle of whatever it is in front of me. We walk up to the counter and sit our shit down while the lady rings us up. I pull my wallet out and slide my card when War speaks.

"Oh, look at you getting all fancy and shit with your bank cards."

"We're making good money now. I had to put it somewhere."

"And you chose the bank?"

"What the fuck do you have against banks?"

"I don't like them for one. Why the fuck do they need to hold my money?"

“Where do you keep your money?” I ask him, a little confused by what he’s saying.

“At home. What the fuck, man? You think I’m going to the bank every time I want cash? No. Fuck that shit.”

“You’re really weird, War.” He chuckles and grabs our bags, carrying them out of the store. We start walking again when he glances over at me.

“How pissed do you think she is?”

“Pretty pissed,” I reply. He nods his head as we continue our walk while he opens a bottle, and starts drinking. He passes it to me, and I do the same as we walk and talk. It’s been a while since me and War have hung out, just the two of us. We’re all usually together for the most part.

We make it home after hours of walking or stumbling since we’ve been drinking so much. We both laugh as we make our way up the stairs and into the house. She’s sitting there as soon as we come in, in the middle of the goddamn floor.

“What the hell are you doing?” I ask. She looks up, anger in her gaze as she looks between us.

“Oh, shit,” War mumbles.

“You have no fucking right to put a tracker on my phone. Who the hell do you think you are?” she yells as she climbs to her feet. I’m too drunk for this.

“We have every right. And it seems it’s a good thing we did,” I tell her.

“A good thing? A good fucking thing? Are you serious? Denz told me if he went to jail one more time, he could lose the chance to have Sasha if something happened to his mom. What if they would have caught him? Huh?” Damn, her anger is sexy as hell, and I wish I had seen more of it. I stumble toward her, taking another pull from my drink before offering it to her. She slaps my hand away and rests her hands on her hips.

“Don’t be so mad, Arya. We had it covered,” I tell her. She reaches up and grabs my chin in her fingers, tilting my face to

look at the bruise I'm sure Dean left there.

"What happened to your face?"

"Cops. Cops happened to my face," I slur.

"You're fucking drunk. You get arrested, you get released, and you think it's smart to get drunk on the walk home?"

"Yeah, mom. That's exactly how it happened." She is fire-red right now. I've never seen her this angry before. War walks over, throwing his arm around her and pulling her into his side even though she doesn't want to be there.

"Listen, little bird. It's been a trying night for everyone. Let's just have a drink and calm down."

"I don't want a fucking drink! I want to know why the hell you'd put Denz in that situation!"

"He's fine, Arya! You know what? He's my fucking brother. And if you think for one goddamn second I would put either one of them in danger, then you don't know shit about me," War growls at her. She blinks rapidly as he pulls away from her and storms off toward the steps.

"He's right, you know? We wouldn't put each other in danger, Arya. That's not what we do. We already knew if the cops got called, he was out, and we were in. I thought you knew us better than that?" I keep my voice calm as she blinks rapidly. I know she's trying not to cry right now, but she needed to hear it. We'd never have let Denz take the fall for that shit.

I walk past her and down the steps where War is sitting on the couch and Denz is passed out asleep. I drop down next to War and sigh, taking another long pull from my bottle.

"You good?" I ask.

"I'm fine. Just a little pissed," he says. I nod my head because I understand that.

"She was just worried about Denz," I remind him trying to calm the anger in him.

"Yeah, I get that, but come the fuck on. Is that what she thinks of us? That we would let our own brother fall?"

“No. That isn’t what I thought at all.” I hear her voice, and I turn my head to see her at the bottom of the steps. I motion for her to come over, and she does, sitting right in between the two of us.

“I’m sorry. Both of you. I don’t have a family. I don’t have brothers or sisters, so this is all new to me. I’ve never had someone have my back the way you guys have each other,” she reaches up and swipes a tear from her cheek. “I wasn’t just worried about Denz either. I was worried about all of you.”

“Why didn’t you just tell us about him?”

“He’s the reason I’m here. The reason I failed at life,” she says.

“You didn’t fail at life, Arya,” I tell her.

“I let myself fall for him. I let myself believe he loved me and wanted more out of life with me when all he actually wanted was to steal everything I had. I was stupid, and yeah, I failed at that part of my life.”

“You learned a lesson. There’s a big difference between failing and learning a lesson,” War tells her.

“I’m really sorry,” she says, looking up at me now. I lean down and kiss her, letting her know I’m okay. Then she turns to War, and he smirks at her.

“Open your mouth, little bird,” he says. Arya opens her mouth as he takes a long pull from his bottle, tips her head back, and slowly lets the alcohol trickle from his mouth into hers. Then he leans in and devours her mouth with his.

“Now that’s all settled. You drinking?” I ask her. She nods her head and reaches for my bottle, but War doesn’t let her.

“Wait. I got you this,” he says, pulling the pink shit out of the bag and passing it to her. She holds it up in her hand and laughs.

“It’s pink. And it’s called Kinky,” she laughs as she reads the bottle.

“I thought it would be perfect for you,” War says with pride.

“It is. I’m going to down this shit,” she says as she takes the cap off and brings it to her lips. War watches her every move when I hear the door open. You can hear footsteps as someone comes down the stairs. We all look over to see Julie standing there.

“Whatever this is, it’s done,” she says, waving between us all.

“What are you talking about?” Arya asks, taking another drink from her bottle. By now, Denz has woken up and is listening in.

“This, Arya! What the hell are you doing with these men? Have you learned nothing from the last one?” She screams. Arya doesn’t seem fazed at first, just sipping from her bottle.

“How do you know anything?”

“I’ve seen the cameras, Arya. I’ve seen them in your room and you down here. I’m not stupid.” Now Arya stands to her feet and stares her mom down.

“You’re spying on me?” she asks.

“I was checking up on things. They’re your brothers, for God’s sake.”

“They’re my step-brothers, and that’s not the same.”

“You’re being childish is what you’re doing. Do you think these three are going to want you forever? Do you think any of them will stick around?”

“Childish? Are you serious?”

“Get out. You are not going to come in here and ruin everything, Arya. Get your things and get out,” she snaps at her. Now, the three of us are on our feet and crowding around Arya.

“She’s not going anywhere,” Denz tells her.

“This is my house, too. You guys are adults. You don’t live here. What I say goes,” she sneers at us. I pull my phone out and send a quick text to my dad, asking him to come down here if he isn’t busy. It takes a minute, but he finally comes down the stairs and looks between all of us.

“What’s going on?” he asks.

“I want Arya out. I’m so sorry, Jarrod. I didn’t know she’d behave like this, sleeping with all three of your sons.” Dad raises a hand to stop her there.

“Julie, this isn’t news to me.”

“What do you mean? You knew about this?”

“Yeah, I have.”

“I want her out, Jarrod. Now.” My dad looks at us and Arya before looking back to Julie. He shakes his head and turns to face her, gripping her shoulders in his hands.

“If anyone is leaving, it’s going to be you, Julie,” he tells her.

“Me? Why would I leave?” she asks in a confused tone.

“You’re cheating on me.”

“I am doing no such thing!”

“You are, and I have the proof. I was ... I was hoping that things would change for us. I was hoping we could be together and travel and see the world, and to be honest, I haven’t been faithful to you either.”

“I’m always traveling, Jarrod. Why would I want to travel on my time off? And how the hell can you call me out on being a cheater if you’re doing the same?” Dad shakes his head and runs his hand over his face.

“We don’t work anymore, Julie.”

“I ... I don’t understand.”

“I think you should go pack your things,” he tells her. Her mouth falls open as she looks at us and then back to him. A sick smile crosses her face before she huffs out a breath.

“You’re sleeping with her too, aren’t you?” She turns to Arya now. “You little whore!” War starts toward her, but Arya grabs the back of his shirt, pulling him back.

“That’s enough! She belongs to my sons, and as long as they’re happy, that’s all that matters to me. Now leave, Julie!” I’ve never heard my dad raise his voice to this level. I’ve never

imagined he would, but here he is, defending Arya to her mother, his wife. Julie looks around before she quickly takes off up the steps and my dad walks toward us. We all part for him as he looks at Arya standing in the middle of us.

“You are more than welcome to stay here as long as you like. There is no need for you to go anywhere,” he tells her, brushing her hair behind her ear.

“Thank you.”

“I’m only sorry things had to end this way. Since you’ve been here, I’ve seen a different side of your mother I didn’t know before, and I can honestly say I don’t like it.” Arya nods her head already knowing all this. Dad nods to us before turning and heading back up the stairs. We sit back down, but Arya doesn’t. She sets her bottle on the table and walks over to sit in the chair across the room. None of us made a move to go to her. She needs her space.

And that’s exactly what we give her.

Chapter 29

Arya

It's been a week since Jarrod made my mom leave. I still feel like it's my fault, though. Maybe she's right. Maybe being with them is too much, but I care about them, and I don't want to leave any of them.

My mind has been shit for the last week, and I don't know how to get it better. I've been working a lot since Jarrod got me more work. I'm thankful for it, too, and I finally have enough money to move out if I want to. The guys made it clear I wasn't going anywhere, but some days, I wonder if this is all going too fast, but I can't see my life without them in it in some form. I've grown attached to them, and that's the scary part.

I close my laptop and yawn, even though it's early. I wanted to go for a walk on the beach, but these strange messages I keep getting are starting to get to me. I thought about telling the guys about them, but they're still pissed they never found who drugged me at the gala, so I keep it to myself.

The thing is, they get more in depth. At first, I thought it was someone just fucking around and trying to scare me. Now they tell me what I'm wearing and what I'm eating. It's weird, and it scares the shit out of me, but there's no way I'm giving up what little freedom I do have left over it. If the guys knew, I'd be locked in the goddamn house for the rest of my life.

I shove off my chair and walk out of my room and down the steps. I don't see anyone, and I don't know if they're here or not, so I make my way down to the basement. Harlon sits in the chair with his head back and eyes closed. I smile at how peaceful he looks right now. I walk over, climb in his lap, and snuggle into him when his arms come around me.

"I didn't mean to wake you up."

"You're sitting on my cock; of course, I'm going to wake up," he says, causing me to laugh. "What's wrong?"

“How do you know something’s wrong?” I ask him. He sighs but never opens his eyes or looks at me.

“I can feel it. You’re tense.”

“Do you think my mom was right?”

“About what?”

“That we shouldn’t be together,” I tell him. Now, he lifts his head to look at me and shakes his head.

“No. She’s not right, baby. She’s jealous.”

“You think so?”

“Yeah, I do. She had something good with my dad, and she ruined it. She’s miserable, and now she’s trying to make you feel the same way. Don’t let her.” I nod my head and snuggle back into him.

“But he cheated, too, with me.”

“She knew that getting into things with him.”

“That he cheats?”

“That he isn’t a very faithful man. He has three kids with three different moms. What did she expect?” I nod my head. Maybe he’s right. Denz walks past with keys in his hand, and I call out to him.

“Where are you going?” he stops to turn and look at us.

“To get Sasha from school. She’s in trouble again,” he tells us.

“Want some company?” I ask. He shrugs but then nods his head. I climb out of Har’s lap and follow behind Denz up the stairs. We head out to his car, and I climb in and buckle up.

“What did she do this time?”

“Fighting. I don’t know what else to do with her. She can’t keep getting in trouble,” he says, sounding pissed. We pull out of the driveway and out onto the road.

“Would it be okay if I talked to her?”

“Why wouldn’t it be?” he asks, glancing over at me.

“I just didn’t want to overstep,” I admit.

“That’s not possible. You’re as much a part of this family as she is.” My chest tightens, and I feel those damn tears prickle the back of my eyes. I don’t think he knows what he just did to me. When I don’t respond, he glances over again.

“Shit. Come here,” he says, holding his arm out. I scoot across the seat, and he pulls me into his side, turning to kiss my forehead quickly. “You know I mean that, right?”

“So much has happened lately. I wondered how you guys felt.”

“Nothing is going to change the way we feel about you, Arya. Nothing.” I rest my head on his shoulder as we drive over to the school. Denz runs in and gets her, and she smiles brightly when she sees me in the car. She climbs and starts talking about anything and everything she can as we head back to her house. Once Denz parks the car, he turns to face her.

“You can’t keep doing this shit, Sasha.”

“You don’t know shit, Denz. You have no idea what the hell I did it for.”

“So fucking tell me!” he roars. She huffs out a breath and shakes her head, crossing her arms over her chest.

“Can we have a minute?” I ask Denz. He looks at me and back to her before getting out of the car.

“What’s going on? You have your brother worried,” I tell her.

“He’s too hard to talk to.”

“Then talk to me, Sasha. What’s going on?” I see the tears in her eyes as she climbs over the seat and sits in the driver’s seat.

“They talk shit, the kids at school do, mostly about my mom. And I know she isn’t a good mom, Arya, but she’s still my mom,” she cries.

“And they say mean shit?” She nods her head. “Sasha, people are mean. They are ugly. They want to bring you down because they’re down. Your mom, she’s something that can’t be replaced. Has she always been good to you guys? No, she hasn’t, but I get it. She’s your mom.”

“She’s dying, Arya.”

“I know she is. But you still have time to forgive her, Sasha. You still have time to make things right in your heart.”

“Is it okay that I love her still?”

“Of course it is. She’s your family, and she brought you into this world. You can love her all you want, Sasha.”

“Do you think Denz will be mad?” I shake my head.

“No. He won’t be mad because there’s a part of Denz, deep down, that loves her too.”

“I don’t think she has much time left,” she says as tears roll down her cheeks.

“I’m so sorry, Sasha. You know I’m here if I can do anything for you,” I tell her as I pull her into a hug.

“Will you talk to Denz for me?” I hold her for a long time before pulling back and nodding my head.

“I will, but you have to cut him a little slack. He’s doing the best he can for you,” I remind her.

“I know. I’ll do better.”

“Good. Want to go inside?” She nods her head, and we both climb out, heading inside. Denz is sitting on the couch when we walk in, and Sasha goes straight for him. She hugs him, and he wraps his arms around her, hugging her back.

“I’m sorry, Denz.”

“It’s all good, Sasha. It’s all good.” Sasha pulls away, smiling at me, before heading down the hall. I walk over and sit down next to Denz, grabbing his hand in mine.

“She’s a lot like you.”

“An asshole?” he muses, and I laugh.

“No, not an asshole. She loves your mom even though things haven’t been good. Kids were making fun of her, and she stood up for herself.”

“Fuck. I didn’t think that would be the issue,” he says.

“She knows she’s dying, and she needs to make her peace with that. You do, too,” I tell him. He sits back on the couch, looks over at me, and nods.

“There’s like a part of me that knows that and wants to go in there and tell her that I forgive her, but there’s another part that says fuck her, let her ass rot for what she did. She chose fucking alcohol over her kids. It’s fucking selfish.”

“I agree. It is selfish, but that part is in the past now. She’s dying, Denz, and if you don’t make that peace now, you never will.”

“How the fuck did I get someone like you?”

“You’re lucky, that’s how.”

“Yeah. I sure as fuck am.” He leans over and kisses me, and it’s like everything is right in the world. We stay huddled together on the couch, talking and laughing for a long time, when Sasha comes back out.

“I know this is going to sound weird, but would you two come in there with me?” I glance up at Denz, and he nods his head. We both climb off the couch and follow her into the room. I wasn’t really ready to see her like this. I’ve never seen her before today because Denz always kept the door closed.

She’s sick. Dying. Just like they said, she was. She looks terrible, and I can only imagine that it’s from all the alcohol she has consumed in her life.

Sasha sits on the edge of the bed as Denz and

I sit in a chair at the end of the bed.

“They said she can hear us,” Sasha says.

“I’m sure she can,” I add. I didn’t realize it had gotten to this point, that she was no longer responsive. It’s sad. Truly sad.

“Hey, Momma. It’s Sasha. I don’t know what to say to you. The last time we actually talked was two years ago. You told me I looked like my dad and that I was lucky for that.” I fight back my tears as I listen to her talk. This has to be so hard for her.

She talks for a long time before climbing into the bed and lying next to her mom. I watch her as she falls asleep. Denz motions for me to come with him, and I do. I stand, and I head for the door, but before he follows, I hear him say, "I forgive you, Mom." My heart shatters in my chest for them. This can't be easy on either of them.

We walk out the front door, and Denz pulls a cigarette out and lights it up. He offers me one, but I shake my head.

"Do you ever smoke?" he asks.

"No. I've smoked weed before but never cigarettes."

"Oh shit. We got us a good girl, huh?" I laugh now as Denz stalks toward me, blowing smoke into the air. "How about I make you dirty?"

"Haven't you three done that enough?" I question him. He shakes his head, takes another drag, and tosses his cigarette to the ground. Then he's there, backing me up against the Mustang.

"I haven't even begun to make you dirty yet," he tells me. Shivers roll over me, a chill running down my spine. Denz grabs my waist and spins me to face away from him before shoving me down on the hood of the car.

"What are you doing?" I ask him as he lifts my sundress.

"Making you dirty, baby." Then he pulls my thong down and makes me step out of it.

"It's daylight, Denz. Anyone could see us," I remind him. He chuckles darkly.

"Do you think anyone in this fucking neighborhood has the balls to look at you?" He shoves me down rougher onto the hood of the car before I hear his zipper behind me. Then his cock is pressing into me. I moan loudly and pray the neighbors don't hear me.

Denz grabs my hips and starts thrusting into me. It feels so damn good to have him inside me. His hands dig into my flesh, and I moan louder. Denz chuckles as he rolls his hips, getting right where I want him. Then, as quickly as he was

there, he pulls out of me. I whine, and he laughs before spinning me around to face him and lifting me onto the hood of the car.

Before I know it, his head is buried between my legs. His tongue caresses me in the most delightful ways, pulling feelings from deep down inside of me. My body shudders at the feel of him. He toys with my clit, circling it with his tongue until my legs begin to shake, but then he dips it inside me, and all I can feel is pleasure.

He keeps going, licking and sucking before he bites my clit between his teeth. I arch my back, the pain and pleasure almost too much to handle. Denz doesn't stop, either. He keeps going until I can't take any more. I come all over his tongue and face. I have no fucking shame about being on the hood of his car in front of everyone.

Denz keeps licking lightly until my legs stop shaking before pulling me off the hood of the car and turning me back around. His cock is back inside me, and it's the best fucking high I've been on.

Each thrust is harder than the last. Each caress of his cock against my walls sends me spiraling harder and faster. I don't think these guys even know what they do to me.

“Are you going to come again, baby?”

“Denz, please.”

“Are you begging me now? Beg me, Arya. Beg me to fuck you hard just like you like it.” And I do. I beg him.

“Please, Denz.”

“Tell me what you want?”

“You.”

“You have me. What do you want, Arya?” he slows down to a torturous pace that has me whining.

“Fuck me hard, Denz. I need your cock buried inside me.” As if that's what he was waiting to hear, that's what he does. He pounds into me until my legs begin to feel like jelly, and then

he goes harder. My fingers grip at nothing, trying to find something to hold onto just as I fall over the edge.

Denz comes grunting and groaning, and that's when I hear her.

"I can see your fucking ass, Denz. That's disgusting," Sasha yells. I burst into laughter as Denz does the same.

Chapter 30

Denz

Life seems to have settled to a point. Something is still off with Arya, but she isn't saying what it is, and I don't see any reason to force her, either.

Things at home have been better. Sasha has calmed her ass down at school and is actually doing her work now. I think her talk with Arya really helped.

"I want to get Arya something. Her birthday is coming up," I tell the guys.

"How do you know?"

"Dad told me. What should we get her?" Harlon asks.

"A ring." War declares. We both look at him like he's crazy when he shrugs. "What? Don't act like you haven't thought about it."

"It's a little soon for a ring," I tell him.

"Is it, though? I don't know about you fuckers, but I don't plan on letting her ass go anywhere," he adds.

"I think we're all on the same page there, but getting married?" Har asks.

"I didn't say getting married. Clearly, she can't marry all of us, but we can show her we're serious about this," War clarifies as he plays a video game.

"That's probably the sanest thing you've ever said, War," I tell him. Harlon laughs as War grins at us.

"It makes sense. She needs to feel apart of this family. I'm not sure she feels that right now."

"I agree. I don't think she does either," Harlon says.

"So we go shopping tomorrow."

"How do you know she even wants a ring?" I ask War.

“What woman doesn’t want a ring? And don’t pick some stupid shit, either, like a regular wedding band. She isn’t a regular girl,” he says.

“Clearly not if she fucks the three of us,” I laugh.

“What do you guys want to do today?” I ask, changing the subject.

“Take our girl out to dinner later. I think she’s working now.”

“Should we go interrupt her?” Harlon asks. We all shrug and War tosses the controller on the table before standing. The three of us walk up the stairs and then up to her room. She’s sitting where she always is, at the table on the balcony. She looks up when she hears us walking in.

“What the hell is this? An intervention?”

“It might be. What do we need to intervene with?” Harlon asks her.

“I wouldn’t know. Why do you all look so serious?” she asks, looking between us.

“Nothing. We’re going out for dinner tonight,” I tell her.

“Okay. And?”

“And what do you want to do now? We’re bored,” War tells her. She looks at her laptop and then back to us.

“What do you want to do?”

“Whatever you want to do,” we tell her.

“We could go to the pier. I haven’t been there yet,” she says, her eyes lighting up a little.

“Then let’s do that,” I say. Arya closes her laptop and picks it up, carrying it inside. She hooks it to her charger and then starts to strip.

“I thought we were leaving?” War asks as he slides up behind her, slipping his hands around her waist.

“We are leaving, so stop.”

“Then why are you teasing us?” Harlon whines.

“I’m not. I’m putting on a clean shirt. I can’t help that you three are horny all the time,” she tells us. The three of us laugh as War bites into her shoulder, causing her to moan.

“And you say we’re the horny ones,” I mumble.

“Fine. Let’s go,” War says before slapping her ass roughly. Arya jolts but goes straight to her closet and finds a different shirt.

“Can we walk?” she calls out from inside.

“It’s hot as fuck, Arya,” I complain.

“And? Stop being a baby.”

“We can walk if you want to, but I’m not carrying your ass back when your feet hurt,” I remind her.

“I don’t need you to. Harlon will.” Har nods his head like she isn’t wrong about that. She fucking knows I would do it for her if she asked me to. I don’t think there’s much we wouldn’t do for this girl.

Her phone chimes on the desk and I nod to War to check it out. He leans over but doesn’t touch it, his eyes narrowing on the phone. Now he moves to pick it up, sliding it open and pulling up her messages.

“What the fuck?” That catches our attention, and we all walk over to see what it is. War turns the phone so that we can all see it, and I’m shocked by what I see.

Unknown: You look so pretty on that balcony.

Arya comes out of the closet and sees all staring at her phone. Fury flashes in those blue eyes before she comes over and snatches the phone away from us.

“Do you three have to go through everything of mine? Can I not have anything that’s fucking personal?” she snaps at the three of us.

“Who is that?” War asks her.

“It says unknown, doesn’t it?” he nods. “Then I don’t fucking know.”

“Who the hell would send you that?” I ask now.

“I don’t know, Denz. In case you weren’t listening, it says unknown.” Arya deletes the message and shoves the phone into her pocket as War moves toward her. Fuck, this isn’t going to end well. He backs her up until her back hits the wall, and he’s looming over her.

“Don’t start this, War,” she warns him.

“Start what, little bird? Finding out who the fuck you’re talking to?”

“I’m not talking to anyone.”

“He said you were pretty,” he adds.

“How do you know it’s a him?” she challenges him. I can see his hands clench at his sides, but I don’t step in to stop it. Not this time. War’s hand unclenches as he reaches up and runs his hand down her cheek. The next thing I know, he’s wrapping his hand around her throat tightly. Arya doesn’t move, she just watches him.

“We don’t like cheaters, little bird. I thought you learned your lesson at the club in Miami.” I have no idea what happened in that room in Miami, and judging by the marks that he left on her, I don’t want to.

“I’m not cheating you asshole.”

“Doesn’t look that way. Are you a mommy’s girl? Seeing how many men you can fuck?” His tone is harsh but I never saw Arya coming. She was a surprise to all of us. Arya has a fire inside of her that draws you in, and just like she punched me that day, she pulls her knee back and slams it into War’s dick. Strangely enough, he doesn’t let go of her neck. He groans in pain when Harlon steps up next to them.

“Let her go.”

“No,” War growls.

“Let her go, War,” Har tells him once more. War reluctantly lets her go and steps back to compose himself.

“Don’t you fucking ever, ever call me mommy’s girl again!” Arya screams as she lunges for War. He chuckles as Harlon sticks his arm out to grab her, pulling her back.

“You have to admit it looks a little suspicious,” I tell her. Arya takes a breath and calms herself before she speaks.

“I didn’t want to tell you, but someone has been sending me messages for a while now.”

“How long?” War growls.

“Months.”

“What? Months, Arya? What the fuck?” I roar this time. I run my hand through my hair, not knowing what to say to her. Why did she keep this a secret? Why didn’t she just tell us?

“What? I didn’t think it was a big deal,” she says with a shrug.

“Someone’s watching you. It could be the asshole that drugged you,” War adds.

“I don’t think so. I think it’s Denz’s little girlfriend, Rachel.”

“Why do you think it’s her?” Harlon asks.

“Sasha said she’s been saying shit about me. I just figured it was her.”

“I want the phone,” War demands, holding his hand out. Arya laughs and shakes her head.

“Fuck you. You’re not getting shit.”

“Don’t make me use force, little bird.”

“Let me tell you three something. If you don’t start giving me a little bit of privacy, I’m leaving. You’re overbearing shit is getting to be too much for me.” I can hear the sincerity in her voice. She’s right, though. We do too much at times.

“Fine. We’ll calm down,” I tell her. The guys look at me like I’m crazy, but this is what we need to do to keep her happy. If we have to steal her phone later without her knowing it, then that’s what we’ll do.

“Thank you. Now, are we going?”

“Yeah, let’s go, baby.” She walks toward me and wraps her arms around my waist, hugging me. I hug her back and just give the guys a look that they understand. They both nod their heads as we head out of the room.

“Where are you off to?” My dad stops us.

“To the pier. Want to go?” Arya asks him. He smiles but shakes his head.

“I have too much work to do here. You have fun,” he says, winking at her.

We walk down the stairs and then out the back door. We might as well walk down the beach since it isn’t really that far from us.

I keep an eye out, unsure who sent those messages to her. I hate it could be anyone because we never figured out who the hell it was at the gala. That fact alone still has me on edge.

Arya and Harlon mess around, shoving at each other and laughing as we walk. War falls back to walk with me, and I know he wants to talk about what we read.

“I don’t like it,” he states.

“I don’t either, but we are invading her space, War. We know it’s only trying to protect her, but she doesn’t know that.”

“Well, she needs to learn that. It could be the same person,” he adds.

“I know, and if we have to, we’ll sneak the phone just like before.” He nods his head when she glances over her shoulder at us. I smile at her, and she actually smiles back.

We continue walking until we make it to the pier. Then she takes off. I can’t help but laugh as she runs toward the rides like a child. It makes me wonder what her life was like after her dad did what he did to her.

“You think her mom took her out much?” I ask, glancing over at War.

“Doesn’t look like it.”

“Yeah. That’s kind of sad,” I say.

“Don’t get all fucking emotional on me, Denz. Look at her. She’s having the time of her life right now,” he says, nodding toward where Harlon and her are already in line for a ride.

“I know, and I’m glad it’s with us.”

“You going soft on me, Denz?” I shove at him and laugh.

“Fuck no. She just makes me feel things I’ve never felt.”

“I get it. She does that shit to me, too.”

We walk over, and I pull out my phone, snapping pictures of her and Har on the ride. She’s laughing, her hair flying through the air. She looks genuinely happy.

We stand back and watch her with Harlon, considering this is more his thing than ours. We follow them around when she comes running toward me, launching herself into my arms. She wraps her arms around my neck and her legs around my waist and clings to me.

“You three don’t even realize how happy you make me,” she blurts out. All of us heard her. She pulls back and I see the look on her face like she didn’t mean to say it out loud.

“You make us happy too, Arya. More than you know,” I tell her. I see the tears shimmering in her eyes, but she quickly blinks them back. Our girl isn’t a crier unless she has to be.

“It’s just ... I’ve never had anything like this before,” she says. War kisses her cheek, and Harlon grabs her hand in his.

“If we’re being honest, we’ve never had anything like this either,” War admits to her. She looks between the three of us and smiles brightly.

“It’s like I get something different from all of you. And I’m just ... me.”

“You don’t see it the way we see it, Arya. You give us each something different, too. Something each of us needs,” I tell her. She reaches up and swipes at her face before laughing.

“I’m not going to cry! I swear to God, if you make me cry, I’m going to be pissed.” The three of us laugh.

“No crying. It’s a good day.”

“I want cotton candy,” she announces. With her legs still wrapped around me, I carry her over to the concession stand. War orders us all something before we walk over and sit down at a picnic table. The sun’s going down, and soon, they’ll have live music out here.

Arya climbs off my lap and sits next to me, picking at her cotton candy. Then she pulls off a piece for each of us, shoving it in our mouths.

“It’s so beautiful out here when the sun goes down,” she says, looking out over the ocean. Harlon pulls her into his side as we all enjoy being together.

Soon, the sun goes down, and the live band plays. Arya is entranced, watching them in awe. I love watching her like this. So interested in things.

And just like that, I’m lost in her.

Chapter 31

Warren

They say time heals all wounds, but I wonder about Arya. The light in her eyes right now tells me she didn't have the best childhood even before her dad did what he did.

I'm not saying mine was great; it wasn't, and I have the scars to prove it. But our little bird? She deserves more. And there are days when I wonder if she'd be better off without me in her life. Obviously, I still have some deep issues with my childhood, or at least that's what everyone thinks.

They think that's where my dark obsessions come from, but I can't be too sure about that. But the more I watch her, the more I know I need her in my life.

"Oh my God. Dance with me!" She yells over the music as she leaps from the table and grabs my hand. The other two laugh as she drags me out into the middle of the pier and forces me to dance.

"Why aren't you moving?" she asks me as she moves her body to the music.

"I'm watching you."

"You can't watch me and dance at the same time, War. Come on before this song is over," she whines. I wrap my arms around her waist and pull her closer before I start moving. It's not a fast song and not really my thing either, but for her, I'll do it.

"You know we're the only ones dancing, right?" I ask her. She doesn't care. I can see it in her eyes.

"So? The rest of them are scared to be looked at."

"And you're not." She shakes her head before resting it on my chest. "Can I ask you something?" Now, she looks back up at me.

"Anything."

"After what your dad did, what was life like for you?"

“At first, it was really hard. I didn’t understand at the time he was in jail, so I would always think he was out there somewhere waiting for me. Mom was always busy, so it was just me. She stopped traveling for a while since there wasn’t anyone to watch me anymore, and I think that really pissed her off.”

“Did she ever give a shit about you?”

“I don’t know,” she shrugs. “I think she did at one point, but the more surgeries I had to have, the more help I needed, and she would get angrier. She sent me to counselors and shrinks and all that shit, but there was always a part of me that thought I didn’t need the help. That I could handle it on my own. As I got older, I was more embarrassed than anything. Can you imagine being a thirteen-year-old girl and having to change in front of everyone for gym class? That shit really hit me hard. I would sneak to the stalls just so no one could see me.”

“What about as you got older? Did you get over it then?”

“My first boyfriend was sweet as can be. He knew what happened. I mean, everyone in town did. He was very reassuring. He didn’t make me feel bad about them or anything, so that was a plus.”

“Sounds like you had at least a few good people around back then.”

“I didn’t really. Just him, and then when I was older, I met Jason,” she tells me as we keep moving to the music.

“And he was a prick,” I tell her. She laughs, and it’s the best thing I’ve heard out of her.

“Yeah. Guess I don’t have to worry about him anymore, right?” I smirk at her.

“Nope. I think after losing his finger, he learned his lesson. If he didn’t, and he dares come back around, it won’t be a finger that I cut off.”

“Does it not bother you?”

“What’s that?”

“Killing someone.”

“I don’t want to talk about that with you, little bird. I do what I do for a reason.”

“And I can’t ask questions?” she asks. I shake my head before bringing my lips to hers. I kiss her roughly, devouring her mouth with mine. When she moans, I think about taking her on the Ferris wheel and making her ride my cock for all to see. Her nails skim the back of my neck, and I growl into her mouth.

“You’re going to get us in trouble out here, little bird. Is that what you want?”

“You know what I want.”

“Then let’s go home.”

“Not yet,” she says softly as if she’s enjoying the moment. I let her have her time. I let her keep us moving but when we get home? That’s a different story.

The music changes to something faster, but Arya doesn’t pull away from me. She holds on tightly like I may disappear.

“I’m not going anywhere,” I whisper to her. A shiver runs down her spine, and I can see her visibly shake.

“Thank you.”

“Okay. Let’s go. We fucking missed our dinner plans,” Denz says when he walks up next to us.

“We had an actual plan?” Arya asks, gazing up at him.

“We did, but we don’t, now. So your options are, we hit the drive-thru, or we grab something here,” he tells her.

“I honestly don’t care what you guys want to do,” she adds.

“You’re the lady,” Har tells her.

“And you outnumber me.”

“Fine. We’ll grab something here so we can get you home and get you naked,” he tells her.

“Is that a promise?”

“Oh, that’s a promise,” Denz adds.

“Wait. All three of you?” she asks. It’s not like we haven’t done it before. Yeah, of course, we usually fuck her separately, but that doesn’t mean we can’t have fun altogether at times.

“Goddamn right, all three of us,” I tell her. Her lips part, and I can see the flush covering her cheeks. She’s ready for it.

“Yeah, I’m going to need food.” We all laugh at her and walk toward the food trucks.

“You think we’re going to wear you out?” I ask her.

“If it’s anything like before? Yeah.”

“You’re going to come so fucking hard and so many times tonight,” I tell her as I nip at her ear. Denz laughs, watching her squirm as Har orders us all some food. He passes it out, and we grab some before we start walking back toward the house.

Arya eats her taco as she watches the water. And I can’t take my eyes off her. There’s just so much about her that pulls me in, and she doesn’t even realize it.

By the time we reach the house, our food is gone, and we’re all laughing and having a good time. As soon as we step into the backyard, I grab her and pull her into me. I lean down and sink my teeth into her neck, just like I know she likes. She cries out from the pain as I run my tongue over the mark I made. Now she moans as I reach for the hem of her shirt and tug it off her. She moves back to allow me the space to do it when I move to her shorts next. I see the guys stripping out of the corner of my eye, but my focus is on getting her naked.

Once I have her that way, I strip off my clothes, and we all climb into the pool. Arya goes to her usual spot on the stairs, but I shake my head and grab ahold of her. She smiles as I pull her through the water and then lift her, setting her on the edge.

“Spread your legs, but don’t lay down,” I demand. She does as she’s told, spreading her legs wide for me. She shifts so her pussy is off the edge and right in front of me. Leaning down, I inhale her scent before diving in.

My tongue dives into her pussy, licking at her wetness. I peer up at her to make sure she has her eyes on me like a good little

bird, and she does.

Har climbs out of the water and goes around behind her before he stops me. Arya whines, but Harlon lifts her, grabs his cock, and coats her ass with his pre cum before sliding her down his length. She cries out from the intrusion and even more while Har scoots toward the edge of the pool so I can get back to her pussy. With his cock in her ass, I dive back in. The more I eat her, the more she moves and writhes on his cock. She doesn't know what to do. She doesn't know how to feel.

Denz scoots closer and reaches up, tugging at her nipples roughly. Arya is already panting and wiggling, and we're just getting started.

We keep going like this for a long time, me not letting her come when I feel her getting close. I pull back just in time, keeping it just out of her reach. She curses me and begs the three of us to make her come together.

"Please. Denz, I need it," she whines as he pulls her nipple hard between his fingers. Harlon lifts her off his cock before standing her and walking toward the grass. The two of us climb out and follow them over there, where he lays her down. The next thing I know, his cock is buried inside of her. He fucks her the way she likes from him when I slap her face with my cock. She turns her head, opening her mouth before I slip it in. Denz moves to straddle her mid-section, pushing his cock between her breasts and fucking them.

She pulls my cock deep into her throat when I hold it there. She tries to breathe, but it does no good, and she knows it.

"Oh fuck. She's clenching my cock so hard," Harlon grunts. When her eyes start to water, I pull back and let her get some air.

"These fucking tits, Arya. So fucking good," Denz tells her as she continues to moan and groan.

Harlon picks up his pace, and I know he's about to come. He reaches down and twirls his finger around her clit, and that's the end of her. She screams around my cock as I pull out of her mouth. Harlon grunts as he releases.

When he pulls out of her, she thinks it's all over. She lies there out of breath when Denz smirks at her.

“You think you're done, baby? You have two more cocks to milk first.” Her lips are swollen from sucking me off, but it doesn't matter.

We're not done with her yet.

Chapter 32

Harlon

I tap out after I filled her pussy full of me. Now, the other two take over while I watch.

Denz dips his fingers inside of her, pulling my come free and shoving it in her mouth. She peeks over at me as she swallows down what I put in there. I grin at her as she licks her lips. Then, her focus moves back to Denz. He rolls her over and lifts her so she's on her hands and knees. Then he's thrusting inside of her.

Her lips part as sounds leave her mouth. I can't take my eyes off her either. She looks so goddamn beautiful like that, on her hands and knees. Her head is tipped back as Denz fucks her roughly as War traces her lips with his cock. If I didn't already fill her pussy full of me, I'd be back over there in a second, but I let my brothers have their turn with her.

Denz has her hips in a vice-like grip as he pounds into her. War slaps her mouth with his cock, and she groans loudly as Denz roars and comes inside of her. Arya looks weak and tired, but she still has War left.

Denz pulls out of her, and Arya drops to the ground, panting and gasping for air. I watch War look at her before moving toward his clothes. He grabs everyone's clothes and tosses it to us before slipping his back on. I look at him strangely, but he doesn't pay any attention to me. Instead, he walks over and tugs Arya to her feet.

"Your turn," she coos as she gazes up at him.

"Not tonight."

"What? Why?" She almost sounds pissed that he told her no.

"You're tired. It's been a long day."

"You don't want me?" War grabs her hand and wraps it around his cock, forcing her to squeeze.

"Oh, I want you, little bird, but I want you when you're awake," he tells her with a grin. She's about to protest when he

leans down and bites her lip so hard that she squeals. Then he reaches down and lifts her in his arms before we all head back inside.

War doesn't make a move to go to her room. Instead, he carries her to the basement.

"Har, grab some blankets and pillows," he says as we all filter down the stairs. I nod and head into the bedroom, collecting things. When I walk back out, War still stands there with Arya in his arms. He nods to the floor, and I spread out the blanket and pillows. Then War kneels and lays Arya down.

"What is this?" she asks as she yawns.

"We're all sleeping here tonight," he informs her. She smiles up at him and then turns to look at me.

"You too?" she asks.

"Yeah, me too," I tell her. Her smile gets bigger as Denz walks over and drops down on the floor, hitting the pillow quickly. War moves to sit on the couch, pulling out a cigarette and lighting it up while I toss my shirt to the side and lay down next to Arya. She rolls over to face me and I can see the smile on her face.

"You happy?" I ask her.

"Yeah. And tired as fuck," she laughs a little.

"Then sleep, Arya. We're all here. We're not going anywhere," I tell her. She nods her head, and I watch as her eyes slowly close. It doesn't take her long to fall asleep, little noises coming from her lips.

"She's out," War says with a laugh.

"We don't give the girl much sleep," Denz adds.

"No, we don't."

"She's happy, though, and that's what matters," Denz says as he closes his eyes and slides his hands under his head.

"Yeah, you're right. She is happy." I reach over, grab the controller, and flip the TV on. Then I just sit back and flip the

channels as Denz falls asleep next. Not long after, War lays down, but he doesn't sleep.

"You think this is going to work out?" he asks.

"What's that?"

"The four of us?"

"Why not? We're not jealous of each other."

"That's true. I just don't want to fuck up our relationships, you know?" This is the first time I've heard War talk like this. He's not really the talking type, but I guess he needs to say his peace right now.

"It won't. If anything, she brings us together."

"What about our lives? Shit we've been doing before she came along?"

"I don't know, War. It all seems fucking pointless now," I tell him.

"You're right. The gang shit, mostly. We fucking started that shit, so why can't we end it?" Now, that shocks the hell out of me. War was the one who wanted this. He wanted people who had his back aside from us, and he wanted people to know who the fuck we were. We have that now. We've had that for a long time. People on the other side of town don't fuck with us anymore, and that's exactly why we started the blues to begin with. Once the others heard about us, they did their own thing, starting the reds and whatnot. But for War to say it's pointless now really takes me by surprise.

"You really mean that?" I ask, looking over at him. He turns to look at me and nods.

"I'm twenty-five, Har. You and Denz are twenty-three. When the fuck do we grow up?" Now, I raise an eyebrow at him.

"This all because of her?" I ask, nodding toward Arya.

"Some of it. But I've been thinking, too. Dad's right. Why the fuck can't we help with the businesses? We've been kicking ass at opening these clubs for him, and we're all learning new shit."

“Oh fuck. Are you starting to like doing this? Not Warren fucking Staton!” I tease him a little. He flips me off, and I laugh a little.

“She deserves more, Har. Sasha deserves more. Once their mom is gone, that girl deserves the world.”

“You’re right. They all do, and so does Denz. I get why we did things the way we did back then, but we have more to look forward to now,” I add.

“Exactly. I don’t know how you and Denz feel about this shit, but I think we need to relook at our lives and situations.”

“I never thought I’d hear that from you,” I laugh.

“Fuck, Har. I never thought I’d say it either, but Arya makes things different, makes me feel different.”

“I get it, War, I do. I feel the same way.”

“So we talk to dad and Denz tomorrow?” I nod my head before getting comfortable next to Arya. I reach over and brush her hair away from her face and just look at her. I don’t think she could have come into our lives at a better time, and I don’t think there’s a better woman for us. I just wonder what’s going on in her head, what she thinks.

With a sigh, I lay back and closed my eyes. It shocks me War is thinking this way. I’m usually the one who has these kinds of thoughts and looks at the bigger picture for the rest of us, but not this time.

I keep my eyes closed, but sleep doesn’t come. When I open my eyes, I see Arya staring back at me. Her bright blue eyes stay locked with mine, and it’s as if all the air is being sucked from my lungs. She has power over me, and I don’t think I give a damn that she does.

“Why are you awake?” I ask her, reaching over and running my fingers along her cheek.

“I had a bad dream,” she tells me.

“About what?”

“My dad.”

“Want to talk about it?” She shakes her head, and I nod.

“Do you think they’ll ever stop?” she asks softly.

“I don’t know. Dreams are like reminders. Sometimes you hate them, sometimes you don’t.”

“What do you dream about, Har?” I smirk at her.

“You.”

“You do not.”

“Yeah, I do. I dream about having a life with you,” I tell her.

“What kind of life?”

“Whatever kind you want. I don’t know if you know this, but you basically hold the three of us in the palm of your hand, Arya.” Her lips part as if she didn’t already know that. Her eyes shimmer with unshed tears, but she doesn’t let them fall as usual.

“You guys mean a lot to me,” she whispers.

“We’re not going anywhere. This is us now.”

“How do you know the other two feel the same way?” I chuckle.

“I know my brothers. In fact, before War fell asleep, we were talking about you.”

“What about me?”

“That you deserve so much more than you are given right now.”

“I’m content with what I have, Harlon. I don’t need more. I just need you three.”

“And you have us, but we want you to have the world, too.”

“Is it that important to you guys?” I nod my head, and I watch as the smile tugs across her face. “Then I’ll go with whatever you guys choose.”

“That’s our girl,” I say as I move closer and brush my lips over hers. I kiss her softly, deeply, and passionately. I let her know through my kiss just what she means to all of us.

Arya pulls back and groans a little as I look at her.

“I’m sore,” she whispers.

“We’re not going to do anything,” I inform her. She smiles and presses her lips against mine once more before snuggling into my chest. Her breath fans against my bare chest, and I find it soothing, so I wrap her in my arms and pull her as close as I can get her, pressing a kiss to the top of her head before we both fall back asleep.

Chapter 33

Arya

The guys were gone this morning when I got up. I couldn't believe I slept as late as I did, either. I don't usually sleep in, but apparently, my body needed it today.

I got up, took a shower, and did some work, but my phone has done nothing but chime with messages for the past hour. Most I just ignored but now I'm getting pictures and not just any pictures. It's pictures of the guys with other girls. A part of me wants to get angry, but part of me wants to know what the hell is going on. After the times we've spent together, I didn't think that they'd do this, but apparently, I was wrong. And the fact I'm pretty sure these are coming from Rachel pisses me off more.

I scroll through the pictures for one last time before the fury in me wins. I throw my legs over the side of the bed and stand, heading to the closet to grab my boots. I pull them on quickly before grabbing my phone off my bed and calling a cab. I've been drinking a little today after the messages started coming in, and I sure as hell don't want a DUI on top of it.

I head downstairs when the phone chimes again. I take a breath, unsure if I want to see what it is, yet I open it anyway.

Unknown: You should have known you couldn't keep them all.

It's her. It has to be Rachel. As I walk toward the door, I think better of taking my phone with me. They can track me, and I don't want them knowing shit.

My cab pulls up, and I rush outside and climb in, rattling off Denz's address on the other side of town.

Anger bubbles up inside of me the closer we get to Denz's house. Would they do this to me? After all the bullshit they put me through to make sure I don't talk to any other man, and they're out with other women? No. I can't see them doing that, but there's the proof on my phone. There are even dates, for fuck's sake.

I try to calm the rising storm in me, but it does no good. I'm pissed, hurt, angry. Why would they do this to me? Why would they put me in this position? Was it all just a game to them? Let's see who can fuck Arya and ruin her life? After Jason, I should have known better. I should have kept my distance, but I liked the games we played. I liked the chase and loved it when I was captured.

And now I look like a fool. They played me. They made me think they actually cared when they didn't. And my heart sinks in my chest at the thought of that. Maybe I didn't know them as well as I thought I did. And the fact I gave them pieces of me. Pieces I can never get back, pieces I didn't really want to give and yet I did.

Tears burn the back of my eyes, but I won't let them fall. I won't cry for them. I can't. They've destroyed me. They've broken a part of me I didn't think could ever be broken again.

My chest aches as the cab pulls up in front of Denz's house. I climb out, but I don't see the SUV parked out front like it usually is. I glance at his house before walking down the street to Rachel's house. I'm so angry that I'm ready to burst.

My hands ball into fists as a man walks up next to me.

"You looking for Denz?" I nod, not sure who he is. "He's at Rachel's," he informs me before walking off. I continue my walk to Rachel's, ready to beat the shit out of both of them. I storm up her steps and beat on the front door. The door flies open, and Rachel stands there staring at me before a sick smirk crosses her face.

"Where the fuck is he?" I growl at her. She laughs, throwing her head back before shoving her door open and calling for someone, but it isn't Denz. I watch as more girls filter out of the house as I back down the steps.

"Denz isn't here right now," Rachel says with a smile. "But my girls are." I count them in my head, taking each one in. There are seven of them and one of me. Fuck. That doesn't mean I'll go down without a fight.

“And your point is?” I ask her, not at all afraid of what’s about to happen. It’s not like I’ve never been on the receiving end of some bullshit before.

“I warned you away from Denz more than once, and you don’t seem to listen. Where are the guys when you need them?” She taunts as they all come down the stairs and straight toward me. I could run. I could scream for help that no one would hear. No. I’m not a runner. I won’t run from them.

“They sure as hell aren’t here with you,” I smart off to her. That’s about all it takes for her to lunge at me. I easily side-step, and she stumbles and falls to the ground. Her girls don’t make a move to help her, though.

She stands up and comes back at me, but I land a punch to her cheek, stopping her. That’s when she gets pissed and calls her girls in.

It all happens so damn fast that I barely see it all coming. I swing, probably hitting a few, but they have me outnumbered.

The hits come, and they come hard and fast before I’m knocked to the ground. I do my best to cover my face and protect my head, but it does little good. My ears are ringing, my face scratching across the pavement. I don’t know how long this goes on before I hear them all laughing and walking away from me.

It takes me a good minute to get off the ground and to my feet. Once I’m up, I try not to fall as I stumble down the road toward Denz’s house. I think about knocking to see if Sasha is home, but I don’t want her involved in this. In fact, I don’t want Denz involved in this either. Fuck them. All of them.

I glance over at Denz’s Mustang in the driveway. His precious fucking Mustang. That’s when I see the baseball bat and quickly pick it up. I stumble my way over to the car, and I scream out loud as I slam the bat down onto the hood. Over and over, I scream out my anger and take it out on his car.

“Fuck all of you!” I scream as I bust out the front window. I move to the back window next and do the same before the headlights go.

When my head is spinning and I'm out of breath, I glance at the door to see Sasha standing there watching me. She doesn't say a word; she just backs up and closes the door.

My ribs ache, and my head is spinning, but fuck this whole neighborhood. I stumble my way down the street, knowing I couldn't call a cab if I wanted to. I left my phone at home on purpose. So they couldn't track me. So I walk.

Even though my head spins and the world around me shifts, I keep going. Once I cross the street, I stumble, trip over myself, and fall onto my knees. The rocks beneath me rip the skin off my knees as I sob a little. My whole body aches as I shove myself up and keep going.

It takes forever for me to make it back to the house. The same house I debated not coming back to. Why should I? No one wants me here anymore. My mom is gone, and they've done this to me.

Jarrold will help me, though, and that's the only thing that has me dragging myself up the stairs and into the front door. I stumble inside, and as soon as the door closes behind me, I hear War.

"Where the fuck have you been?" He roars, the noise thundering through my already shaken skull. I raise my head so they can see my face. All three of them pale before anger takes over. I stumble further into the house when they try to come toward me all at once.

"No! Stay the fuck back!" I can't take anymore. I can't make it any further. I drop to my knees in the middle of the room.

"What the fuck happened?" Denz growls loudly. I don't answer them. They start toward me once more, but I raise my hand weakly.

"Don't you fucking touch me!" I scream at the top of my lungs. They stop moving at once when I hear someone else coming into the room.

"What's going on?" I hear Jarrold's voice. Now I look to him. His eyes widen as he takes in my face. I can only imagine what that must look like. His eyes turn to the boys before he

quickly moves toward me. He leans down and scoops me into his arms, carrying me toward the steps. The guys are pissed. I can hear them yelling and screaming at the top of their lungs, but I don't care what they have to say.

Jarrood doesn't take me to my room, and I'm grateful for that because I know the guys would only barge their way in. Instead, he takes me to his room and slams the door, locking it behind him. He walks over and lays me gently on the bed.

"I'm going to have the doctor come look at you," he says.

"No. No doctors. You can look at me," I tell him.

"Arya, you need a doctor. Something could be broken," he tells me, but I shake my head. He sighs and turns on the light next to the bed so he can see better. He has me turn my head so he can look at my face. He presses on spots that make me wince.

"I'm sorry," he says softly but continues. "I need to remove your shirt," he tells me. He hasn't seen them either. I didn't want him to, just like I didn't want the guys to see them, but right now, I'm hurting, in pain, and I'm too weak to say no. I sit up the best I can and let him pull my now blood-stained shirt over my head. Jarrood's eyes move over me as he tosses the shirt to the floor.

"Your ribs are bruising already. You really need a doctor, Arya." I shake my head once more as he reaches for me. Once again, he pokes and prods at me, trying to make sure nothing is broken. Sobs and cries rip out of me as he moves over my ribs.

"I don't think they're broken. They feel in place," he says. I nod my head. That's a fucking plus.

"Thank you."

"Don't thank me. I want to know who did this to you," he growls.

"It's a long story," I manage to say.

"Then start talking, Arya. I have all night."

“You have work to do,” I tell him. He smirks at me and shakes his head.

“That’s not happening. You’re not getting rid of me. Did the guys have anything to do with this?” he asks me. What do I tell him? The truth? Everything? I don’t know what to say and what to keep to myself. At this point, I don’t really want to tell him anything.

“I’d rather not talk about it,” I tell him.

“Arya, you wouldn’t let them near you. If they had anything to do with this, I swear to God!” He snaps, but I shake my head.

“Fine. I’ve been getting strange messages for a while now. I thought they were from Rachel, so I went over there and confronted her. I was outnumbered. She had her friends there.”

“What messages? What did they say?”

“They started weird. Like they knew where I was and what I was doing. Like someone was watching me. The ones I got today were of the guys. They ... They were all with different girls,” I tell him. He sits back a little, running his hand through his hair.

“How do you know that they were recent?”

“They had the dates on them,” I whisper.

“Arya, I honestly don’t think they would be with anyone else. They care too much about you,” he says.

“I didn’t think so either, but they had dates on them, Jarrod.”

“Fuck. Where’s your phone?”

“I left it downstairs. I didn’t want to take it with me because they put a tracker on it,” I admit.

“That doesn’t surprise me.”

“It doesn’t?”

“No. They care about you, Arya. They want to make sure that you’re safe.”

“Well, it didn’t work this time.”

“Is it alright if I look at your phone?” I debate it for a long second before I just nod my head. I honestly don’t give a shit anymore who sees my phone. “Okay. I’m going to get that and something for the pain. You just lay here and relax. I’ll lock the door so they don’t come in.”

“Thank you, Jarrod.” He reaches up and runs his fingers along my cheek as he nods his head. I watch him stand and head out of the room, locking the door behind him just like he said he would.

I close my eyes and try to block out the fucking world, but what good does that do me? I’m so angry. I’m mad. But most of all, I’m hurt.

Chapter 34

Denz

Anger doesn't come close to what any of us feel right now. It's beyond that. We don't know what happened to her. We don't know who did this to her. We don't know who the fuck we have to kill for touching her.

None of us are in our right minds right now. The fact that she didn't want any of us coming near her doesn't sit right with me.

The three of us sit, trying to figure out what our next move needs to be when dad comes down the steps. He glances around before walking toward the door, grabbing a phone off the table.

"That hers?" I ask.

"Yeah. Did you know she's been getting strange messages?" he asks.

"Yeah. She wouldn't let us look into it, though. She said it was nothing and deleted them," I tell him. He scrolls through her phone when he sighs. Turning it to face us, we all three look at the same thing. Pictures of us with other girls.

"What the fuck?" War growls.

"Those are old," Harlon adds.

"Who sent those?" I ask now.

"It's an unknown number. I think we need to dig into this," Dad says.

"She thinks they're recent. That's why she didn't want us coming near her," War says, sounding as pissed as I've ever heard him.

"Yeah, she does. And she thought Rachel was sending them," Dad tells us. We all curse under our breath.

"Those aren't new pictures, Dad. I swear to you. Those are all old," I tell him once more.

“I believe you. But they are timestamped. Someone had to alter them to look like they were new.”

“Rachel isn’t that smart,” I add.

“No. She wouldn’t know how to do that,” Harlon adds.

“Well, someone does.”

“So what happened to her?” Harlon asks.

“Rachel and her friends were there when Arya went to confront them. She was outnumbered.” Now we get pissed once more. We’ve warned Rachel to stay away from her. She knew better, and now she’s going to fucking pay for touching her. I glance at War, and he nods his head. He knows exactly why I looked over.

“She isn’t going to let us see her, is she?” Har asks.

“Not right now, but I am going to get someone on this,” he says, holding the phone up.

“Good. We have something to handle,” I snap, ready to break every goddamn bone in Rachel’s body.

“Remember, she’s a female,” Dad warns. War laughs darkly before he speaks.

“I will remember that I as rip her limb from limb. She put her hands on something that belongs to us, and she knew better.” My dad doesn’t say anything further because he knows better. War is a different breed, and when he wants something, he gets it. Right now, he wants blood.

“I’ll let you know if I find anything,” Dad announces before walking off. Me and the guys share a look before we walk out the front door and straight to the SUV. We climb in, and Har takes off driving. War is in the back, pounding the shit out of the seat. He’s beyond pissed, and I don’t blame him.

The ride doesn’t take long, with Harlon hauling ass through the streets.

“I have an idea,” I tell them.

“Which is?”

“The reds. We call Rocky and tell him we caught them sneaking over there or some shit and that we’re done. You know he’s wanted his hands on Rachel for a long time. And we’re out.”

“Are we out?” War asks, looking into the front seat at me.

“Yeah. We are. For her.” He nods his head and sits back.

“You know what’s going to happen to them, right?”

“I know, and I don’t care. They deserve what they get, but first, we’re going to find out what she knows,” I tell them.

Har parks the car in front of my mom’s house, and we all climb out. That’s when I see it.

“What the fuck?” I growl as I look at my Mustang. It’s in pieces. It’s been destroyed.

“You pissed her off,” I hear Sasha.

“Who?” I ask, glancing over at her.

“Arya. I figured you’d done something stupid, so I didn’t bother to call and tell you about your car,” she says, glaring at me.

“You saw her do it?” She nods. “Was she hurt?”

“Yeah, about that. You better not stand here and tell me it was you that hurt her,” she snaps at me.

“It wasn’t me, Sasha. Come on. You know me better than that. It was Rachel.”

“That little bitch! I’m going to fuck her up,” Sasha yells as she starts storming in that direction. War reaches out and wraps his arm around her waist, dragging her back.

“No, you’re not. We got it handled,” he tells her.

“Do you?” she asks, raising an eyebrow at him.

“Yeah, we do,” he says, flashing her a sick smile. She nods her head and steps back now.

“Good. Is she okay?” she asks.

“She won’t let us see her. Long story, we don’t have time for right now,” Harlon tells her. We all head back inside, and I grab my guns while War grabs his knife.

“Lock the door and stay inside, Sasha,” I tell her. She nods her head as we go out the door, and she does as she’s told. I wait to hear the door click before we walk down to Rachel’s house. I don’t bother knocking. I just kick the door in and walk inside. The girls scream before they see it’s us, and then they calm down. They shouldn’t be this calm.

I raise my gun and aim it at Rachel as her eyes widen.

“You sent her messages of us?” she shakes her head, looking confused.

“What are you talking about?”

“I’m talking about Arya! You sent her pictures of all of us?” I roar this time. She shakes her head as War wanders around, dragging the tip of his knife along their cheeks. I can see the fear in their eyes. They know they fucked up.

“I didn’t send any pictures, Denz!”

“But you did jump her,” Harlon adds now. She looks at him and opens her mouth. That’s when I move, shoving the barrel of the gun into her mouth as she begins to cry.

“You and your girls jumped her even after you were told to stay away from her. What the fuck were you thinking?” I growl low in my throat. I pull the gun free and stare at her, waiting for her to answer.

“Yeah, we did, but she showed up here!” Now I chuckle.

“Everyone on their feet. First one who tries to run, I’ll shoot.” The girls all stand as we lead them out the back door and toward the reds. Har makes the call and tells them everything they need to know.

“Can’t I just kill her?” War asks, pressing the tip of his knife into her cheek. Blood blooms on her skin as sobs fall from her lips.

“You could if you really wanted to, but I figured they’d do a little more,” I say, nodding when I see Rocky. One of the girls

decides it's a good idea to try and run when I aim and fire. I missed her on purpose, but it got her ass back in line.

We walk up to Rocky, and War stares him down.

"You're out?" he asks, looking between the three of us.

"We're out. There's still blues over here, and I expect they'll be left alone once we're gone. After all, the ones you had a problem with were us anyway," War tells him as he grits his teeth. I know he wants this kill, but he isn't going to take it.

"And them?" Rocky asks, nodding toward the girls.

"They no longer have our protection. Any of them," I tell him this time. Rachel gasps, turning her head to look at me.

"You can't do that. Do you know what he'll do to us?" she cries.

"I know exactly what he'll do to you."

"And you're going to let that happen?" Now I laugh.

"You fucked up, Rachel. When you put your hand on our girl, you messed up. Now you've lost everything. Rocky here will treat you good," I say nodding toward him. He smirks, his greasy ass smile making me sick to look at, but he will make good on what he's promised to do to them in the past. He's sick. Sicker than we are.

"Yeah, he's right. I've been waiting on you, Rachel," he says, smiling at her.

"Denz, you can't do this!" She screams as I shove her over the invisible line that has kept us all separate for years. She stumbles when Rocky grabs her and whistles for the others. A shit ton of reds come out from where they were hiding as War ushers the rest of the girls over there. They're crying, sobbing, and begging as each one is grabbed by one of the reds.

"Pleasure doing business," Rocky says as he runs his tongue up Rachel's cheek. I see the knife he pulls from the back of his jeans before it plunges into her side. Rachel screams in pain as Rocky jerks her along with him.

The three of us stand still and watch until they're all out of sight.

"I wanted that kill." War snarls.

"Yeah, I know, but imagine what she's getting from Rocky."

"Yeah. He's going to ruin her and have her begging to die," Har adds.

"What do we do now?"

"We find out who the fuck was sending that shit, and we end them," I tell them.

"Do I at least get that kill?" War asks, sounding impatient.

"Yeah, you can have that kill," I tell him with a laugh. We walk back to the house and I go in to check on Sasha before we do anything else. I drop down on the couch, and she stares at me.

"You didn't do anything to her?" she asks once more. I smile and shake my head.

"None of us did anything to her, Sasha. I promise. Someone has been fucking with her in text messages. She assumed the pictures they sent were real, but they weren't. I mean, they are, but they're old."

"Who the hell is messing with her?" she snaps. I know she and Arya have a bond now. One that can't be broken.

"We don't know. Trying to find out," War answers.

"So she smashed up your car for nothing?" She cringes a little.

"I'll make her pay for that," I tell Sasha. She slaps at me and gives me a nasty look while I laugh.

"Is she okay?" she asks now.

"She'll be fine. She's strong. Tough, like you," Harlon tells her.

"That I already know. I'm asking if she's okay."

"She will be. We just need to figure all this shit out," I tell her.

“And when you do, I hope you handle the problem,” she adds, glaring at the three of us.

“It’ll be handled,” War says casually.

“Listen, Sasha. The three of us, we’re out. We’re not running blues anymore,” I tell her. She raises her eyebrows as she looks at me and then the other two.

“Why?”

“You and Arya deserve more than this. You know we’ve been working with my dad, and we plan on getting a bigger place,” I tell her. These are things me and the guys have been talking about and I think it needs to happen sooner rather than later.

“Where?”

“Not on this side of town,” Har tells her.

“You’re going to make me go to school with those uppity ass rich people?” We all laugh at her. I know how much that would piss her off, but there are better schools over there.

“And what about mom?”

“I didn’t say it was happening today,” I remind her.

“Oh. So I still have time with her?” I nod.

“As much time as she has left,” I tell her. She nods her head and scoots closer to me, resting her head on my shoulder.

“Thanks, Denz. For everything.”

Chapter 35

Warren

I'm aggravated. Agitated. On edge. Pissed. I don't fucking know what I am anymore. I've taken out my frustrations on the bag in the gym as much as I can. I've even sparred with a few friends, but they gave up when I'd knock them the fuck out.

Now we're sitting in the basement waiting for dad's contact to get back to us about the unknown number. It's been a fucking week. A week of not seeing her, touching her, being near her. Dad has kept her locked in his room so that she'd have privacy. He's been sleeping in the spare room, but not far from her if she needs anything. He said that he talked to her and told her that those photos were tampered with. She was shocked and upset and thought we hated her.

Dad told her that was so far from the truth, but she couldn't bring herself to face us.

I sigh and lean my head back when I hear the basement door. Then I hear the footsteps coming down the stairs. We all look over to see her standing there, bruises and all. I want to get up and go to her. I know they do, too, but we don't. We give her her space and let her do what she wants.

She looks between us, sadness in her eyes before she slowly walks across the room and climbs into Harlon's lap. His arms instantly wrap around her, holding her close. I'm not jealous she went to him. It's not surprising, either. He's her security blanket. Where Denz and I are a little rougher, he's the calm, and that's what she needs right now.

"I'm sorry," she says, crying into his chest. He keeps her held against him, pressing his lips to the top of her head.

"It's okay, Arya. Everything is going to be okay," he reassures her. It's hard not to get up and go over there, but she needs her space, and I'll give her that right now. But when she's healed, I will punish her for what she did.

“I’m so sorry,” she cries harder. It fucking breaks me in half hearing her cry. Don’t get me wrong, I love when she cries, just not over this, not like this.

Harlon keeps his hand moving up and down her back until she finally calms down. After what seems like forever, she moves to climb out of his lap and comes toward me. She stares at me for a long second, probably thinking I don’t want her over here. But I just give her a short nod, and that’s all she needs. She leaps onto my lap and wraps her arms around my neck.

“I’ve missed you, little bird.”

“I missed you too.” I can hear the hitch in her voice, and it hurts me. No woman has ever had this power over me before.

She stays in my embrace for a long time, but when she moves, I know she’s going to Denz. I watch her walk over and sit down next to him.

“I ... I ruined your car,” she whispers.

“Yeah, you did.”

“I’m sorry, Denz. I know how much that car meant to you, and I fucking ruined it.”

“You know what? That car did mean a lot to me, baby. But you mean more,” he tells her. She instantly climbs up and straddles his hips, sitting on his lap while holding onto him around his neck.

“I feel so bad for thinking any of it, but the texts kept coming, and then the photos, and no one was here. I fucked up,” she says, pressing her face into his neck.

“You didn’t fuck up, baby. You were upset and did what came to mind. Next time something happens, you need to talk to us.”

“I should have talked to you guys first, and I’m so sorry I didn’t. I was just so pissed, and I couldn’t take it anymore.”

“We get it, baby. We do. But now we’re going to find out who the hell did this to you, and we’re going to handle it.” She lifts her head to look up at Denz.

“So it wasn’t Rachel?”

“No. It wasn’t, but she and her girls have been handled,” I add loudly. She turns her head to look at me, a strange look on her face.

“You didn’t ... did you kill them?” Instantly, I laugh. She would think that, and honestly, I thought about killing them. If it hadn’t been for the guys making other plans, I would still be there carving those bitches up a week later.

“I didn’t kill anyone. Yet. When we know who started this whole thing? That’s who is going to die,” I tell her. She looks to relax a little, and a sigh leaves her lips. I watch her climb off Denz’s lap and stand in the middle of the room with her hands on her hips.

“So now, what do we do?” she asks. Just then, I hear someone else coming down the stairs, and when I look over, I see it’s our dad.

“You feeling better?” he asks Arya. She nods and walks over, wrapping her arms around his waist.

“Thank you for everything,” she whispers.

“You’re very welcome.” He keeps his arm around her as he looks at the three of us.

“I have some information, and I’m not exactly sure how everyone is going to take it.”

“What is it?” I ask.

“It’s about who has been texting her,” he says, nodding to Arya. The three of us are on our feet, waiting for more information. Arya stays clinging to dad’s side as she peers up at him, looking a little unsure of wanting to hear this. Then she pulls away and paces the floor.

“What do you know?” Denz asks.

“You want to do this in front of her?” he asks, nodding toward Arya.

“Wait a fucking minute! It’s about me, so why can’t I hear this?” she snaps. There’s our little hellion.

“You can,” I remind her. The others don’t say anything as she comes to stand next to me.

“We don’t know who the outside source is that’s sending the messages just yet. I have people working on that, but what we do know is it’s coming from inside a prison.”

“A prison? What the fuck?” Harlon asks more to himself. Arya shakes her head, stepping away from me as if she knows something we don’t.

“What? What is it?” I ask her. She narrows her eyes and keeps moving further and further away from all of us. I don’t know what she’s thinking or what is happening right now.

“Arya?” Denz calls out to her. She even pushes Harlon away when he steps closer to her.

“This can’t be happening,” she mumbles.

“Arya, I’m so sorry,” Dad says.

“What the hell is going on?” I roar this time. Arya stays away from us, but our dad turns to face us all.

“Her dad is in this prison.”

“What? We thought he was dead.”

“He’s apparently calling the shots,” Dad says. No. Fuck that shit.

“How can he do that?” Harlon snaps.

“It’s simple, really. You can get anything in prison just like you can outside,” Dad explains. My heart starts hammering in my chest as I think about that. Why now? Why is he doing this now?

I turn to Arya, and she falls to her knees. I rush over and grab her in my arms, cradling her to my chest.

“I won’t fucking let them hurt you. I’ll fucking kill every single one of them,” I growl as she looks up at me.

“You can’t touch him. He’s in prison.”

“You don’t know shit, little bird. You don’t know me as well as I thought you did,” I respond. She doesn’t say anything

because she doesn't know what the fuck is going through my mind right now. She has no fucking clue how dark it just got inside of me.

"He's going to do it this time, War. He's going to have someone kill me." I roar so loudly that my dad walks over and grabs Arya out of my arms, knowing I'm going to snap at any moment. And he wouldn't be wrong. I can feel myself coming unhinged.

"I'm going to talk to my lawyer and see what can be done as far as what's going on on the inside," Dad declares. There's nothing that can be done. Not from out here, there isn't.

The amount of rage I can feel inside of me is something I've never felt before. I can feel it vibrating in me, shaking my fucking core.

Dad turns and walks back up the stairs as Harlon wraps his arm around Arya and walks her over to the couch. Denz slaps a hand on my shoulder, no doubt trying to calm me, but that does little good.

Knowing I can't do shit about it right now is triggering me further. That's when Denz's phone rings. He pulls it out and answers it before he's on his feet.

"We have to go," he announces as me and Harlon stand.

"What's happening?" Har asks.

"Someone has been creeping around mom's house. Sasha is scared," he tells us. Oh, fuck that. No fucking way is someone going to mess with our little sister.

"I'm coming too," Arya announces. Denz looks over and shakes his head.

"We don't know who it is."

"I don't give a shit, Denz, I want to be there for Sasha." Denz takes a deep breath and nods his head, and we head upstairs. Taking Arya out with us is dangerous, considering we don't know who the hell is helping her dad, but we already know she isn't going to stay here even if we leave her ass.

We climb into the SUV before Denz takes off. Arya looks lost in her own little world when I scoot closer to her, wrapping my arm around her shoulder. She finally turns her head and looks up at me, her bruises still lingering around her eye. I reach up and touch it, pressing a little harder than I need to, causing her to wince.

“The only marks on you should be mine,” I tell her softly. She pulls her hair back over her shoulder and tilts her head giving me access to her neck. “You’re hurt, little bird.”

“I need it, War.” That’s all I needed to hear. I lean down and sink my teeth into her flesh. Arya gasps before she moans, causing my cock to stir in my jeans. When I pull my teeth back, I lick the spot I just bit, and Arya grabs my hand, sliding it into the front of her shorts. I groan when I find her panties soaked.

“You’ve been waiting for this, haven’t you?” I ask her huskily. She nods her head, biting her lip and forcing my fingers past her panties. With her hand on top of mine, she makes me rub her clit. Arya moans and rocks her hips, showing me with her hand just how much pressure she needs right now.

We keep going until we reach the other side of town, and just as we’re approaching the house, she comes.

“War! Fuck,” she curses as she rides my fingers. When Denz parks the car, I slide my hand out of her shorts.

“You want my cock later? You’re going to ride it hard,” I tell her. She nods her head as the two of us climb out and head for the door. Denz bangs on it, seeing how Sasha has it locked up like she’s supposed to.

When she opens the door, she looks between us before rushing out and slamming into Arya. She nearly tackles her to the ground, but Arya keeps them standing.

“I’m so glad you’re here,” Sasha sighs.

“You okay?”

“Some creep has been around the house. I don’t know who he is. I’ve never seen him before,” she says.

“You’ve never seen him around here?” Harlon asks now.

“No. He’s not bad-looking, though,” she adds.

“Jesus,” Denz mumbles under his breath.

“If you’re going to have a stalker, shouldn’t it be a hot one?” Arya chimes in. I wink at her seeing how I am her goddamn stalker. She smirks, and we head inside.

“We’re going to look around. What did he look like?” Denz asks.

“He was about your height. Blond-ish colored hair. Has a tattoo under his eye,” Sasha says.

“Wait. A teardrop?” Arya asks.

“Yeah. How did you know that?”

“I’ve seen him. It was when I came to confront Rachel. He said that Denz was at Rachel’s house, but he wasn’t.”

“You’ve seen him too?” Harlon snaps, looking at the two of us.

“Yeah. I didn’t recognize him, though. I’m not sure how he knew who I was,” Arya tells us. What the fuck is going on around here?

“Let’s go,” I say, motioning for the guys to follow me. We walk outside, and the girls lock up behind us.

“What the fuck do you think is going on?” Denz asks, looking at the two of us.

“I don’t fucking know, but I don’t like it.”

“Me either,” Harlon adds.

“When I find this fuck, I’m going to murder him for going near either one of them,” I announce as we walk down the street.

We don’t make it far when we hear the screams.

Chapter 36

Harlon

I don't think we've ever moved so quickly in our lives. Arya and Sasha both screamed so loud we heard it outside. The three of us turned and are now racing back to the house.

War kicks the front door in as he pulls his knife, and Denz and I pull guns. The girls aren't in the living room where we left them. An eerie feeling washes over me as we move through the house. It's not until we hear Arya scream *run* that we realize they're out the back.

The three of us race to the back door and fly out to see someone with a knife to Arya's throat. Sasha stands there, afraid and not knowing what to do.

"You run, she dies," the man tells her. Sasha's tearfilled eyes stare at Arya, not noticing we're out here. War raises his hand, letting us know he's about to do something, but God only knows what.

In seconds, he moves. He rushes the asshole who has his back to us, plunging his knife into his back. The man howls in pain, letting go of Arya, but for some reason, she falls to the ground. Denz and I share a look before we rush toward her, kneeling on the ground next to her. War and the guy are going at each other when we see the blood. Oh fuck. He cut her. She's bleeding. Her mouth is opening and closing, but no words are coming out.

"Be still," I tell her as Denz panics.

"He fucking cut her!" He roars so that War can hear him. We can all hear War growl loudly before he moves in on the guy again.

"Sasha, give them the address," I tell her as I call nine one one and pass her the phone. She's crying, tears rolling down her face as I shove Arya's hands away from her neck and replace them with mine. I hold pressure on the wound as she stares up at me.

“You’re going to be okay, Arya. Do you hear me? You’re going to be fine.” She tries to nod, but I hold her still. I don’t want her to fucking move even a little right now. My chest is tight, my pulse pounding in my ears. There’s so much blood. Too much blood.

“This is it motherfucker!” I hear War yelling. I glance over, and he has the guy on his knees in front of him, the knife to his throat.

“You can’t kill me!” The asshole yells.

“Give me a good reason I can’t,” War asks him.

“I’m your brother!” What the fuck did he just say? We don’t have another brother. Do we? No fucking way. Dad would have told us. The three of us share a look before I look back down at Arya. I keep my eyes glued to hers as Denz says they’re taking him to the abandoned house before the cops come. I nod and listen for the fucking sirens. The cops don’t typically come over here, but whatever Sasha is screaming into the phone must have gotten to them.

It seems to take forever for them to show up, and when they do, they’re assholes. Thank God the EMTs are nicer than the cops are.

They get to work on Arya quickly, wrapping her neck up and loading her into the ambulance. The cops force me to stay behind and talk to them, but all I do is lie. I say someone was in the house and grabbed her, cutting her before running. I give them the opposite description of the asshole so that they won’t be looking for him. Although, around this side of town, I highly doubt they’ll be looking for anyone.

When they finally release me, I grab Sasha and drag her with me to the car.

“Where’s Denz?”

“Handling the problem with War,” I tell her as we climb in and speed the fuck out of here. I have to get there. I have to get to Arya.

“Call my Dad,” I tell Sasha. She nods her head and dials the phone even though her hands are still shaking. I listen as she

tells him what happened and that we're on our way to the hospital.

"He said he'll meet us there," she tells me as she slides the phone into her pocket. I reach over and grab her shaking hand in mine, trying to reassure her that everything will be okay.

"She can't die, Har."

"She isn't going to die." Her hand squeezes mine as we pull into the hospital parking lot and climb out. We rush in and I give the lady all the information I have.

"She's still in the emergency department. You'll need to go have a seat over there," she tells me. That's the last fucking thing I want to hear. I want to see her. I want to know she's okay. I ball my fists up at my side, ready to fucking tear this place apart, when Sasha grabs my hand. I look over at her, at the tears in her eyes, the hurt, and I know I can't lose it right now. I nod my head, and we walk to the waiting room where we sit, and I pull her into my side.

"She's okay, Har. She's a fighter, obviously. She handled Rachel like a champ," she tells me. I chuckle a little.

"You're right. If she's nothing else, she's a fighter."

"Do you believe what he said?"

"I don't know, honestly. My dad slept around a lot when he was younger. It honestly wouldn't surprise me if he were related," I tell her, although I don't know if it's true.

"Why would he be after Arya, though?" I shrug my shoulders when dad walks in.

"Any word?" he asks. I shake my head as he runs his hand through his hair and sits next to me.

"What happened?" he asks. I told him exactly what happened from the time we got the call from Sasha until the time they hauled him off. "My son?"

"That's what he said," I tell him.

"If he is, I never knew about him."

“With all due respect, Mr. Staton, just how many women did you fuck back then?” Sasha asks him. I bite back a laugh, but dad doesn’t. He laughs. Like, actually laughs at her question.

“I would be lying if I said a few. It was more than that.”

“That’s pretty obvious.”

“We’ve never met. I’m Jarrod,” he says, offering his hand to her.

“Sasha.”

“You look a lot like your mom, Sasha.”

“Thank you. I wouldn’t know what my dad looked like, so I have no idea if I look anything like him or not.”

“Well, that shouldn’t bother you. You’re beautiful like your mom.” Sasha smiles brightly before laying her head on my shoulder. Dad has never met Sasha, and Denz wanted to keep it that way, but we can’t do that anymore. His reasoning was them having the same mom. It didn’t make sense to the rest of us, but to him, it did, and we kept our word of not introducing them until now.

“Are Denz and War handling things?” Dad asks. I nod my head as he nods his. “Do we know anything about this person?”

“Just that he claims to be our brother.”

“That makes no sense.”

“Maybe there’s one you didn’t know about,” I tell him. He lets out a big sigh and nods.

“I suppose there’s always a chance,” he answers.

“I don’t know ... I don’t know what to say here. Denz and War are handling it, but if he’s really our brother, that’s pretty fucked up,” I say, thinking about it all. Dad pulls his phone out and sends off a message before he speaks again.

“I’m asking for a photo of his face so I can have someone look into him. If he’s in any database, they’ll find him, and we can confirm.”

“You know he’s a dead man either way, right?” Dad nods his head.

“It seems that’s what he deserves for what he did to Arya.”

We all sit in silence as we wait to hear anything. It’s ridiculous having to wait this long. Dad even lied and told them he was her dad so that we could get information faster. Even that didn’t work.

Sasha’s knee bounces up and down as we wait. My nerves are firing off one by one. Dad got the message back from War and sent off the picture to whoever the hell it is he knows, and now we wait.

It seems like forever when they finally tell us we can see her. The three of us leap from our seats and follow the nurse down to her room. When I step inside, my heart stops. She moves her eyes to look at me, and a single tear falls down her cheek. Dad has to give me a little shove to get my feet moving, but as soon as they do, I’m right at her side. I grab her hand in mine and hold on tightly.

“You scared the shit out of me, Arya.”

“Yeah. If you were going to die, I was going to kick your ass!” Sasha snaps at her. Arya tries to laugh but then brings her hand to her throat.

“The nurse said nothing vital was hit and that you’d have a pretty nasty scar, but you’d be fine,” Dad adds.

“That’s what they told me, too. What’s one more scar, right?” she asks.

“Your scars are beautiful, Arya, just like you are,” I tell her.

“Do you think the others are going to hate it?” I shake my head and laugh a little.

“Have you not met War?” Now, she smiles again.

“This is all so crazy. You guys went out, and this guy came out of nowhere. He had to have gotten in the house somehow.”

“Yeah, I’m sure he was hiding in there,” I add.

“I’m just glad it was me and not her,” she says, nodding toward Sasha.

“He said your name,” Sasha adds.

“What? He did?” I ask.

“Yeah. He told her to shut up and said Arya.” Fuck. He knew it was her. He had to have known we would show up there at some point, and he was going to what? Wait it out, hiding with Sasha in there? That thought makes me sick to my stomach. Anything could have happened to Sasha. The thought causes a chill to run down my spine.

“Well, we’re all here and safe now,” Dad adds.

“Where are they guys?” Arya asks.

“Handling things,” I inform her. She knows exactly what that means, too. I don’t need to explain it to her.

“They said I could go home today. I don’t have to stay since the cut wasn’t that deep.”

“That’s good. We want you home,” I tell her.

“She’s coming with, right?” she asks, looking at Sasha. That isn’t something we’ve talked about or had time to talk about, but dad answers for us.

“She is. There’s no reason for her to be in that house alone when we have the space,” he says.

“My mom’s there,” Sasha tells him.

“I know, honey. I’m sending a nurse to stay with her,” he informs her. I can’t believe he’s doing that. I smile as I glance over at him. He just gives me a nod. His phone chimes in his pocket, and when he pulls it out, I see the way his eyes narrow.

“What is it?”

“Let’s step outside a minute, Harlon.” I nod and lean down, pressing a kiss to Arya’s cheek before standing and following him out of the room. Once we’re in the hall, he turns the phone for me to see.

“He isn’t my son. He was her dad’s cellmate.” I curse. I roar, and I slam my fist into the wall. A few nurses watch me, but they don’t say a word. My dad rests a hand on my shoulder so I’ll calm down and not get kicked out of the fucking hospital. I take a few deep breaths and steady myself.

“What the hell are we going to do? Once he finds out he didn’t get the job done, he’ll send someone else,” I tell him.

“I don’t doubt that. For whatever reason, he wants her dead. I have no idea why that is,” he says.

“This is all fucked up. We can’t tell her this, not right now.”

“She has a right to know what she’s up against, Harlon. Letting her know will keep her in line. She won’t want to wander off by herself if she knows.” Shit. He’s right. I nod my head, knowing he’s right.

We head back into the room and find her and Sasha smiling. It doesn’t take long before I hear War screaming down the hall, either. I open the door, stick my head out there, and call to him. He turns his head and flips off the nurse, before he and Denz come this way.

I step aside and let them in, and they go straight to Arya. War leans down and kisses her like he might never see her again, and Denz does the same when War moves.

“What did the doctor say?” Denz asks.

“She’s good. She has a ton of stitches, but she’s good to go home. Nothing major was hit,” I inform them. They let out a breath of relief the same way I did.

“When you heal up, I’m going to spank your ass so fucking hard,” War warns her. Arya smiles, and it’s fucking breathtaking.

“I just want you guys to know that ... when he had me like that, with the knife to my throat ... I couldn’t stop thinking about the three of you and being away from you. I ... I love you guys.” Hearing her say the words sends warmth through me. I didn’t know if she felt what I felt. I don’t know what the guys feel either, but I know I love this girl. We share a glance before looking back at Arya.

“We love you too, little bird,” War tells her. Tears fill her eyes once more but she quickly brushes them away.

“Can we get out of here now? I hate hospitals.”

Chapter 37

Arya

The guys have been all over me since the incident at the house. They haven't let me leave their sight. If one isn't with me, one of the other's is. It's sort of calming, though. It gives me a sense of peace I didn't know I needed.

Sasha has been here since then, too. Denz gets up and takes her to school and picks her up, but she ends up right back here. Jarrod has been around a lot more lately, but things between him and the guys have been very secretive. And me? I'm just here.

Most days, I don't know how to feel. Or what I should be doing. I try to work, but my mind shifts to everything else that's happened. Some days, it's overwhelming for me.

I sit out back and watch as Sasha plays in the pool. She seems so happy right now, and I wonder if this is what things will be like in the future.

"What are you thinking about?" I look over when I hear Denz. It's been eight weeks since the incident. The sutures have been removed, and I was told I was able to move as much as it was comfortable for me to do so.

"Everything."

"Like what?" I know he isn't going to let this go.

"Why my dad wants me dead mostly." Denz pulls up a chair and sits down next to me, looking out at Sasha.

"I don't have an answer for you, baby. I wish I did, but I don't. It doesn't really make sense to me either, considering it all happened over ten years ago."

"That's what I thought too. Why now?"

"Wish I knew. You up for a party tonight?" he asks, wiggling his eyebrows at me. Now I perk up.

"Am I allowed to go?"

"We're all going," he tells me.

“So that’s a yes?”

“That’s a yes. There’s a big party down at the pier tonight. Figured you could us a night out to relax and unwind.”

“Is that what you think I need? A party?” I grin at him. He reaches for me and pulls me out of my chair and into his lap, his cock pressing against me. It’s been too long since I’ve had them. They haven’t touched me since I had the stitches in, and I’ve nearly died without having them inside me.

“I think I know what you need, baby, and we plan on giving it to you later now that your neck is healed up.” I lean in and press my lips to his briefly before resting my head on his shoulder.

“We? As in all three of you?”

“You think you’re up to that? We can wait. We can each fuck you separately until you feel better,” he tells me.

“You guys would wait for me?”

“You know we’d do anything for you, baby. Anything at all.” I sigh as Denz runs his hand up and down my back.

“I think I’ll wait then. Not that I don’t want to, but I know how intense it is,” I tell him.

“You don’t need to give me an excuse, Arya. You say wait, we wait.”

“And it doesn’t bother you?”

“Waiting? Of course, it does. I want my cock inside of you, but I know you’re still healing. It won’t hurt any of us to rub one out in the shower,” he laughs.

“You don’t do that.”

“Oh hell yeah, I do. We all do when you’re not around,” he tells me.

“I meant what I said. I love you.”

“I love you too, baby. We all do.”

“And this isn’t going to be weird?”

“Has it been weird yet?”

“Well, no. I’m just making sure,” I say. His hand grips my ass, and I nearly moan from the contact.

“I’m sure. We’re all good.”

“Do you have any more information?”

“I do, but we wanted to wait until later to tell you about it. We want you to have tonight first.”

“So it must be bad,” I sigh.

“It’s ... not great, and you’re not going to like it,” he tells me. Shit. I don’t like the sound of this. I don’t know what they are going to tell me, but I can tell I’m already going to hate it.

“You’re getting tense,” he adds.

“I don’t like surprises, Denz.”

“I know, and this isn’t a surprise. It’s just a delay in information.”

“Fine. If you say so, do I need to change for this party?” I ask.

“I’d prefer you to be naked, but what you’re wearing is fine too.” I nod my head and keep sitting in his arms for a long time. Sasha goes in as the sun starts to go down. That’s when the others come out.

“You two plan on going with us?” Har asks. I climb out of Denz’s lap and nod my head.

“I’m ready. Are we walking?”

“Yeah. It’s a nice night,” Harlon says. I agree. It is a nice night tonight, even though there’s been so much on my mind to enjoy it. Maybe tonight is just what I need. Maybe a night away from the house will make me feel better.

I take off running around the pool and out onto the sand. The guys are right behind me, War grabbing me in his arms and lifting me over his shoulder. I laugh when he smacks my ass roughly, causing me to laugh harder. That’s not something I’ve done in a while, and honestly, it feels good.

“Why didn’t you bring Sasha?” I ask as I dangle over War’s shoulder.

“She’s not old enough to drink.”

“Me either,” I remind them.

“Doesn’t matter. We got you. Sasha is too young,” Denz says. I nod my head as War carries me all the way to the pier. Only when we get there does he set me on my feet. I glance around and see Cale and his friends, as well as Tracy. Cale doesn’t even look at me anymore, thanks to the guys scaring him off, but when Tracy sees me, she comes rushing over and pulls me into a hug I wasn’t ready for.

“I’ve missed you. I’m glad to see you out,” she says. She knows what happened. Everyone does, and I’m still not sure how they all found out. Hell, even my mom called to see if I was okay, but that was the extent of our conversation.

“Missed you too. Are we drinking?” I ask her. She nods her head and takes my hand, dragging me along with her. Just like the guys said, they don’t question me about my age and just hand me whatever drinks I want.

I head out into the middle of the pier with my drink in hand, dancing with Tracy. The mood feels like it lightens after I get a few drinks in me.

Tracy and I keep dancing, but I can feel the guy’s eyes on me. They never let me out of their sight. A shiver runs down my spine, and I know that one of them is coming closer. As soon as hands land on my hips and slip around my front, I know it’s War.

“You don’t like to dance,” I tell him over my shoulder.

“Only with you, little bird.”

“So I’m the lucky one?”

“Don’t you feel lucky?” he asks me. Tracy spins around and moves away from us, and War leans down, pressing his lips to my neck.

“I do feel lucky with the three of you.”

“We need to talk,” he says, and judging by his tone, I can tell it’s serious.

“Is that why they sent you over?”

“I asked if I could tell you this,” he says, running his tongue up my neck. Shudders take over, my body trembling just from his touch. War spins me in his arms, so I’m facing him, and I whine, missing his tongue on my flesh. “Walk with me.” I nod my head as he takes my hand into his and leads me toward the end of the pier where no one else is. I look out at the ocean for a long second knowing whatever he’s about to tell me, I’m not going to like. War leans against the rail, looking as if he doesn’t know what to say to me.

“Spit it out, War.”

“The man that cut you, he said he was our brother.”

“I heard that part vaguely,” I tell him. He nods his head.

“He lied. He wasn’t really our brother, although he could have easily been. Dad did a lot of searching and had people looking into everything. He was a cellmate of your dad’s,” he tells me. I swallow hard and take a deep breath, not at all expecting that to come out of his mouth.

“That’s how he knew about me?” War nods his head.

“Your dad had given him a lot of information on you. He must have tracked you when your mom brought you here.”

“And he was the one sending the messages,” I say softly.

“Seems that way. He wanted to scare you while he watched you.”

“But he’s gone now.”

“Yeah. He’s gone now, little bird, and he isn’t coming back.”

“I hear a but in there,” I laugh a little.

“There is a but, and not one you’re going like.”

“What more could there be?”

“He’s up for parole.” My heart stops. It literally stops in my chest. My hand comes up to my mouth, covering it to keep the scream that’s lodged in my throat from coming out. War steps toward me, but I throw my hand up to stop him.

“How?”

“Good behavior,” he says, lowering his head. What am I going to do? What if he finds me? He knows where I live; he has to. The guys can’t protect me forever. I lower my hand and suck in a deep breath I need before looking at War.

“So I fight back.”

“What?”

“I fight back. I’m not letting him try to kill me again, War. He tried twice now, and I refuse to let that happen again,” I snap at him.

“You’re not fighting him, little bird.”

“Like fuck I’m not!” With that, I take off. I run from War, knowing he’ll catch me if he wants to and knowing I’m going to run right into the other two, but I run anyway.

I round the corner just as Harlon steps in front of me. I slam into him, and he wraps his arms around me as a sob breaks free. I shake my head and shove at him, trying to shove him away, but he doesn’t let go.

“Let me go!”

“That’s not going to happen.”

“Just let me go, Harlon!”

“He’s not going to do that, and if he does, I’ll be there,” Denz announces. Tears burn my eyes so badly, but I can’t let them fall. I refuse to let them fall. I take a few calming breaths when War catches up to us. Only then does Har ease his grip on me.

“He’s not going to touch me,” I tell the three of them.

“We’ve already agreed on that,” Denz adds.

“No. You don’t get it. None of you get it. He sent someone after me,” I snap at them.

“And he’s dead,” War says casually.

“And now my dad is getting out? He’s going to come for me.”

“And he’s going to die too,” War adds now.

“How, War? Are you going to hunt him down before he can get to me?” The three of them share a look, and I know there’s more to it than them knowing he’s getting out. There has to be more.

“What? What is it? I know there’s something else.”

“We have to tell her,” Harlon says, looking at the other two.

“That’s not something she needs to know right now,” War growls.

“Just tell me,” I say.

“Fuck. Fuck!” War tugs at his hair. “Your dad isn’t coming near you, little bird, and the reason I know that is because I’m going to kill him.”

“How?” Now they share another look, and before War turns to me and straightens his spine.

“I’m going to prison.”

Chapter 38

Denz

That went over about as well as I thought it would. I didn't want to tell her yet. I didn't want her to know until we had it all planned out, but she insisted on it. And now she's looking like a crazed woman.

"You're not going anywhere," she says, holding her head high.

"I am, little bird. We've already worked it all out, and this is what needs to be done," War tells her. Her eyes are wild as she looks between the three of us. Then she says something that shocks us all.

"You go and we're done."

"What?" I ask, hoping like hell I didn't hear her right. She surely didn't say that we're done.

"You heard me, Denz. He goes, and we're done. All of this is done," she says, waving her hand between all of us. I chuckle, and War straight up laughs.

"We're not done," I tell her.

"If he goes and you guys help him. We. Are. Done." I've never seen War move so quickly in my life. He grabs Arya and drags her under the pier, where there is no one else. Me and Harlon share a look before following them. Arya is screaming and fighting his hold, but the music is so loud above us that no one can hear her, and War knows it.

He throws Arya to the ground and yanks her shorts down her legs. She tries to scramble away as she yells, but War grabs her around her waist and holds her steady. Me and Harlon watch as he makes short work of his jeans, pulling his cock free. Arya still fights, but I think that's exactly what he wants. He likes when she fights and she's giving him one hell of a fight right now.

She bucks and tries to flip him off her, but then he grabs his cock and thrusts into her. She keeps fighting even as he plunges into her. He's taking her hard, harder than the rest of

us do, but I know there's a part of her that likes it. Arya claws at the sand as she tries to get away, but it's no use.

"Go ahead, little bird. Tell me we're done one more time," War growls as he fucks her harder. Cries rip from her throat the harder he goes.

"We're done!" She screams louder this time. A roar rips from War's mouth as he grips her hips in his hands and hammers into her. I see the tears falling down her cheeks, but there's nothing I can do to stop War. This is his way of doing things, and he'll get his point across one way or another.

"You're going to come all over my fucking cock, little bird. You're going to enjoy it, and then the next because there will be a next time; you're going to do it all over again," he tells her. Moans begin to fall from Arya's lips, and I know he's made his point.

Harlon and I watch as our brother fucks her so hard she won't be walking home tonight. She comes with a scream for War as he grunts his own release. When he's done, he pulls out of her quickly and pulls his jeans back up. Then he grabs her shorts and slides them back on her before lifting her in his arms and walking toward us.

"You ready?" he asks us, and we both chuckle.

"I suppose you made our point for us," I tell him.

"It had to be done." The three of us walk while he carries Arya back to the house. As fucked up as this whole thing is, in our way of thinking, this is the right thing to do. If we wait it out, he could send someone else after her. If we wait for him to get out, he could come after her, and that doesn't make sense.

"Are you going to explain the reasoning behind this?" she mumbles as we walk into the house and head for the basement.

"To keep you safe. That's the reasoning," Harlon tells her.

"I'm safe with you guys."

"You are, but what about if he gets out, Arya? Then what?" Harlon asks her.

"Then we deal with it then," she says through a yawn.

“The chances of us finding him is not good. He could be planning anything with anyone, and we’d never know,” I tell her. War sits down on the couch but keeps Arya in his arms.

“This is a bad idea. For one, how do you know you’ll be sent to the same prison? And two, how long will you have to be there?”

“Dad has some connections that will get him in there. He’ll be gone for a year at most,” I tell her. Now she’s up. She climbs off War’s lap and stands to her feet, shaking her head.

“No. No fucking way. You’re not doing it,” she says, pointing at him.

“We don’t have another choice,” War tells her.

“This is so fucking stupid! I can’t believe you would even come up with something so fucking dumb! What the hell is wrong with the three of you?” she screams louder this time.

“What’s wrong with us? What the fuck is wrong with us? We love you, Arya! That’s what the fuck is wrong with us. We’re doing this for you!” I growl this time. She looks at me and narrows her eyes, and I know she’s pissed.

“Then take me out of the equation, and you have nothing to worry about,” she snaps.

“Now you know that isn’t going to happen,” I remind her.

“I’ll make it happen. I’ll fucking leave,” she sneers as she starts to head for the steps. I stand and quickly grab her, dragging her back toward the living area.

“You think you can just walk out on us? Is that what you think?” I ask her.

“I’m an adult. I can do whatever I want to do.”

“You’d like to think that, wouldn’t you?” I chuckle.

“You can’t hold me hostage,” she yells.

“Oh, we can, and we will if we have to.”

“Just let me go. Then you guys can go on with your lives,” she pleads softly. Harlon moves now, coming to stand in front of

us. He pulls the box from his pocket, containing the ring we got her that we never had the chance to give her since everything happened.

He opens the box and stands in front of her, just staring at her.

“What ... what is that?”

“Three black diamonds. Obviously, it’s against the law for all of us to marry you at the same time, but this is as close as we can get,” Harlon tells her. I feel her relax in my arms, and when I let her go, she doesn’t try to fight or run. War stands and walks over as I walk to stand in front of her. Tears fall down her cheeks as she looks at the ring in his hand.

“You can’t do this,” she says softly as Harlon pulls the ring from the box and reaches for her hand. She lets him lift it, and then he slides the ring on her finger. It looks fucking perfect there.

“This is us loving you, Arya. All we want is you.”

“But I don’t want to lose him,” she cries as she looks over at War.

“You’re not losing me, little bird. I’m coming back,” he reminds her.

“It’s not the same, and you know it.”

“You’re right. It won’t be the same, but he is coming back. He’s not going to be gone forever. We just need to handle this, and everything will go back to normal,” I tell her. I know this is hard for her. It’s hard for all of us. We don’t want to lose our brother for a year either, but this is what needs to be done. She has to understand we’d do just about anything to keep her safe.

“A year?” she asks, looking between us.

“Only a year,” I tell her. Before any of us can speak, Arya slams into War’s arms and holds onto him as she sobs. She isn’t a crier; that much we know about her, but this is hitting her hard, just like the rest of us.

She clings to him as Harlon, and I share a look. She’s going to need a little time to adjust to the idea of this, and I know she’s going to want to spend time with War before it all goes down.

Harlon and I decide to leave them alone and walk toward the rooms when Sasha sticks her head out.

“What are you doing?” she asks, looking me up and down.

“We need to talk,” I tell her. She doesn’t know either, and now is the time to fill her in since Arya already knows.

“What happened?”

“Let’s go inside,” Harlon says, nodding toward the room. Sasha steps back so that we can go in, and we all sit on the bed.

“What’s going on?” she asks, looking between the two of us.

“Arya’s dad is the one trying to have her killed. You know that much, but what you didn’t know was he’s going to be up for parole.”

“Oh fuck that! Nope. They can’t let him out,” she snaps.

“That’s the thing. We have heard he will more than likely get out, and we can’t let that happen.”

“So what do we do?” she asks.

“We have a plan. Not one you’re going to like, but we still have a plan,” I tell her. “War is going to prison.”

“No! Hell no! That’s your fucking plan? Do you know what could happen to him in there?”

“We know, Sasha. We’ve gone over it many times. We’ve talked about it, and he’s not backing down on this. It was his idea to begin with.”

“You can’t let him do that. Tell him no, Denz.”

“It’s not that easy, and you know it. When War wants something, he goes after it,” Harlon adds.

“And you two are just going to sit back and let it happen?”

“We have no other choice.”

“So he’s going to what? Get sent to prison and kill her dad?” Harlon nods his head now.

“Does Arya know?”

“She just found out. She’s going to need you now, Sasha,” Har tells her.

“You know I’m here for her, but this is fucked. I don’t want to lose him either,” she says, her tone calming slightly.

“It’s a year. One year,” I tell her.

“A whole fucking year?”

“Yeah. Time will fly by, I promise.” She shakes her head, not believing a word I say to her. I know this isn’t ideal, but once Warren has something in his head, he isn’t going to let it go, and this is his plan.

“I don’t know what to say,” she says.

“There’s nothing to say. Spend time with him while he’s here, and that’s that.”

“This is all so messed up. I get why he wants to do it. I don’t want anything to happen to Arya, but what about if something happens to him?” Fuck. This is going to be harder on the two of them than I thought it would. I know they both love him, and that’s what’s going to hit them hard. He isn’t going to be here like he usually is. And I’m not going to lie and say it’s not bothering me, too, because it is. I don’t want to lose my fucking brother, and I know what kind of shit can happen in there.

I run my hand through my hair as I stand and pull Sasha into a hug.

“Everything is going to be okay,” I tell her.

“Is it?”

“I don’t know, Sasha. I honestly don’t know.”

Chapter 39

Warren

The countdown has begun. Soon, I'll be leaving them all, and that part kills me inside. I won't let them see it. I won't let them know how much this is bothering me, but I know what needs to be done, and I know I'm the one who needs to do it.

I'm not saying the others couldn't, but I am saying I'm the best man for the job. I have a few friends in that prison, so I think I should do okay there.

I've been spending as much time with everyone as I can. Arya sleeps in my bed most nights now, and that's where I want to keep her. The guys don't mind seeing how I'm going to be leaving soon. Sasha too. She's been by my side every chance she gets, too. It's not going to be easy to leave them. Any of them, but especially the girls.

I smoke my joint as I sit out back, not able to sleep. My insomnia has gotten the best of me lately, and I can't seem to find a way to calm it down.

"Couldn't sleep?" I glance over when I hear Arya's voice.

"No."

"Worried?" she asks, and I chuckle.

"Not at all. I got this, little bird." She walks over and sits on the end of the lounge chair I'm sitting on.

"Are you sure this is the best idea? I think we can come up with a better plan," she says, eyeing me.

"This is the best plan. We get his ass before he even gets out."

"What if you get caught?"

"Have I gotten caught yet?" I ask her, raising an eyebrow.

"That doesn't mean shit, and you know it, War. What if you get caught? Then what? You're not going to get out then." I see the worry and the questions in her eyes, but there's nothing I can do to help that. This is what needs to be done.

“Why are you doubting my skills?” I ask as I inhale.

“I’m not. I’m just scared,” she admits.

“That’s understandable, but there’s nothing to be scared of. In fact, I know how scared you are of your dad, and he isn’t going to be an issue anymore,” I tell her.

“You think it’s that easy?”

“It is that easy, little bird. Come here,” I tell her. She scoots up and sits between my legs, laying her head on my chest. I snuff out my joint on the ground next to me before grabbing her hand and running my fingers over the ring we got her.

“You like it?” I ask.

“I love it. It means the world to me.”

“And you mean the world to us,” I remind her.

“I love you, War.”

“I know you do. I love you too, little bird. And I can promise you when I get out of there, I’m going to cuff your ass to the bed and make you suck my cock.” She giggles, and it’s the best sound I’ve heard in a while. I wrap my arms around her and keep her tucked close to me. She sighs as I run a hand up and down her back.

“What’s going to happen after?”

“What do you mean?”

“With the house and Sasha and just everything.”

“Worried about the future now too?” I ask her.

“A little.”

“Don’t be. We got you. Sasha is going to be fine. Denz has the means to take care of her now, and he has a support system in place. Dad has talked to his lawyers, and they don’t think getting custody of her is going to be an issue if their mom dies before she’s eighteen.”

“That’s good. That’s really good.”

“Yeah, it is. As far as everything else goes, Dad wants us to stay here since he’s going to be traveling, but if you want your

own place, we can do that too.”

“My own place?” she asks, looking up at me strangely. I smirk.

“Don’t get excited, little bird. I meant with us.”

“I’m happy wherever you guys are. I don’t mind staying here either.”

“You just got a thing for my dad, huh?” she laughs a little, keeping her head on my chest.

“I love your dad. He’s been great to me even when my mom wasn’t, but I think I have my hands full with the three of you,” she admits.

“Pretty sure you’re right about that.”

“Everything will be okay, won’t it, War?” This is a side of Arya we’re not used to. Arya can hold her own, and she always has, but this is a vulnerable side of her that we rarely get to see, and I want to take advantage of it while I can.

I lean down and press my lips to the top of her head before I speak.

“Yeah. Everything will be okay,” I assure her. I hear the door close, and we both look over to see the other two coming out.

“Can no one sleep tonight?” I ask with a laugh as they come to sit around us.

“Guess not. You two okay?” Denz asks.

“We’re good. Just talking,” I tell him.

“Mom’s nurse called,” Denz adds.

“What did she say?”

“Mom isn’t doing well.”

“You want to go see her?” Arya asks this time. Denz shakes his head. “What about Sasha?”

“I’m taking her over there tomorrow. I’m not waking her up right now,” he adds.

“I’ll go with you,” Arya offers.

“We all will,” I tell him. He nods his head this time, and we all sit in silence. It’s strange, knowing I’m not going to be here with them for a whole year. I’ve never not had my brothers around and that’s going to be an adjustment for all of us.

And now we have Arya. And we’ve only just gotten her, and now I’m going to have to be away from her for a year. Will she even want me after I get out? Is she going to be the same girl? Will I be the same man? There are so many different things I’ve been thinking about, and I don’t have answers.

Arya must feel how tense I am. She leans up and presses her lips to my neck, and I sigh, closing my eyes. I’m going to miss this.

“I’ll come visit,” she whispers.

“No, you won’t.”

“Why not?” Now, she pulls away from me, looking at me like I’m crazy.

“No one is coming to visit me while I’m there,” I tell her. She looks to the others, but we’ve already discussed this. I don’t want them to see me like that. I don’t want them to come.

“Why the hell not?” she snaps, climbing off the lounge chair.

“Because I said no, little bird.”

“I’ll show up anyway.”

“And I’ll deny the visit.”

“Why would you do that to me?”

“I’m doing it for you,” I tell her.

“How is denying me the right to see you for me? That makes no fucking sense, War!”

“Listen, when I first go in, I can’t go straight to killing your dad. It’s going to take time, and until he’s dead, no one can see you there, little bird. It’s not safe.”

“And what about after?”

“No. I’ve made my decision, and it’s no. No one is coming to visit. Not you, not my brothers, not my dad.”

“This is fucked up, War! We’re your family!”

“Goddamn right, you are! And that is never going to change,” I growl at her.

“And you two are what? Just letting this go?” She turns her attention to the other two now, anger and fire dancing in her pretty blue eyes.

“He’s a grown-ass man, Arya. If he says no, then the answer is no,” Denz tells her before she looks at Harlon.

“And you?”

“I’ve tried to talk some sense into him. I told him it was a bad idea, but like Denz said, he’s a grown man and makes his own choices.”

“I can’t believe you three. Have you once thought about what this is going to do Sasha and me? Or does it even matter to you?” Fuck, she’s angry as hell, and I’d love nothing more than to bend her over and fuck the anger out of her, but now isn’t the time.

“I have thought about it. And I think it’s best if you two don’t see me. Shit’s going to happen in there, little bird, and I don’t want you to see me that way.”

“What shit?”

“Come on, Arya! You know how prison works,” Denz snaps at her. She lowers her gaze because she does know. She’s not a stupid girl.

“And you think I care what you look like? No. I just need to see you, War! I need to know that you’re okay.”

“I get it, I do, but we’re not going to do that. Don’t argue with me on this. You’re not going to like the outcome.” Arya huffs out a breath and walks off toward the pool house. We all keep an eye on her as she sits with her back to it and slides down, pulling her knees up to her chest.

“I didn’t think it would be this bad,” Harlon says.

“Me either. You know I fucking hate it, right?” I ask them. They have to know I hate the idea of leaving them.

“We know, War. And if you want to back out and come up with something else, we’re all for it,” Denz tells me.

“No. There is no backing out now. I’m doing this for her. She fucking deserves peace after everything that’s happened to her,” I tell them. They nod, agreeing with me, but I know they don’t agree with me doing what I’m going to do.

“We just need you back in one piece, War,” Harlon states.

“I know, brother, and I will be. But you two have to promise me to take care of them,” I tell them. I know they will. I know in my heart that they will, but I need to hear it right now.

“We got them,” Harlon says.

“You have nothing to worry about,” Denz adds. I nod my head before dragging my gaze back to her. She sits there with her head down, not paying us any attention. All I want to do is hold her in my arms for the rest of my fucking life, but that can all happen after I handle her dad.

“You’re not going to change your mind, are you?” Har asks me.

“No. This is what I can do to make sure she’s safe. I’m taking the chance,” I tell them. I keep my eyes on her for as long as I sit here. After a while, she stands and paces the grass, screaming at the top of her lungs. And we let her.

We let her have her moment.

Chapter 40

Harlon

I can't believe it's today. My nerves are on edge as we walk around the pier. No one told her, no one told Arya what the plan was for today because if we did, War knew she wouldn't come.

He holds her hand as they walk around just talking, and she laughs a few times, but those laughs are going to fade quickly. Denz and I are going to be the ones picking up the pieces of her broken heart.

"This is stupid," I mumble as we walk around.

"He won't rethink it, Har. We've tried," Denz tells me.

"I know, but fuck, man. You know how hard this is going to be on all of us?"

"I know. I know it is." I can hear the sadness in his tone. Anything could happen to War once he's sent to prison. Anything! What if his plan backfires? What if he doesn't make it out of there? I can't even think straight. This is all too much.

War glances around, eyeing his target before he shifts his gaze back to ours. He smirks and I know this is it. He grabs Arya and spins her in his arms, leaning down and taking her mouth with his. He kisses her so damn roughly that her lips will be bruised, but he's making his last moment with her count for something.

We walk closer to them, and when he pulls away from Arya, he shoves her in our direction. I wrap my arms around her as he walks backward with a fucked up grin on his face.

"What's he doing?" Arya asks as he keeps walking backward.

"What War does," I mumble. We all watch as he spins around at the last minute and starts talking to the cop.

"Oh God. He's not ..." Arya says, but her voice trails off. She knows what he's doing. He pulls his fist back and punches the cop right in the jaw before smirking at him. In seconds, the cop has him on the ground and cuffing him.

“He’s always hated that cop,” Denz muses.

“This is it,” Arya says as we walk toward them.

“Hey, that’s my brother you’re cuffing!” Denz yells. The cop’s head pops up, and he looks between us before standing up and pulling his gun. He aims it at us and yells, “Stay back!” War laughs from his spot on the ground as Denz does the same. We watch as the asshole calls for backup. Only when they arrive does he lower his gun.

“He’s my fiancé! Can I at least tell him bye?” Arya asks. The main cop shakes his head, but his backup allows it. They pull War off the ground, and Arya rushes over, throwing her arms around his waist. I can’t hear what she’s saying, and it doesn’t really matter because War laughs and kisses her once more before she’s ushered away from him.

“Touch her again, and I’ll fucking gut you!” War yells at the cop.

“Is that a threat?”

“If that’s how you want to take it.”

“You want another charge?” the asshole asks him. War just smirks at him before the other cop grabs his handcuffs and drags him toward the car. Arya stands there watching him, unsure what to do or say right now.

We stand still, watching until the cars are out of sight. Only then do we walk up to Arya and wrap my arms around her. She turns into me, burying her face in my chest as Denz rubs her back.

“You want to go?” I ask her. She nods her head before pulling away from me, and we all start walking. We take the street this time instead of the beach since that’s the way Arya went.

“I really like this neighborhood,” she says as we make our way down the street.

“It is nice being so close to everything. You don’t have to go far, and when you want something, it’s there,” I add.

“I could live on the beach forever,” she says.

“You like it that much?” I ask her. She looks over her shoulder at me and smiles.

“Yeah, I do. I don’t like the storms when they blow up, but the ocean is amazing,” she says as we keep walking. I know she’s sad to see War go. I know she’s hurting on the inside, but she isn’t going to let it show, at least not right now.

“What do you want to do for dinner tonight?” Denz asks.

“Doesn’t matter to me. Whatever you guys want,” she says.

“I want you for dinner,” I tell her. Arya laughs, and it’s the best sound in the fucking world, but I also know she’s covering up her sadness too.

“Then you can have me.”

“What about what I want?” Denz chimes in. She spins around and walks backward so she can look at the two of us.

“What do you want?”

“Your pussy on my lips.” She smiles again before the smile fades.

“I think I’m hanging out with Sasha tonight. She isn’t going to take this well,” she says.

“We’ll all hang out together,” I add. Arya nods her head before turning to look the right way. When we reach the house, she climbs the steps and opens the door.

“He’s gone?” Dad asks as we all step inside. Arya straightens her spine and takes a deep breath before he motions for her to come to him. She goes straight to him, and he wraps her in his arms. “He’s going to be okay, Arya. Don’t worry about him.”

“I do worry. He isn’t here, and I hate that.”

“I know you do. We all do, but Warren has always been strong-willed. He sets his sights on something, and there’s nothing we can do to change his mind. Just remember he loves you,” he tells her.

“I love him, too.”

“I know you do. Just like you love the other two, and they’re going to be here for you while all this happens.”

“I know. It’s just hard not having him here,” she says. Dad keeps her tucked in close for a long time when Sasha comes upstairs. She looks between everyone, and she knows instantly. Tears spring to her eyes as Denz goes to her and pulls her into his arms. It breaks my heart that they have to go through this.

I stand back and watch all of them, wondering what the hell we’re going to do without him here. It’s not just them who are going to miss him. It’s us, too. Very rarely have we ever been apart, and now that’s going to happen for at least a year.

When everyone calms down, my dad asks if they want to go out for dinner. Everyone agrees, and we all head out to our cars. Arya and I follow Dad, Denz, and Sasha until we get there.

“You okay?” I ask her before we get out. She turns in the seat and looks at me before nodding her head.

“I am. It’s just going to be hard, but I know you guys are here, and we all have each other,” she tells me.

“You’re right. We do.” With that, I lean across the seat and press my lips to hers quickly before we climb out and meet up with the others.

“This is my favorite Mexican restaurant,” Dad says.

“I didn’t picture you as the Mexican kind of guy,” Arya says with a little laugh.

“Well, I’m part Italian, to be honest. I just never got in touch with that side of me.” Arya laughs as we walk toward the table when some girl steps up to Denz. Arya’s head turns in that direction and that fire we all love burns in her eyes.

“Don’t let that skank touch your man!” Sasha snaps. I chuckle, but then Arya moves. She crosses the restaurant quickly, grabs the girl by the back of her hair, and pulls her away from Denz.

“Who the hell do you think you’re touching?” she roars at her. The girl tries to fight back and get Arya’s hand out of her hair.

“Get off me!” The girl yells.

“Keep your hands off my fiancé!” She screams back.

“You three have your hands full with that one,” Dad says through the laughter.

“Yeah, we do. The girl can hold her own.”

“Should we go break that up before we can’t eat dinner?” he asks. I laugh and nod my head as we both turn and walk over. Denz is already trying to calm her down, but it does little good. We step up, and she finally releases the girl from the hold she had on her, and the girl rushes off.

Denz doesn’t waste any time lifting Arya in his arms and heading for the bathroom. He motions for me to follow, and I do as Dad and Sasha head to the table.

We step into the bathroom, and I lock the door behind us.

“What the hell are you two doing?” she screams at us, looking between the two of us. That’s when we close the distance between us. We crowd around her, and Denz snatches her shorts down her legs along with her panties. I tug at her shirt until she lifts her arms and allows me to remove it. Then my lips are on her neck, licking the scar that has formed.

Denz drops to his knees and spreads her legs wide, diving into her pussy.

“You think you can just fuck me, and I’ll calm down?” she asks, anger still evident in her tone.

“That’s exactly what we’re going to do,” I tell her. She moans and arches her back as Denz licks at her. His hands slide up her thighs before pulling her pussy apart for better access. He runs his tongue all over her as I suck on her flesh. Then I lower my head to her nipples and pull at one with my teeth. Arya hisses as we both work her over.

I reach up and shove two fingers in her mouth and halfway down her damn throat. Arya sucks them, and I damn near come in my jeans.

Denz keeps going as I move to the other nipple. Once I tug it with my teeth, she lets go. Her scream pierces the silent

bathroom as she gushes into Denz's mouth. He laps up everything she has to offer as I slide my fingers out of her mouth. Arya pants as I grab her shirt and tug it back on before moving to her shorts next. I help her put them on as she catches her breath.

When we're all situated, we walk back out of the bathroom as if nothing happened. We walk over to our table, where Dad already ordered drinks for us. Arya's cheeks are flushed and everyone knows what we did. Not that we care.

The waitress comes and takes our order and we just sit around and talk. The girls laugh at stories dad tells about us boys when we were younger.

"So you've lived in the same house since they were kids?" Arya asks.

"Mostly, yeah. The boys always had the basement for them," he adds.

"I love your house, Mr. Staton. One day, I'm going to have a house like that," Sasha says.

"I told you to call me Jarrod. And you're welcome to stay as long as you like, Sasha. It's a pleasure to have you," he tells her. She smiles, beaming up at him.

"Thank you." He nods at her as our food is brought and sat in front of us. The girls dig in and start eating, but I can tell dad is on edge about War.

"We have another opening in New York in a few weeks," I remind dad.

"You boys are really doing well with those. I've heard from management that everything goes smoothly when you're there," he says.

"We do our best, but I think it's Arya who gets the attention. She seems to attract men," Denz adds this time. Dad chuckles as he looks over at her.

"There's nothing wrong with gaining some attention."

"As long as we don't have to beat anyone's ass over her," Denz tells him.

“I can handle myself,” she adds as she bites into her taco.

“We know you can.”

“And that’s why we love you.”

Chapter 41

Arya

I hate it. I fucking hate it. I'm so down and depressed it isn't funny. My heart doesn't feel right without War here, and I never thought that I'd have those kinds of feelings for anyone.

I sit in the bathroom, staring at the razor blade in my hand. It's too much. I don't know how to do this for a year. I don't know how to handle all the feelings I have. I've never faced anything like this before.

I bring the edge of the blade to my naked stomach and press it into my flesh just as the door opens. I look up to see Denz standing there. His eyes drop to the razor in my hand before shaking his head.

"You said you weren't going to do that shit again," he says, nodding toward the blade.

"I ... I don't know what else to do, Denz! Don't you get it? I have no fucking idea what to do with myself!" I'm angry, but at who? All they've done has been here for me. Everything War is doing is for me, and I still can't figure out how to thank them or be there for them while they deal with losing their brother.

"I do get it, baby. This is hard on everyone, not just you. We're all fucking trying to deal with it some way."

"You're doing a better job at it than I am."

"You think so? I've been at the gym more than I've been here for you. And that's my mistake. It's been three months already, and I'm so fucking sorry I haven't been here when you needed me." My eyes fill with tears as I look at him.

"You have your own life," I whisper.

"No, I don't. You are my fucking life. Don't you see that? You and the guys and Sasha, that's all I have. I'm so sorry, baby, that I haven't been here for you the way you needed me to."

He isn't wrong. He hasn't been around much in the last three months. Harlon has, but he's been distant too. I think this thing

with War has really taken its toll on all of us. We're all struggling in our own ways, and I'm not making it easier on them.

"I just didn't expect to feel so much, Denz. I didn't expect to feel like this," I admit to him. He walks closer and holds out his hand, but I'm not ready to let go just yet.

"None of us thought we'd fall in love, Arya. Certainly not with the same girl, but we did, and here we are. And what kind of fucking brother ... man would I be if I didn't protect you while he isn't here?" His hand is still there, waiting for me to give him the blade. I look down at the mark I've already made, and it hurts. I shouldn't be doing this. I shouldn't let my feelings get the best of me like I did. I told them I'd stop.

Slowly, I pull the blade away from my stomach and place it in Denz's hand. He wraps his fingers around it and shoves it in his pocket as I stare up at him.

"Do you hate me?"

"How could I hate you?"

"It's my fault your brother is gone," I remind him.

"When you love someone, you do whatever it takes to protect them, baby. War loves you. That's why he isn't here right now. He loves you so fucking much that he made that decision. He knew it was better to leave you for a year than it was for you to leave us forever," he says. My heart shatters. My tears fall now. I've never had this kind of love in my life. I've never known anyone like these guys before. I swipe at the tears on my cheeks and sniffle a few times.

"You came in here, and you looked like you had something to say. What was it?" I ask him. I could tell by the look on his face he had something to tell me.

"We can talk about it later."

"No. Let's talk about it now. I need something to distract me," I tell him. He nods his head before offering me his hand. I slide mine into his, and he pulls me to my feet and out into my room, where we sit on the bed.

“I went home last night with Sasha. We went into my mom’s room and just sat there. Sasha was talking to her, telling her about you mostly. She, uhh, mom died last night.” Oh my God. My heart feels heavier than it did already as I pull Denz into me. I hold him there, knowing he isn’t going to cry, but I know this has to hurt him.

“I’m so sorry.” Denz pulls away from me pretty quickly and leans back against the headboard.

“Sasha wanted to stay there last night, and I didn’t see any reason she couldn’t. I need to go and get her today and bring her back here. Start making arrangements.”

“Tell me what you need, Denz. I’ll help with whatever I can.” He gives me a soft smile before nodding his head.

“I just need you, baby. That’s it. Just stay by my side.”

“I can do that.”

“Sasha may need you more than I do,” he tells me. “Me and my mom weren’t that close.”

“Doesn’t mean it doesn’t hurt,” I tell him.

“It does, but it doesn’t. It’s not like I didn’t see it coming. We all did. But I also made my peace with it a long time ago.”

“Do you know what she wanted done? Did she want to be buried or?”

“Yeah. She wanted to be buried. I will go tomorrow and get it all set up.”

“I’ll go with you.”

“Thank you. You want to come with us to get Sasha?” I nod my head when Denz stands and pulls me to my feet. Before we go anywhere, he drags me back into the bathroom to clean up the mess I made on my stomach. He wets a rag and wipes the blood away before passing me my shirt. I slip it back on, and we walk hand in hand out of my room and down to the front door where Harlon is waiting. He walks closer and pulls me into a hug before we all leave together.

The ride to Denz's mom's house seems to take forever, and when we get there, it all feels off.

Sitting in the living room while Denz makes phone calls just feels wrong. Sasha is surprisingly calm for someone who just lost her mom.

"Do you need anything?" I ask her.

"I'm fine."

"You sure?"

"Yeah, I'm good. I got to spend some time with her, and that's all I wanted."

"I'm glad you had that time. I know it's not the same, but when my mom left, it was weird. It was like one minute she was there, and the next she wasn't. She was pretty absent throughout my life, though, so I suppose that makes it easier," I tell her.

"We're kind of the same, aren't we? My mom wasn't around much either, preferring the bottle to being a mom. Maybe that's why I don't feel as sad as I should."

"No one can tell you how to feel, Sasha. Only you know what you feel, and whatever that is, it's okay. We all deal with things in our own way," I tell her.

"Like you cutting?"

"Yeah. Kind of like that. Not that you should do that, you better not," I snap at her. Sasha laughs as she lays her head on my shoulder.

"I know, I wouldn't do that, but thank you for being here," she tells me. I nod my head, and we sit like this for a long time while Denz is on the phone. Harlon stands out on the front porch alone, and it makes me wonder what he's thinking. When Sasha says she's going to pack up her stuff, I walk out on the porch.

"What are you thinking about?" I ask Harlon.

"Life. Everything. How do you go from breathing one minute to dead the next? It's so crazy. One breath. That's it, just one

breath that doesn't come, and it's all over."

"You miss your mom?"

"No."

"Do you want to talk about it?"

"No." Instead of pressuring him, I walk over, slide my arms around his waist, and hold onto him. He wraps his arms around me, and that's how we stay until Denz is ready to go. Sasha packed her stuff into the back of the car and now stands staring at the house she'll never live in again.

Me and Har walk off the porch and stand next to her.

"You know this isn't goodbye, right?" Harlon tells her.

"I know. We'll see her again one day," Sasha says, and my heart nearly shatters again. "Denz?" she says, turning to her brother.

"Yeah?"

"We never have to come back here, right?" I can only imagine how much pain and hurt they've endured in this house.

"No. We're never coming back," he tells her. A small smile tugs across her face before she turns and climbs into the car. Harlon moves away from me and climbs in behind her as I walk toward Denz.

"It's the end of a chapter in your life."

"But it isn't the end of the story," he adds. I smile up at him, not knowing what the hell I'd do without these guys in my life.

"You ready to start a new page?"

"I'm more than ready. This has been a long time coming. It was only a matter of time, right?" I nod my head.

"You're right. And when War gets back, we will start a whole new life."

"You're ready for that?" he asks me.

"Yeah. I've been thinking about it a lot, and there's nothing more I want than the three of you and, of course, Sasha."

“I’ve put a call into the lawyer about her. Hopefully, things will be settled quickly.”

“You got this, Denz. We’re all here for you.”

“I know you are.”

Chapter 42

Denz

I forgot how exhausting funerals could be. I've been to a few in my life. Mostly friends who have died.

No one showed up for mom's funeral aside from us and, surprisingly, dad. Not that I thought anyone would. She had no friends due to her drinking. She ran them all off a long time ago. It was just us.

You would think I'd feel sad, but I don't. In fact, I don't feel much of anything. It hurt to see Sasha cry as they lowered our mom into the ground, but that's the only reason it hurt.

Maybe I did make my peace with it a long time ago. Or maybe I just can't forget all the bad that happened to me as I grew up. Or how she basically abandoned Sasha for alcohol. Maybe what I feel is anger. I don't really know for sure.

What I do know is now is the time for me to step up and not just for Sasha. For Arya, too. She's struggling, and I know she is, and I let the ball drop on that. I'll never let that happen again because I know just how much we all love her and need her in our lives.

"You want ice cream?" I ask Sasha as we walk back to the car. She laughs a little and nods her head.

"Yeah. I'd like that."

"Can we go to the pier?" Arya asks this time.

"We can go anywhere you want."

"You want to join us, Jarrod?" Arya asks him.

"No. I'm going to head back home. You guys have fun," he tells us before walking away. We all pile in the car and head toward the pier. The ride is silent, and that kind of bothers me. I miss the laughter and all the talking.

We pull up, find a spot to park and climb out. Arya and Sasha take off running, and for the first time in a while, they're laughing.

“It’s good to hear them laugh,” Harlon says, nodding toward the girls.

“Yeah, it is. I caught Arya cutting again,” I tell him.

“Really? Fuck. That’s my fault,” he says.

“How do you figure?”

“I haven’t been around as much as I should be. At least mentally.”

“Not your fault. I haven’t been around either. I think everything with War has just gotten to us all, and we’ve been dealing with shit in our own way,” I tell him as we walk toward the girls. They’re already standing in line for the ice cream, still laughing and having a good time.

“You’re right, but we have to do better. We’ve basically left her to fend for herself, and that’s fucked up on our part.”

“I know. We got this,” Harlon tells me. We walk over, and I cut the line getting looks from others, but I don’t give a shit. I throw one arm around each of the girls and pull them against me.

“You’re embarrassing,” Sasha whines.

“No, I’m not. I’m your brother,” I tell her.

“And? It’s embarrassing for you to do this. How do you want me to get a boyfriend?” she asks me, and I immediately laugh.

“You’re not having a boyfriend for at least another five years.”

“He’s right. You don’t need one,” Harlon adds.

“And yet, Arya gets three,” Sasha says with a laugh.

“Arya’s a different breed,” I tell her. Arya looks up at me with a funny look on her face. “What? Not all girls can handle the three of us.”

“Yeah, you sure don’t make it easy,” she teases.

“Oh, come on. We aren’t that bad,” Harlon says with a smirk. Arya raises an eyebrow, and I start laughing. I release the girls and pay for their ice cream when my phone rings. I slide it out to see it’s our dad and step to the side to answer it.

“Hey?”

“I had a phone call just a few minutes ago. War was in an altercation,” he says.

“What do you mean?”

“He got beat pretty badly, but he’s okay. He didn’t want us to know, but as you know, I have a friend who works at the prison. He just wanted to make me aware of the situation.”

“How bad is bad?”

“Nothing was broken, so that’s a good sign,” he says before sighing into the line.

“This is stupid. This whole idea he had was stupid. We should have never gone along with it,” I snap into the phone.

“It wasn’t our choice, and you know it. Warren sets his mind to something, and he’s going to do it regardless of what we say, and we both know that. As of right now, he’s okay, Denz.”

“What the hell do I tell Arya?”

“That’s up to you. If it were me, I wouldn’t tell her anything. It will only worry her more,” he says.

“You’re right. I’ll let Harlon know, but I’m not saying anything to her.”

“Good plan. I’ll talk to you later,” Dad says before hanging up. I glance over and see the girls laughing as they paint ice cream on Harlon’s face, and I know not telling her is the best option. She doesn’t need to know. In fact, he didn’t want us to know.

Taking a deep breath, I walk back toward them and smile. It’s a fake smile, but at least it’s a smile.

“You good?” Harlon asks. Of course, he can tell something is off.

“We’ll talk later,” I tell him. He nods his head when Arya comes toward me. She swirls her finger in her ice cream and then presses it to my lips. I open my mouth, and she slips her finger inside as I lick and suck it off. Her eyes are on fire with need. It’s been a while since we’ve given her what she needs, and I’d say that tonight will be the night we fix that issue.

“You’re making me horny,” she tells me, causing me to smile.

“Am I?”

“You know you are. Is that your plan with the ice cream?” she asks playfully.

“It wasn’t before, but it seems like a good option now,” I tell her. Arya bites her lip when I lean down and suck it into my mouth. I nip at it playfully before she devours my mouth with hers.

Her kiss is hard and needy. It’s like she’s missed this, and she probably has. So I kiss her back with as much force as I can.

I tangle my hand into the back of her hair, forcing her to tilt her back as I deepen the kiss. She tastes like everything I’ve ever wanted and then some.

When we finally pull apart, she’s gasping for air. Her eyes are glossed over, and her cheeks are pink. I don’t think I’ve ever seen her as beautiful as she is right now. I reach up and run my thumb across her bottom lip and watch as she smiles.

“I need to take you home,” I tell her.

“Then take me.”

“Oh, you two are too much,” Sasha whines before we all laugh.

“Can’t help it,” I tell her with a shrug.

“God, let’s just go before you fuck her right here on the pier,” Sasha says as she climbs to her feet. She and Harlon take off running, teasing each other as they go. I keep Arya tucked into my side as we walk toward the beach.

“Everything’s going to be okay, right?” she asks, glancing up at me.

“Yeah, it is. We’ve all been lost in our own little worlds, but that’s going to change. We were a unit before. We all clicked, and that’s something that’s missing right now. I know it isn’t the same without War here, but we’re going to make this work until he comes home.” Arya nods her head as we keep walking.

When we get to the house, Harlon and Sasha go inside but I drag Arya into the pool house. I close the door and lock it behind us when she begins to strip out of her clothes.

“How do you know that’s why I brought you in here?” I ask as she pulls her panties off.

“Is it not?”

“Maybe. Even if it wasn’t, there’s no way I could say no to you when you’re standing there naked,” I tell her. Arya walks over and sits on the edge of the oversized chair, scooting back and spreading her legs. Her pussy is right there waiting for me, and I can’t help but be drawn to her.

I stalk toward her as I take off my clothes, then drop to my knees in front of her.

“You do know you’re the only one I’ve gotten on my knees for, right?”

“Don’t lie.”

“I’m not lying, baby. No other girl has gotten me on my knees like this,” I tell her. She smiles brightly before I lean my head down and run my tongue along her slit. Arya gasps as I keep going. I twirl my tongue around her wet pussy, getting it wetter for me. I find her clit, and I tug it between my teeth as she arches her back.

It’s been too long since I’ve had her like this. It’s been too long since I’ve been inside her. My cock hardens as I taste her on my tongue. I lick her until her knees begin to shake, and just when she’s about to let go, I stop. Arya whines as I chuckle and grab her off the chair.

“That’s mean,” she whines as I position her on my cock. As she falls down my length, she moans loudly.

“I want your cum all over my cock, baby.” Arya uses her legs to lift herself and then slides back down my length. I let out a groan, feeling her wrapped around me the way she is.

I give her time. I let her take me the way she needs me for a little while anyway. She rides me, and it feels so goddamn good, but I need more, and she knows it. I lift her off me and

climb to my feet, bending her over the chair in front of us. Then I'm back inside of her, thrusting into her.

"Harder," she cries out as I fuck her. I grip her hips in my hands, and I take her just as she asks. I plunge into her, pulling nearly all the way back out before slamming into her once again. Her body bounces off my cock, but she takes me so well. The deeper I get, the more I need.

I release her hips and reach for her ass, spreading her wide open for me. Then I'm right back to taking her roughly.

"Oh, God! Denz!" she cries out as I fuck her hard. "You're so deep!"

"Yeah, baby. You wanted all of me, right? You wanted me to fuck you hard? Then take my fucking cock like a good girl," I tell her. At my words, her pussy clenches around me. "You like that, baby? You like me to tell you how to take my cock?"

"Yes!" she cries out loudly.

"Then do what I tell you. Don't fucking hold back, Arya. Let me all the way in. Let my cock send you out of this world." She clenches again, and I swear to God I'm about to explode. A few more rough thrusts and her body begins to tremble. Her legs shake as she tightens around me, screaming out her orgasm. I'm not far behind. A few more strokes, and I'm done for.

I run my hand up and down her back while my cock jerks inside of her. When that fucker has had enough, I pull out of her, and she drops onto the chair.

"That was amazing," she whispers.

"It's been a while."

"Yeah. Never go that long without fucking me again," she warns, causing me to laugh.

"I won't. I promise." She rolls over on the chair and scoots to the side making room for me. I climb on and lay close to her, pulling her into my arms.

"God, that felt so good. Better than getting myself off," she laughs.

“You’ve been getting yourself off?” I ask her.

“Yeah. I didn’t want to bother you guys.”

“Well, we can’t have you doing that anymore when there are two of us who can take care of that,” I tell her. She rolls her head to the side and presses a kiss to my chest.

“I’m actually very good at it,” she tells me.

“Is that right? I think I might need to see this in action next time.”

“You want to watch me make myself come?”

“Why wouldn’t I? I bet that looks hot as fuck with you finger fucking yourself. Fuck, you’re going to make me hard again just thinking about it.”

“You’re crazy.”

“I love you.”

“I love you, too.”

Chapter 43

Warren

My body aches, and my ribs scream in pain, but I watch him. I did what I had to do to get myself in a good place with the guys here. I needed backup, and now I have it. Some don't understand and never would, but in these walls, you have very few options.

I lean against the fence as I take in the scene. This can happen anytime. I just need to be sneaky about it. I can't have eyes on me when I do it. So that's why I wait and watch.

Having everyone out in the yard together is a bad fucking idea. You can practically feel the tension between everyone. He doesn't know who I am, and that works to my advantage. He has no fucking clue what's coming to him.

I glance around for my guys, and we make eye contact. There are few guards out here today, and if I were smart, this would be the perfect time to hit him. I nod once at Mark, one of my guys, and he nods back. I watch as he turns and walks over to another guy, and they talk for a second. We don't make it obvious. We've been working on this for the last three months I've been here.

When Mark gives me the signal, I walk across the yard toward that bastard. David. His name makes me sick to my fucking stomach and leaves a bad taste in my mouth.

Mark starts toward me, reaching out his hand as if we're going to shake hands, but instead passes me the shank and walks away. I take a look around at the guards just as Mark starts a fight with someone else. The guard's attention isn't on me, and as I get closer, my heart kicks up a notch. It's not like I haven't killed before, I have, but this is new. Killing in prison is dangerous, and if I'm caught, that's the end of my life.

David looks up just as I step up to him. This is it. It's time.

"This is for Arya," I tell him before burying the shank into his stomach. I pull it out quickly and stab him a few more times before he drops to his knees. I turn and quickly walk away just

like we planned, meeting Mark back in the center of the yard, where I pass off the shank. He walks away quickly and heads toward someone else while I go back to my spot against the fence. When I look down, I see blood on my hand. Fuck. I slowly slip my hand inside the sleeve of my jumper and wipe it off. No one will see it in there.

I slip my hand back out just as the guards begin to blow their whistles, ordering everyone to the ground. I drop down onto my stomach with my arms stretched out and look toward Mark. He gives me a quick nod, letting me know things were taken care of.

We stay like this for a long time as they get the medics out here for that rat bastard, but by the time they move to take him inside, I can tell he's already dead. A sick smile tugs across my face, knowing I'm the one who took his life. He can't go after Arya anymore. She's safe, and that's all that matters to me. Fuck the rest. I'll gladly spend the rest of my life in this hell hole if it means she can live her life and not be afraid.

After a while, we're all ushered back inside and to our cells. Robert, my cellmate, isn't the brightest person in the world, but he doesn't fuck with me, so I'm okay with him.

"Whoever did that shit was quick as fuck, right?" he asks.

"Seems so. No one saw anything," I add.

"No shit. I was like three steps from that asshole, and I didn't see shit," he tells me. I didn't pay much attention to who was standing around, and I didn't really care. As long as it's over, that's all that matters to me. I drop onto the bottom bunk and lay back, a sick smile still on my face. When I close my eyes, I can picture my little bird smiling and enjoying her life. That's all I really want for her. I want her to be happy.

Insomnia has the best of me most nights in here. I'm dead tired, but I can't sleep. All I can do is think about her and my brothers. What they're doing. How things are going without me there.

Some days hurt worse than others. Some I'm so lost in the day-to-day life I'm forced to live here that I try not to think

about them. It only makes it worse when I do.

Morning comes, and as we're let out of our cells, word gets around that David is dead. I figured as much. I knew where to stab him so he wouldn't survive.

"Who do you think did it?" Robert asks as I lean against the rail outside our cell.

"Hard to say. He probably pissed off the wrong person," I tell him.

"From what I've heard, he didn't fuck with anyone since he was about to be up for parole."

"Doesn't mean shit, and we all know it."

"That's true. Hey, I heard they were releasing some assholes on good behavior that have lesser charges," he tells me. That's news to me.

"What counts as a lesser charge?" I muse.

"I don't know, honestly. All you did was hit the cop. I would think that's a lesser charge."

"Doubt that. They take that shit a little too seriously," I tell him.

"No shit. A year for that shit? Did he deserve it?" he asks me. He didn't really deserve it. He just happened to be there at the wrong time, and I used that to my advantage.

"Yeah, he was looking at my girl," I lie.

"Just looking?" I turn my head to look at him and nod.

"Isn't that enough?" I ask him. He laughs now as I turn to look back at the others.

"She must have a golden pussy if you got that pissed off for looking," he says. He starts to laugh, but it gets cut short when I spin around, grab him by the throat, and slam him against the wall.

"I've killed men for less, Robert," I warn him. His eyes widen before he nods his head understanding me. I release my grip and move back to my spot on the rail. Robert eyes me as he

rubs at his throat, but he should be careful what he says about my little bird.

I stand here for a while longer when one of the guards comes to get me. He tells me to follow him, and I do as I'm told.

He takes me down a few different halls before I'm escorted into an office. This is it. They figured out it was me. Is this when they play the goddamn video and tell me they know what I've done? I nearly laugh, but I hold it in until they actually prove that it was me.

"Mr. Staton. Do you know why we've brought you in here today?" the warden asks me.

"No."

"As you're aware, we're overcrowded here, and to be honest with you, your charges aren't as serious as some others. We've been watching everyone, and we've had to make some decisions. At this time, due to the overcrowding, we're going to release you from your sentence. You will be required to go on probation as a result of this early release. Do you understand?" What the fuck? What Robert said was true? They're letting some of us out?

"You're letting me go?" I ask, not sure I heard him correctly.

"Yes."

"Why?"

"As I stated, we're overcrowded, and we're looking at those with the lesser crimes who have been on the straight and narrow since they've been here. We've had no issues out of you since you arrived, so you're a candidate for early release."

"I punched a cop," I remind them.

"As we very well know, and I do hope that in the short time you've been here, you've learned a lesson. Your record was not a clean one when you came in but again, mostly misdemeanors. What I can tell you is if you get into trouble again, you will be serving your full sentence here." I nod my head, understanding him perfectly.

"I got it."

“Good. Then go back to your cell, and as soon as we can process everything, you’ll be released.” I nod my head and almost thank the bastard, but instead, I follow the guard back out and down the halls until we’re back to my cell. I drop down on the cot and smirk to myself. Good behavior. I just fucking killed a man, how good is that?

Nevertheless, I’m going home. I’m fucking going home.

Three months in here has tested me. It’s tested me daily. I’ve done a lot of thinking and a lot of remembering. Not everything I’ve thought about has been good. I’m lost in thought when I hear Mark.

“You get in on that early release shit?” I sit back up and lean forward, resting my elbows on my knees.

“Yeah. Just told me.”

“Good. Good for you, War. Glad one of us is getting out of here,” he says.

“You know I got you, right? Whatever you need,” I tell him.

“The story you told me was enough, man. If that motherfucker could ruin a little girl like that once, who’s to say he wouldn’t do it again?” It’s funny hearing that come from Mark, considering he killed a man over money. I get it, though. He was homeless at the time, and what he had wasn’t much.

I knew Mark from childhood. We grew up together. He took a different route in life, and we lost contact over the years, but I found him in here again.

“She’s safe now. That’s all that matters to me,” I tell him.

“You’re right. That’s all that matters. Glad I was able to help,” he says, offering me his hand. I reach out and take it in mine as he shakes it briefly. “Go on, get your ass out of here, War.” He steps back and turns, walking away. That may very well be the last time I see Mark. He’s not leaving this place unless it’s in a body bag.

It seems to take forever when the guard comes for me. They pass me my old clothes and tell me to change and I do it quick

as hell. I sign all the paperwork that needs to be signed and gather my shit before they let me out.

When I step outside those gates, I feel free. I feel good. I take a deep breath and wait for the cab they called. Once it arrives, I rattle off dad's address, and we head that way.

It doesn't take long to get there, and I wonder what everyone is going to say once they see I'm back.

When we pull up, I climb out of the car and walk up the steps. I open the door slowly and that's when I see her. My little bird stands there with her head down, looking at something in her hands.

I walk quietly toward her, stopping right behind her. With quickness, I wrap my arm around her waist and one around her mouth so she can't scream. Then I lean in close to her ear and whisper, "You better run, little bird, because if I catch you, I'm going to make it hurt." Her body tenses, knowing I'll do it. When I let go of her, she seems torn. Does she spin around and face me, or does she run? I chose for her.

"Run!" I bark loudly. Arya doesn't waste any time darting for the steps. I give her a little head start before I begin to chase her. She's up the steps and about to slam her bedroom door when I shove it open. She stumbles back and then races for the balcony. She's looking over the edge, trying to find somewhere to go, but she's stuck. Like a fucking predator after it's prey, I stalk toward her.

She can hear me coming. She turns around, her eyes wild as she looks at me.

"How are you here?" she asks me. I smirk darkly.

"Take those clothes off, little bird."

"No. How are you here, War?"

"Did you just tell me no?" I ask her, cocking my head to the side. Her eyes widen as I inch my way closer to her.

She opens her mouth, but words don't form. I stop a few steps away from her and nod toward her clothes. She doesn't make a move to take them off, so I keep coming until there's nothing

between us but our breaths. I reach up and rip her shirt in half, exposing her breasts. Her chest heaves, rising and falling. Her lips are parted as she looks at me.

“Have you missed me, little bird?” I ask her, but my tone is still dark. I watch her, waiting for an answer, and when I don’t get one, I lean down and yank her shorts off her body.

“I ... I’m on my period,” she says, causing me to laugh.

“I haven’t been inside of you in months, and you think a little blood is going to stop me now?” I shove her legs apart roughly before grabbing the string for the tampon and pulling it out of her. I toss it to the side, spin her around, and bend her over the rail. I know it’s uncomfortable, and I know it’s going to leave a mark. My fucking mark.

I pull my jeans down and quickly slam into her pussy. She cries out for me just like I imagined she would. I dig my fingers into her hips, leaving bruises, I’m sure, as I fuck her over the balcony with force.

“You missed this cock haven’t you, little bird?” I ask her. When she doesn’t answer, I grab her hair and pull, forcing her head back at an awkward angle. “You better answer me,” I growl loudly. She still doesn’t say anything, so I release her hair and slap her ass hard.

“War!” She screams my name as her pussy tightens around me.

“Answer me, little bird. You know I’ll make it hurt,” I warn her. When she still doesn’t answer, I reach for her neck, slipping my hand around it, and squeeze. She gasps but still doesn’t answer, so I keep fucking her roughly until she does.

“Yes! I missed your cock!” She screams. I release her throat and pound into her when I hear the door open. I glance over my shoulder to see Harlon. He looks at me funny but then closes the door and leaves.

I can feel my little bird so close to coming, and I want her to have that. I want her to come. I want her pussy to milk my cock because it has been far too long since I’ve had her. So I move faster, plunge in deeper. Her cries are like music to my

ears. It's exactly what I needed to hear, and when she comes, she screams my name just like I dreamt of the last three fucking months.

Chapter 44

Harlon

We sit around the fire pit out back, talking and drinking and having a good time. It's nice to have War back. He was the missing piece of the puzzle while he was gone. He was the reason we all felt so off, but now he's back, and it's like he was never gone.

We've talked about everything from work to prison and everything in between, but Arya stays tucked into his arms where she belongs right now.

"I can't believe you're back," Dad says as he smiles at War.

"I know. I wasn't sure they were being serious when they told me."

"I can imagine not. That's not something that usually happens," he says. "Nevertheless, we're glad to have you home."

"I'm glad to be home," he tells him as he leans down and presses his lips to Arya's head. She smiles brightly and snuggles closer to him.

"What are we going to do now that I'm back?" War asks.

"What do you mean?" I ask.

"What's the plan? Work, housing, life."

"Work is still yours. I do plan on traveling now that you're back and everyone is safe," Dad says. "As far as housing, you're all more than welcome to stay here. It's not like we don't have the room. And we also need to celebrate Denz getting custody of Sasha."

"You got it?" War asks him.

"Yeah. I did. Didn't take much since dad helped," Denz says.

"Fuck. That's great news," War says. "So you're stuck with us now?" he says, turning toward Sasha.

“Looks that way. But as long as I have Arya, I’m good. There’s too many men in this family,” Sasha tells him. We all laugh as I take a pull from the bottle that’s being passed around before I pass it to War. He grabs it and takes a long pull before offering it to Arya. She grabs it and downs a big gulp as we laugh.

“Thirsty?” War asks her.

“I’m having a great time,” she responds as she passes the bottle to Denz.

While I sit back and look at everyone, I know this is what family is supposed to be. This is what everyone wants to have.

I watch as everyone talks and just has a good time. Dad excuses himself and heads inside while the rest of us laugh and talk. We keep drinking, passing the bottle around until there is nothing left. Then we start a new one.

Once that’s gone, we all head inside, and Sasha goes to bed. But not before hugging War for the longest time. I know everyone has missed him, including us.

Arya went to use the bathroom while the three of us dropped onto the couch.

“You good?” I ask War.

“Yeah. I’m better than good, Har. It was hell in there. It was fucked up being away from everyone and not knowing what the hell is going on. I’m so fucking tired, though. I barely slept in there.”

“You look tired,” Denz adds.

“Figured that much. I’m just glad to be home.”

“We’re glad you’re back too. How did it go?”

“Her dad?” I nod. “It wasn’t as hard as I thought it would be. You remember Mark? Met up with him in there, and he helped me out. We planned shit out, and it went smoothly. At first, I thought they were calling me into that office because they knew what I did,” he laughs a little. “I was trying to think of what it would be like to spend my life in that place. Not being with you guys or her. It fucking ripped me apart, man.”

“So they didn’t know shit?” Denz asks.

“Nope. They didn’t know shit. We were out in the yard one day, and I saw the opportunity, and I took it. Looked that motherfucker in the eyes and told him it was for Arya, and that was it.”

“I’m glad it’s over,” I say.

“Me too. She’s safe now. No one is going to touch her again,” War adds.

“That’s right,” Denz says. We finish our drink and wait for Arya to come back, and when she does, she’s tipsy and stumbling. She laughs to herself as she makes her way over to War and drops down in his lap.

“You keep dropping like that, I’m going to fuck you again.”

“Is that a promise?” she asks, looking at him over her shoulder.

“Didn’t I hurt you enough already?”

“It hurts so good.” Damn, that girl is on fire. We all laugh as she looks between us. “I love you guys,” she says.

“We love you too, little bird. How you liking that ring on your finger?” She looks down and runs her fingers over it before smiling.

“I love it. It makes me feel connected to each of you.”

“You think you can handle us for life?” I ask her. She chews on her bottom lip for a long second, nodding her head.

“I think I can do that.”

“Even when we hurt you?” I ask.

“Like I said, it’s a hurt that’s good.”

Now, I sit back and look between everyone. I can see just how much we all mean to each other. In this moment, we’re complete. And that’s exactly how it’s going to stay.

We let Arya have her fun and keep drinking even though she’s had enough. We’re celebrating War being back, and that’s enough for us to give her space.

She leaps off War's lap and stumbles down the hall toward the rooms. When she comes back, she has an arm full of sheets, pillows, and blankets.

"What the hell are you doing?" I ask her as she drops them all into a pile.

"We're all sleeping together tonight," she announces.

"And you're doing what?" Denz asks her.

"I'm making us a bed. You guys are going to have to fight it out over who sleeps where, but I call the middle," she slurs as she lays the sheets out on the floor. We watch her do whatever the hell it is she's doing, and when she's finally finished, she stands with her arms out wide.

"It's perfect!" she declares.

"You're perfect," I tell her. She smiles at me before grabbing a pillow and dropping down into the middle of the bed she made. She lays down as War climbs out of his chair and lies next to her. Denz moves next, getting on the other side of her as I watch them all.

"Don't worry, Har. Just because you're not next to me doesn't mean you aren't with me," she mumbles as sleep tugs at her. She's right. We don't have to be next to her to be with her. We're always with her in her heart.

And she's always with us, in ours.

I don't go to sleep right away, opting to stay up and just be here. The guys mess with Arya a little, causing her to laugh a few times. I can't help but smile. She's happy, and that's all we've ever wanted for her.

Eventually, the laughter wears down, and they all fall asleep except me. I just can't stop looking between them.

When I was younger, I didn't really see the point in family. My mom was who she was, and that wasn't a good mom. She was never there when I needed her, and to a point, I hated her for that. But dad? He did everything he could for us. We were the ones who chose not to live here often, opting to stay on the

other side of town and do our own things, but dad was always there. He made sure that we were okay.

I look at her, and it kind of pisses me off we didn't stick around with dad more than we did. He's done nothing but try to get us on the right track since we were kids. Sadly, it didn't always work.

I'm glad we're all here now, though. We can all work together and provide for Arya and Sasha the way they deserve to be provided for.

I see Arya lift her drunken little head, turning to look at me.

"Why aren't you asleep?"

"Why aren't you?" She grins at me and climbs off the floor, careful not to step on either of the guys as she comes toward me. When she's close enough, she sits next to me, but I shake my head. She smiles bigger and climbs into my lap exactly where I want her. I wrap my arms around her and just hold her tightly.

"Are you okay? You've been pretty quiet," she says softly.

"I'm good. I was just thinking about things."

"About what?"

"Life. You. Them," I reply, nodding toward the guys.

"What about it?"

"Just how good it's going to be. We're all back under one roof now. Sasha is here. Everything is back to normal."

"Or as normal as it can be, right?" she laughs.

"Yeah, as normal as it can be. I don't think any of us thought that we'd be sharing the same girl for the rest of our lives."

"Does it bother you?"

"I thought it might, but it doesn't. You give us all something different we need, and we do the same with you. I've watched us all over the months, and I can see it clear as day."

"You know I love you, right?"

"I know. I love you, too."

“Come lay down with us?” How could I tell her no? There’s no way. I nod my head as she stands and grabs her pillow. She climbs over War and lays on the other side of him, patting the spot next to her. I pull my shirt over my head and watch as her eyes trace over my abs before she bites her lip between her teeth. I smirk at her as I lay down next to her.

“You keep looking at me like that, and I’m going to fuck you.”

“I wouldn’t mind.”

“I bet not, but we’d wake the guys up.” She sighs and lays her head on my chest, her hair tickling my skin. And after a few minutes, she falls back asleep.

Chapter 45

Arya

Time heals all wounds. What a bunch of shit, just like War said. Time doesn't do anything to heal you. At least not for me. What's healed me? Them. The people I surround myself with. The ones I chose to call family.

I never truly understood what family meant. Not after my dad did what he did to me. And my mom? She's a breed all her own. Growing up alone was hard on me. It made me look at life differently. And the life I found for myself back then wasn't the life I needed.

They say things happen for a reason, and lately, I've been thinking about that. I lost everything to an asshole. I moved here with my mom. Met the guys and Jarrod. Was it all some kind of plan the universe had for me?

At first, I thought a lot about my mom leaving. Although she was never really there, to begin with, it kind of stung when Jarrod made her leave. She may not have been the best mom, but she was still my mom. But the more I thought about it and looked back on my life with her, I realized just how much I didn't need her.

I watch the guys and Sasha play in the pool together, and I can't help but smile. They've brought so much joy and chaos to my life. I wouldn't change a minute of it. Sometimes, love hurts so good. We've dealt with bad things happening, and we've had great times together, but in the end, we're still here. Together.

Jarrod sits down next to me and looks out at the guys.

"I should thank you," he says.

"Why? I didn't do anything."

"You have, though. Maybe you don't see it, but I do."

"What do you see?"

"How happy they are. How much they love you. How much they've grown since you've been around. Maybe I wasn't

always the best dad in the world. I always think I could have done more, been more to them. I've made my fair share of mistakes when I was younger, but they are the greatest things that came out of all that."

"They love you." He nods his head.

"I love them."

"You did a good job raising them, Jarrod."

"They did a lot of the raising themselves. I'm just glad they met you. You bring out a side of them I haven't seen in a very long time."

"What side is that?" I ask. He nods toward the pool, where they all laugh and play around.

"I like them like this," he adds.

"Me too. They look happy."

"They are happy, and I know a majority of the reason is you. I wouldn't ever judge my boys, but I can tell you I never saw you coming. All of them sharing you?" he chuckles. "I didn't figure that would work out well for them, but it seems I was wrong."

"If I'm being honest, I never once thought about being with three guys at the same time either. I thought one was enough to worry about, but three?" We both laugh now.

"You handle them well, Arya. I'm proud of you. Of all of you." Tears burn the back of my eyes as I shake my head, trying to get them to stop. Jarrod looks over and smiles at me. "It's okay to cry, Arya. It shows you actually have feelings."

"No one has ever said they were proud of me before."

"Never?"

"No."

"Then I'm glad I got to tell you, and you know the three of them are proud of you, too. You've done something with your life. You lived through so much at such a young age, and you didn't let it hold you back. That's something to be proud of,

Arya.” I nod my head and wipe at my eyes, clearing the few tears that fell.

“Thank you, Jarrod.”

“Of course.” He stands and leans down, pressing a kiss to the top of my head before going inside. Sasha walks over, dripping wet, and takes his spot.

“I know you’re not getting some daddy Jarrod action, too,” she says before dropping into the seat that he just left. Now, I do laugh out loud.

“Have you seen those three? I think I have enough to deal with,” I say, pointing out at the water.

“No shit. They drive me insane. I don’t know how you do it, Arya.”

“They’re easy to love. You just have to look past the hard exteriors.”

“Don’t get all girly on me now,” she says, making a gagging sound.

“What about you? Have you found a boyfriend yet since you started the new school?”

“There’s this one guy. He’s cute, but he wears loafers, Arya. Fucking loafers,” she says with a sigh.

“Oh God. Not one of those.”

“Oh yeah. One of those. I think if we can get him to dress better, he has a chance.” I laugh again as she talks about the guy and tells me more about him. He sounds like a good guy, from what she’s telling me.

“Your brothers will hate him,” I tell her.

“They hate everyone. That’s why I have you now. You can help me persuade them.”

“You think they’d listen to me?”

“Shit, Arya. You have those three so wrapped around your finger that it isn’t even funny. They got you a damn ring, for fucks sake.” I look down at the black diamonds on my finger,

and I can't stop the smile that crosses my face. War climbs out of the water and comes toward us.

"What are you girls talking about?" he asks.

"None of your business," Sasha tells him. She gets up and sticks her tongue out at him before jumping back into the pool.

"I think you've had enough alone time, don't you?" he asks me.

"Is there ever enough alone time?"

"Yeah, there is. And when you have too much of it, you start to rethink shit."

"Like what?"

"I don't know what runs through that pretty little head of yours." I smile up at him. Could my life be any more perfect?

"Well, if I've spent too much time alone, what do you want me to do?" War smiles at me, that dark and deadly smile of his. My heart leaps in my chest, and my breathing kicks up a notch. He leans down, biting into my shoulder, causing me to cry out from the pain before he runs his tongue over it to soothe it. Then he nips at my ear lobe and says, "Run. I want you to run, little bird." Without thinking about it, I leap from the chair and take off running.

I run around the end of the pool and climb in the water before War ever makes it to me. He eyes me, his eyes dark and needy.

"Need me to protect you, baby?" Denz asks.

"I can handle him."

"Oh yeah? Can you handle all three of us?" Harlon asks as War climbs in the water. I take the chance and look between all three of them as they come toward me. My heart fills with so much joy and love that I can barely comprehend it all. How did I find not one but three men to love me?

"I've been handling all three of you, haven't I?" I tease as they surround me. Then, there are hands all over me. I can't tell who is who as they all touch and tease me. Lips are on my neck, my lips, my shoulder.

“You handle us just fine, baby,” Denz whispers in my ear, causing me to shiver.

“Guess what we’re doing tonight?” Harlon asks me.

“What?”

“We’re going to fuck you so hard you can’t walk tomorrow. I hope you’ve been saving up your energy, little bird. Tonight, you’re ours.”