



*a*  
**Kind  
Wedding**

**Conner**

**Charlotte**

*New York Times, USA Today & Wall Street Journal* Bestselling Author

**SANDI LYNN**

A KIND WEDDING:  
CONNER & CHARLOTTE

KIND BROTHERS SERIES, BOOK TWELVE



SANDI LYNN

SANDI LYNN ROMANCE, LLC

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A KIND WEDDING: CONNER  
& CHARLOTTE

*New York Times, USA Today & Wall Street Journal  
Bestselling Author*

SANDI LYNN



A Kind Wedding: Conner & Charlotte

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# MISSION STATEMENT

**Sandi Lynn Romance**

**Providing readers with romance novels that will whisk  
them away  
to another world and from the daily grind of life – one  
book at a time.**

## ALSO BY SANDI LYNN

Looking for more romance reads about billionaires, second chances, and sports?  
Check out my other romance novels and escape to another world and from the daily  
grind of life – one book at a time.

Series:

### *Forever Series*

- Forever Black (Forever, Book 1)
- Forever You (Forever, Book 2)
- Forever Us (Forever, Book 3)
- Being Julia (Forever, Book 4)
- Collin (Forever, Book 5)
- A Forever Family (Forever, Book 6)
- A Forever Christmas (Holiday short story)

### *Wyatt Brothers*

- Love, Lust & A Millionaire (Wyatt Brothers, Book 1)
- Love, Lust & Liam (Wyatt Brothers, Book 2)

### *A Millionaire's Love*

- Lie Next to Me (A Millionaire's Love, Book 1)
- When I Lie with You (A Millionaire's Love, Book 2)

### *Happened Series*

- Then You Happened (Happened Series, Book 1)
- Then We Happened (Happened Series, Book 2)

### *Redemption Series*

- Carter Grayson (Redemption Series, Book 1)
- Chase Calloway (Redemption Series, Book 2)
- Jamieson Finn (Redemption Series, Book 3)
- Damien Prescott (Redemption Series, Book 4)

### *Interview Series*

- The Interview: New York & Los Angeles Part 1
- The Interview: New York & Los Angeles Part 2

### *Love Series:*

- Love In Between (Love Series, Book 1)
- The Upside of Love (Love Series, Book 2)

### *Wolfe Brothers*

- Elijah Wolfe (Wolfe Brothers, Book 1)
- Nathan Wolfe (Wolfe Brothers, Book 2)
- Mason Wolfe (Wolfe Brothers, Book 3)

*Kind Brothers*

- One of a Kind (Kind Brothers Series, Book 1)
- Two of a Kind (Kind Brothers Series, Book 2)
- Three of a Kind (Kind Brothers Series, Book 3)
- Four of a Kind (Kind Brothers Series, Book 4)
- Five of a Kind (Kind Brothers Series, Book 5)
- The Kind Brothers (Kind Brothers Series, Book 6)
- Six of a Kind (Kind Brothers Series, Book 7)
- Seven of a Kind (Kind Brothers Series, Book 8)
- Eight of a Kind (Kind Brothers Series, Book 9)
- Nine of a Kind (Kind Brothers Series, Book 10)
- A Kind Wedding: Jackson & Georgia (Kind Brothers Series, Book 11)
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- A Kind Wedding: Nathan & Sofia (Kind Brothers Series, Book 13)
- A Kind Wedding: Christian & Charleigh (Kind Brothers Series, Book 14)
- Ten of a Kind (Kind Brothers Series, Book 15)
- Eleven of a Kind (Kind Brothers Series, Book 16)

*Standalone Books*

- The Billionaire's Christmas Baby
- His Proposed Deal
- The Secret He Holds
- The Seduction of Alex Parker
- Something About Lorelei
- One Night in London
- The Exception
- Corporate Assets
- A Beautiful Sight
- The Negotiation
- Defense
- The Con Artist
- #Delete
- Behind His Lies
- One Night in Paris
- Perfectly You
- The Escort
- The Ring
- The Donor
- Rewind

Remembering You  
When I'm With You  
LOGAN (A Hockey Romance)  
The Merger  
Baby Drama  
Unspoken  
The Property Brokers

# KIND FAMILY OCCUPATIONS

## **Kind Design & Architecture**

CEOs - Sam & Stefan Kind

Sam Kind - Architect

Stefan Kind - Builder

Sebastian Kind - Chef and owner of:

## **Four Kinds**

### **Emilia's**

## **Kind Brewhouse**

Simon Kind - Homicide Detective LAPD

Shaun Kind - Billionaire & CEO of Sterling Capital Corp.

## **Kind Medical Center**

Owners: Jackson, Conner, & Nathan Kind

Dr. Jackson Kind - Neurosurgeon

Dr. Conner Kind - Orthopedic Surgeon

Dr. Nathan Kind - Plastic Surgeon

Dr. Georgia Kind-Scott - OB/GYN & Fertility Specialist

Dr. Emilia Kind - Pediatrician

Dr. Charlotte Roman-Kind - Clinical Psychologist

## **Cedars-Sinai Hospital**

Dr. Christian Kind - Cardiothoracic Surgeon

Charleigh Ellis - Cardiac Nurse Practitioner

Julia Kind - Owner of Mojo Madness Coffeehouse

Grace Kind - Homicide Detective LAPD

Jenni Kind - Fashion Designer and Owner of Simply Jenni.

Dr. Grayson Kind - Trauma Surgeon

Dr. Gabriel Kind - Internal Medicine

# CHAPTER 1



Conner

We had just arrived home from the hotel, and I still hadn't told Charlotte what I'd done. I'd let her bask in the glory of my proposal for a bit longer before I sprung the news on her.

"The guys and I are going to hit the waves for a little bit," I said as I wrapped my arms around Charlotte's waist.

"Okay. I'll go unpack our overnight bags." Her lips met mine.

"I can do my own, babe. You don't have to."

"I know you can. The question is, when? Because I already know how this will play out."

"Oh really? Enlighten me, Charlotte." I narrowed my eye at her.

"I suspect that when you brought our bags in and took them upstairs, you set them on the bed. When we go to bed tonight, you'll look at your bag and say, 'I can't believe I forgot to unpack my bag.' You'll pick up the bag, set it on the chair in the corner, and there it will stay for about a week. If you need something out of it, you'll go over to your bag, unzip it, take out what you need, and zip it back up instead of fully unpacking and putting everything away. I'll say, 'Conner, why haven't you unpacked yet?' and you'll say, 'Babe, I'm going to. I've been busy.'" She arched her brow. "Have I forgotten anything?"



I swallowed hard because she knew me too well.

“You think you’re so funny.” I kissed her forehead and opened the sliding door.

“I speak the truth, Conner, and you know it.” She smiled.

“Don’t touch my bag. I promise to unpack it when I’m done surfing.”

“Sure, you will,” she said as I stepped onto the patio and closed the door.

I grabbed my surfboard and ran down to the shoreline, where my brothers and cousins were already putting their boards in the water.

“What took you so long?” Christian asked.

“Charlotte was telling me I’m not going to unpack my bag and leave it sitting for a week.”

“Ha. She knows you too well.” Nathan smiled as we paddled out.

“I bet Sammy and Shaun already unpacked their bags like the freaks they are.” Simon grinned.

“Damn right, I did. And I even unpacked Julia’s. Sad to say that she would leave it as well.” Sam sighed.

“Same,” Shaun said.

“Christian?” I looked at him.

“I’ll get to it.” He smirked.

“I guess you haven’t gotten around to telling Charlotte what you did,” Nathan spoke as we sat on our boards.

“I’m telling her when we’re finished here.” I sighed. “I might need backup.”

“You’re the fool who did it without talking to her first.” Sebastian smiled.

“How could I have talked to her about it when I hadn’t asked her to marry me yet?”

“I love you, bro, but I’m not getting in the middle of this one.” Christian laughed.

“You know you have a place to sleep at my house.” Nathan smirked. “Ella would love it.”

“Charlotte will be fine with it. I know my fiancée.”

“Really? Then why are you so scared to tell her?” Sam asked.

“I’m not scared.” I furrowed my brows.”

“Yeah, you are. Here comes a wave, douchebags,” Simon shouted.

After we finished our surf, I set my board on the patio and stepped inside the house.

“How was surfing?” Charlotte asked as she grabbed a bottle of water from the refrigerator.

“It was okay. Not many waves today. I love you, Charlotte.”

“I love you too, Conner.” The corners of her mouth curved upward. “What did you do?”

“What? I can’t tell you I love you?” I wrapped my arms around her and pulled her into me.

“It’s the way you said it and so randomly.” She broke our embrace.

“You want to get married in the Crystal Gardens and have the reception in the Crystal Ballroom, right? It’s pretty much a Kind family tradition.”

“Yeah.” She narrowed her eye. “It’s a beautiful place. Why?”

“I already booked it.” I blurted out to get it over with.

“What do you mean you already booked it? You did it without me?” A frightening smile crossed her lips. “When did you do that?”

“A couple of weeks ago.”

“Okay. For when?” she calmly asked.

“September 2<sup>nd</sup>.”

“September is a great month. I like September. Thanks, babe.” She kissed my lips.

“You’re not mad?” I furrowed my brows.

“No. I love the Crystal Gardens and ballroom. Besides, what better place to have our wedding than where you proposed to me.” A smile crossed her lips. “I’m happy you took the initiative and did that because that place books up so fast. One less thing we have to worry about.” She kissed the tip of my nose and walked over to the pantry.

“Phew. I was ready for you to explode,” I said. “We’ll sit down tonight and write a list of everything that needs to be done. The good news is that Jackson and Georgia already have the guest list, and we’re inviting all the same people, so we can get the addresses from them. I’ll text Georgia and ask if she has the addresses on her computer so she can share it with us.” I pulled out my phone.

“Don’t bother them with that while they’re on their honeymoon. We have plenty of time to get the addresses,” she said as she took a bite of her protein bar.

“Not really, babe. Time is ticking with the wedding in three months.”

“Three months!” She started choking on her protein bar, and I grabbed the water bottle and handed it to her while I patted her back.

“Are you okay?”

“What do you mean three months, Conner?!”

“Well, September is in three months.”

“No.” She shook her head. “You booked the gardens and ballroom for September 2, 2024. We have a little over a year to plan our wedding.”

*Shit. Shit. Shit.*

My heart started racing, and I began to sweat.

“I didn’t mention that I booked it for this year?” I played stupid.

“You idiot! I can’t plan a wedding in three months!” She placed her hand on her forehead and walked out the sliding door.

I ran after her as she made her way down the beach.

“Babe, I—”

“Don’t you ‘babe’ me, Conner Kind!” she shouted. “Three months?” She stopped, turned around, and faced me as we stood in the sand.

“Jackson and Georgia planned their wedding in five months, Charlotte. It can be done.”

“That’s two months longer!” Her hands were flying in the air. “Do you have any concept of what it takes to plan a wedding? Three months isn’t enough time! There’s the matter of asking the girls to be my bridesmaids, the save the date cards, invitations, the flowers, the cake, your ring, my wedding dress, the bridesmaid’s dresses, hair, makeup, shoes, picking the menu, getting the wedding favors, seating charts, the DJ, photographer, our honeymoon and whatever else I’m forgetting. And if the people we want aren’t available, then we’re faced with having to look for someone else because you thought it was a good idea to book a venue three months out instead of a freaking year!”

I looked over at Christian and Nathan, who watched us on their patios. Nathan was holding up his phone, and I knew damn well he was recording this.

“If it makes you feel any better, I reserved the date with Gwen.”

“Who the hell is Gwen?!” she shouted.

“The cake lady. You know she makes the best cakes.”

## CHAPTER 2



Charlotte

I was livid with him. How the hell did he think we would pull off the perfect wedding in less than three months? Especially with our jobs.

“Can you please just calm down for a minute?” he asked. “Please, Charlotte.” He cautiously walked towards me. “I love you too damn much to wait a year to make you my wife. When I went with Jackson to the hotel so he could pay the final balance for his reception, I casually asked what dates they had available. Mr. Russo said they had just had a cancellation that day for September 2<sup>nd</sup>. I didn’t even think twice about it, babe. And you know why? Because you are the most important person in my life. I love our relationship and living together, but I want you to become Mrs. Charlotte Roman-Kind as soon as possible. I want to call you my wife.” He slowly extended his hand to me. I inhaled a sharp breath and reluctantly placed my hand in his. “We got this, babe. You and me. I’m all in with this wedding stuff. In fact, I’ll take over the entire planning.” A smile fell upon his lips. “The last thing I want is for you to stress out over what’s supposed to be the happiest day of our lives. It’s only stressful if you let it be, and I won’t let you do it alone. Nope.” He shook his head. “It’s you and me against the world, babe. As I said, we got this, and no obstacle or hurdle will stop us from planning our perfect wedding in three months. I love you, babe.”

“I love you too, Conner, but I’m still mad at you.”

He let go of my hand, wrapped his arms around me, and hugged me tight.

“Woohoo!” Nathan and Christian shouted as they clapped.

“Think of it as an adventure.”

“I hope we don’t kill each other on our ‘adventure.’” I smirked as I broke our embrace.

“If that happens, at least we’ll go together.” He grinned as he hooked his arm around me, and we headed back to the house.

“Glad to see you didn’t kill him, Charlotte,” Christian shouted.

“Yeah. I’m happy I still have three brothers.” Nathan smiled.

“I can’t make any promises. I still might end up killing him before the wedding.”

I heard the ringing of my phone when we stepped inside the house. Grabbing it from the island, I saw Georgia was Facetiming me.

“Hey, you.” I smiled. “I’m happy to see you two made it to Greece.”

“Georgia sunshine.” Conner grinned. “Where’s my brother?”

“He’s in the bathroom. Are you okay?” A smirk crossed her lips. “Nathan sent us the video.”

“Of course, that douchebag did,” Conner spoke. “I’m fine.”

“I wasn’t asking you, Conner.” She laughed.

“Can you please go away so I can talk to my future sister-in-law?” I arched my brow at him.

“Fine. I’m going over to Nathan’s to kick his ass.” He shook his head as he walked out the sliding door.

“Can you believe he did that?” I sat on the stool at the island.

“You have no idea how badly I wanted to tell you, but I couldn’t.”

“I know. Don’t sweat it. I’m fine. Conner is Conner, and I love him, flawed and all.”

Georgia laughed. “I sent the guest list with the addresses to your email. I know you need them right now.”

“Thank you. I appreciate it. Will you do me the honor of being one of my bridesmaids?”

“You know I will.” A grin crossed her lips.

The sliding door opened, and Jenni walked in.

“Oh, is that Georgia?” she asked. “Hi, Georgia! I hope you’re honeymooning it up!”

“We are. I’ll let you go. Jackson just emerged from the bathroom, and we’re going to grab something to eat and see the sights of Greece. I love you girls, and I’ll Facetime you later.”

“Bye, Georgia,” Jenni and I spoke.

“You have no idea how badly I wanted to run down the beach and cheer you on, but Shaun wouldn’t let me.”

“I appreciate it.” I laughed.

“Anyway, there’s something I have to show you.” She set her sketchpad on the island.

“Is that what I think it is?” The corners of my mouth curved upward.

“It is.” She grinned as she opened it, and I saw beautiful sketches of a wedding dress.

“Oh my gosh, Jenni. It’s gorgeous.”

“I already had it designed a few months ago. I also have Sofia’s and Charleigh’s dresses designed if those stupid boys will ever pop the question.”

“How did you know that’s exactly what I envisioned?” I asked.

“Well, I know you, and it’s what I do. I know what will and won’t look right on you.”

“Have I ever told you that you are the most talented person I have ever met?” I smiled as I hugged her.

“Maybe a few times.” She laughed. “Also.” She flipped the page of her sketchbook. “What do you think?”

“Oh my gosh. I love that design.”

“The over-the-shoulder train is removable, and we can rip it off after the ceremony.” She grinned.

“It’s so elegant. Yes. I want that for my beautiful bridesmaids.” I smiled. “And I love the color blush.”

“Perfect color for September. Oh my God, I’m going to look like a beached whale wearing this.” She bit her bottom lip. “I better make sure I order extra fabric.”

“You are going to glow and look stunning in that dress.”

“Feel a little better now that you have your dress and the bridesmaid dresses picked out?” she asked.

“I do. Thank you, Jenni.” I hugged her.

“You know I always have your back, sister. I have to go. We’ll talk later.”

“Okay.” I smiled as she walked out the sliding door.

I grabbed the bottle of wine and poured some into a glass. The sliding door opened, and Conner walked in.

“Is Nathan still alive?” I smirked.

“Barely.” The corners of his mouth curved upward as he walked over and kissed my lips. “I assume Jenni was here to discuss your wedding dress?” He opened the refrigerator and grabbed a beer.

“Yes. She already has it designed.”

“And?” His brow arched.

“It’s beautiful.” I smiled. “She also showed me a beautiful design for the bridesmaid dresses.”



“See.” He wrapped his arm around my waist. “Everything is already starting to come together. The universe is on our side, baby. Now tell me you love me and will be mine forever.”

“I love you, and I’ll be yours forever.” The corners of my mouth curved upward.

“Now give me those sweet lips.” He leaned in and smashed his mouth against mine.



*M*y nails dug into the flesh of his back as a mind-blowing orgasm tore through me. Several moans escaped my lips as my body tightened with pleasure. The feeling of him inside me was always the highlight of my day, and I could never get enough of him. I loved him so much, even when he drove me crazy sometimes.

He continued to thrust in and out of me as sexy moans escaped him. Our lips tangled, and our tongues met before he slowed down and exploded inside me.

“Oh, God,” he moaned.

His body dropped on mine as my arms tightened around him. My insides were still pulsating, even when he pulled out and rolled over on his back.

“I think you killed me.” He smiled as he brought his hand up to my head and softly stroked my hair.

“You’ll be okay, big boy.” I sat up and grabbed my laptop from the nightstand.

“What are you doing?” Conner asked.

“We’re picking our save-the-date cards and ordering them right now. You, mister, better hope they have expedited shipping.” A smirk crossed my lips.

He reached over, grabbed his phone, and pulled up a picture of us.

“What do you think about this picture?” He held his phone up.

“That’s the one from New Year’s Eve up at the cabin.” I smiled. “I love it.”

I uploaded the pic, entered our information, and we viewed the sample.

“Looks great, babe,” Conner smiled. “And look at that. They offer expedited printing and shipping. See, the universe is on our side.” He kissed my cheek. “Say it, Charlotte.”

“No.” I closed my laptop and set it on the nightstand.

“I said say it.” He began tickling me.

“Conner, stop. You know I hate that.” I laughed as I tried to push his hands away.

“Not until you say it.” He straddled me and continued to tickle me.

“Okay. Okay. The universe is on our side!”

“Damn right it is.” The smile on his face grew wide. He leaned down and held my face in his hands. “I love you, my sexy fiancée.”

“I love you too, my hot fiancé.” I smiled as I wrapped my arms around his neck, and our lips met.

## CHAPTER 3



Conner

“Good morning, June bug.” I walked into the practice with a smile on my face.

“Good morning, Conner.” She grinned. “You’re in an exceptional mood this morning.”

“First of all, I’m always in an exceptional mood. Second of all, why wouldn’t I be? I have a thriving practice, an amazing family, and a beautiful fiancée. Plus, I’m getting married in three months, so save the date, June.” I pointed at her.

“Three months?” Her brow arched.

“September 2<sup>nd</sup>. Mark it on your calendar. Oh, and block off the two weeks following for our honeymoon.”

“Where are you going?”

“We haven’t decided yet. Isn’t the new girl starting today?”

“Yes. She’s down in human resources now. I hope she’s better than the last two.” She sighed. “I can’t keep up with the phones for all of your appointments. What is going on all of a sudden?”

“I don’t know.” I shrugged. “I guess I’m just that awesome of a doctor.” I grinned.

“It wouldn’t have anything to do with those TikTok videos you’re making, would it?” Her brow arched.

“You follow me?” I grinned.

“I do. I must say that video of you, Ella, and Lily was adorable.”

“Thanks, June bug. The next video, you’re in it with me.” I smiled. “I’m going to grab a cup of coffee. Can I get you one?”

“No thanks, Conner.”

I walked into the kitchen area and saw Nathan and Charlotte talking over a cup of coffee.

“You!” My brother pointed at me.

“What?”

“That video you made with Ella and Lily.”

“What about it?” I grinned.

“I’ve seen you do some dumb shit over the years, but that —”

“You’re just jealous because you weren’t blessed with the moves like me.”

“Are you referring to the video they made where they’re doing that dance from Wednesday?” Charlotte laughed.

“Yeah. I am. When did you have time to do that?” His eye narrowed.

“When we watched Ella for you last week. I tried to get Charlotte to do it with us, and she wouldn’t.” I pulled my phone from my pocket and brought up my TikTok account. “Hey, look at that. It already has over a million views.” I grinned as I held up my phone to his face.

“You are not my brother.” He pointed at me as he walked out.

“That’s okay. I have two others!” I shouted. “What a douchebag.” I shook my head.

“It’s okay. I still love and want to marry you.” Charlotte smiled as she kissed my cheek.

I hooked my arm around her waist. “What would I do without you,” I whispered as I kissed the side of her head.

“Probably die of loneliness because nobody else would put up with your crazy ass like I do.” A smirk crossed her lips.

“Very funny, Charlotte. Go see your patient.” I slapped her ass.

I grabbed my coffee and walked back to my practice. When I stepped inside, June introduced me to Angela, our new receptionist.

“Dr. Conner Kind, I’d like you to meet Angela. Angela, this is Dr. Conner Kind.”

“Oh my gosh.” She stood up from her seat with a wide grin on her face. “I know who you are. I follow you on TikTok. The pleasure is all mine, Dr. Kind.” She extended her hand.

“Why, thank you, Angela. It’s nice to meet you.” I smiled as I shook her hand.

Nathan walked over and handed a file folder to June.

“Your videos are brilliant. All of my friends follow you too.”

I glanced over at Nathan with a smile, and he sighed and rolled his eyes.

“Nathan, have you met our dear Angela?”

“Yes. I met her when I walked in. Now, I think we all should get to work.”

“Who do you think you are? Jackson?” I playfully slapped his arm with the back of my hand. “Anyway. Welcome to the Kind Medical Center, Angela. I’m sure you’ll like it here.”

“Oh, I know I will.” She grinned.

“How old is that girl?” Nathan asked as he followed me into my office.

“I’d say early twenties. Why?” I furrowed my brows at him.

“Because she looks like she’s twelve. Anyway, stop putting my kid in your videos.”

“For your information, it was Ella’s idea. You know I can’t say no to her.”

He sighed heavily and walked out of my office. I walked over to exam room one, pulled the file, and looked at it before stepping inside.

“Rachel.” I smiled when I stepped through the door. “How is that shoulder doing?”

“Not good, Dr. Kind. The injections aren’t lasting as long anymore, and the pain is getting worse.”

“You knew they were only a temporary fix. It’s time for me to go in and repair the tear. I know you don’t want to hear that, but it’s inevitable.”

“I know.” She looked down. “I guess I better get it scheduled. Can I have one more injection?”

“Unfortunately, no. You just had one last month. Let’s go up front and have June pull up my surgical schedule and see when we can get you into surgery. June, Rachel needs to get in for a rotator cuff repair. When is my next surgical opening?”

“Your next available is in two weeks,” she said.

“Sound good?” I glanced at Rachel.

“Do I have a choice?”

“Not really.”

“Fine. Let’s schedule it.”

“Excellent. June will also schedule your pre-op appointment. Hang in there, Rachel.” I placed my hand on her shoulder and smiled. “You’re in good hands with me.”

“You really are.” Angela smiled as she stared at me.

“Okay then. I’ll see you soon, Rachel.” I walked away as I furrowed my brows.



grabbed a beer from the refrigerator and took it outside, where Simon, Christian, and Shaun sat around the fire pit.

“What’s up, fam.” I smiled as I held my hand up to Christian for a high-five.

“Not much.” Christian high-fived me.

I sat down next to him and noticed Simon glaring at me.

“What?” I asked as I brought the bottle to my lips.

“You know what. I saw the video and want you to know we are not related.”

“Nathan said the same thing.” I chuckled.

“What’s going on down here?” Nathan walked over with Nicholas.

“Give me my nephew.” I held out my arms.

“We were just talking about the video your brother made with your kid and Lily.” Simon shook his head.

“Oh, that. I already told him he’s not my brother.”

“Yeah. I just told him we weren’t related either.” Simon took a sip of his beer. “Anyway, I checked into that Henry guy.”

“And?” Shaun asked.

“Unfortunately, as far as I can tell, he’s squeaky clean.”

“Why ‘unfortunately?’” Christian chuckled.

“I was hoping to find something on him to throw at my dear mother, but he seems okay.”

“I talked to him at the wedding,” Shaun said. “He’s a decent guy. He used to own a printing company that he sold and retired from a couple of years ago back in Florida.”

“Why did he move out here?” I asked as I held Nicholas in my arms.

“Apparently, his wife passed away, and he figured it was time to move on. I don’t really know. I didn’t ask why he moved here,” Shaun said.

My phone rang, so I handed Nicholas over to Christian and pulled my phone from my pocket.

“Hey, cousins.” I grinned when I answered the Facetime call and saw Grayson and Gabriel.

“Nice video.” Grayson grinned.

“Thank you. Some of your other family members have disowned me.”

“We thought it was hilarious,” Gabriel said.

“If it makes you feel any better, we won’t disown you.” Grayson chuckled.

“I appreciate it. When are you two coming out here for a visit?”

“Excuse me. Can we say hi to our cousins?” Simon asked.

“Hold on. A couple of my ex-family members want to say hi.” I turned the phone around.

“You two need to get your asses out here,” Simon said.

“We’re planning a trip out there next month,” Gabriel spoke.

“Good. You can stay with any of us,” Shaun said. “Do not book a hotel.”

“Yeah. You have nine houses to choose from,” Nathan said. “Ella will be excited to see you guys.”

“And we can make some videos.” I grinned as I turned the phone to me.

“Sounds good.” Grayson smiled. “We just wanted to say hi while it’s a little quiet here at the hospital.”

“By the way, Conner,” Gabriel spoke. “That video of you and Charlotte had us dying. She really tore into you.”

“Yeah. Yeah. All is good now. And you two better have already scheduled time off and booked your flights for the wedding.”

“We have,” Grayson spoke. “Shit.” He looked at his pager. “Gotta go. A trauma is coming in.”



“Go save some lives. We’ll talk to you two soon,” I said as I ended the call. “You sent that video to them?” I glared at Nathan.

“You bet I did. In fact, I think maybe I’ll make a TikTok account and post it.”

“Do it and die, brother.” I smacked the back of his head.

# CHAPTER 4



## TWO WEEKS LATER

Charlotte

Conner and I were eating dinner at the table when we heard a car door close.

“They’re back!” I smiled as I flew out the door. “Welcome home!” I hugged Georgia.”

“Ah. It’s so good to be back.” She hugged me tightly.

“Welcome home, bro.” Conner hugged Jackson. “And you, my little Georgia sunshine. I’m happy you’re back.”

“Thanks, you two. As much as we loved Greece, it’s good to be home.” Jackson smiled.

Conner helped Jackson bring in the suitcases.

“So, how are the wedding plans coming along?” Georgia asked.

“So far, so good. We sent out the save-the-date cards. The invitations are on order, and Conner applied for the marriage license. We’re meeting with Gwen about the cake tomorrow and with Giuseppe the following day for the flowers. We’re still looking for a DJ since the guy you used is already booked on that day.”

“Did you book Lily Matthews for the photos?” Georgia asked.

“Yes. She was open for that day.”

“See. Everything is coming along. I can’t wait to see yours and the bridesmaid’s dresses.” She grinned. “I know they’re

beautiful.”

“They really are. I don’t know what to do about the favors.”

“We’ll all get together and come up with something.” She smiled.

“Babe, I’m going outside to see my other brothers and cousins,” Jackson said.

“Okay. Don’t forget we have to unpack, and I want everything put away tonight.”

“Do you see how bossy my wife is now?” Jackson smirked as he kissed Georgia’s cheek.

“Shit. Charlotte and I aren’t married yet, and she’s super bossy.” Conner grinned.

“You want to see bossy, Conner?” I arched my brow at him.

“That was the response I was hoping I’d get.” He pointed at me and winked as he and Jackson walked out the sliding door.

“So, how was Greece?” I asked.

“It was perfect. You and Conner should go there on your honeymoon.”

“He’s in charge of the honeymoon, so I’m not sure what he has planned.”

“Wherever he takes you will be magical.” She smiled.

After I left Georgia’s house, I went home and started the water for a bath. After throwing in a sex bomb from Lush, I put my hair up in a messy bun and climbed in. God, it felt good to relax. My heart hurt at the thought that my parents couldn’t be a part of our wedding. They would have loved Conner, and he would have loved them.

“Taking a bath without me?” Conner smirked as he walked into the bathroom and pulled his shirt over his head. “Is there room for one more in there?”

“I don’t know. It depends.”

“Depends on what?” His brow arched as he took down his pants.

“Where you’re taking me for our honeymoon.” A smirk crossed my lips.

“Ah. I see. Let me in, and I’ll tell you what I did today.” The corners of his mouth curved upward.

“By all means. Join me.” I held out my hand.

He placed his hand in mine and climbed in behind me. Leaning back, I rested my back on his muscular chest as his arms wrapped around me.

“We’re spending a week in St. Lucia and then flying to the Maldives after that for another week.”

“Stop it!” I tilted my head back and stared up at him. “Did you get us one of those over-the-water bungalows?”

“I did.” He smiled. “But it’s a two-bedroom. It’s the only one they had available.”

“I wouldn’t care if we had to sleep on the floor. Oh my gosh, Conner. I’m so excited.” I turned my body around and wrapped my legs around his waist. “Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.” I grabbed his face and planted kisses all over it. “I love you.”

“I love you too.” He brushed his lips against mine. “Now that I’ve made you very happy with our honeymoon, let’s talk cake.”

“You’ll get your key lime and coconut, Conner.”

“Really?” He grinned. “I figured you wouldn’t allow it just to spite me for springing our wedding on you.”

“I would never do that.” My brows furrowed.

“Uh, yeah, you would, babe.”

“Fine. The thought did cross my mind.” I smiled. “But that damn little voice inside my head said, ‘Charlotte, let the man have his cake.’ So, you’re getting your cake.”

“I love that little voice inside your head.” He kissed the tip of my nose. “I also love something else inside you, so let’s get out of this tub and put what I’ve got going on down there to good use.” A smirk crossed his lips.

“And what’s wrong with right here?”

“Nothing. But you won’t be able to unleash your true bossiness here. We need a whole lot of room, baby.” He grinned.



I had just finished with a patient when a text message came through from Jenni.

“I’m on my way to the medical center for an appointment with Georgia. Do you have some time? I have something to show you.”

“I don’t have another patient for a couple of hours, so yes.”

“Good. You’re going to love this. I’ll see you soon,” she said.

I walked into the kitchen area and saw Angela making a cup of coffee.

“Hi, Angela.” I smiled.

“Oh. Hi, Charlotte.”

“Getting your afternoon fix?” I asked as I opened the refrigerator.

“No. This is for Dr. Conner.”

I grabbed an apple and looked at her. “Is that a latte?”

“Yeah.” She smiled as I stood there and watched her do latte art in the form of a heart.

“Wow. That looks nice.”

“Thanks. I used to work in a coffee shop. Do you think he’ll like it?”

*Was this girl serious?*

“He’ll like it even better if you put cinnamon in it.” I smiled as I reached into the cabinet. “Here you go.”

“Thanks.” She lightly tapped the jar.

“He loves cinnamon, so don’t be shy.”

“Thanks, Charlotte.” Angela smiled.

“Don’t mention it. I’ll walk back with you to the practice.”

Conner was standing at the reception desk when we stepped inside, talking to June.

“Here you go, Dr. Kind.” Angela flirtatiously smiled.

“Look at that—a heart. How cute.” He grinned at me.

I stood and watched as he took a sip and instantly spit it out.

“Did you put cinnamon in here?” he asked Angela.

“Yes. Charlotte said you love cinnamon in your coffee.”

June looked at me with a smirk on her face.

“Did she now?” Conner glanced at me and narrowed his eye.

“I thought it added a lovely touch to the heart art.” I arched my brow as I walked out of his practice.

“Hey, you.” Jenni smiled when I saw her step off the elevator.

“Hey.” I hugged her.

“I have fifteen minutes until my appointment. I can’t wait to show you this.” She grinned as she held up a white box with gold trim that resembled an envelope. “Let’s go into the kitchen so that I can grab a bottle of water.”

We stepped into the kitchen area, and she set the box on the island.

“Open it,” she said as she reached into the refrigerator and grabbed a bottle of water.

When I lifted the lid, I saw twelve heart-shaped chocolates with different initials on them.

“These are cute. Where did you get this?”

“Eat one,” she said.

Grabbing a piece of chocolate, I popped it into my mouth.

“Oh, my God.”

“Right?” The corners of her mouth curved upward. “I got them from Shaun. They’re samples from a start-up company in New York that wants him to invest.”

“This chocolate is amazing. Can I have another?”

“Yeah. Of course. Take the whole box. Shaun has more of them he’s bringing home. Anyway, notice the initials on the chocolate?”

“Yeah. That’s the first thing I noticed. What do the initials stand for?”

“Anything you want. Look at the inside of the lid. You can have any message you want printed on it. How fabulous would these be for the wedding favors? Heart chocolates with yours and Conner’s initials in an elegant box with a thank you message printed inside the lid.”

“Jenni, you’re brilliant! I love it!” I grinned.

“The boxes also come with any ribbon you want in any color.”

“How do you know all this?”

“As soon as I saw the box and the chocolates, I made Shaun call the company. Jerry, the owner, said he could have the boxes ready and to you within a month. What do you think?”

“Yes. These will be perfect for the wedding.” I reached over and hugged her. “Thank you. How much are they?”

“Hello. They’re free.”

“Stop it. They are not,” I said.

“Yeah, they are. I told Shaun he’d be dumb if he didn’t invest in this company, so he’s meeting with Roger and his wife in a few days, and we get free chocolate for life!” A grin



crossed her face. “Shit. I’m late. Georgia’s going to kill me.”  
She glanced at her watch. “We’ll talk later.”

## CHAPTER 5



Conner

I entered the kitchen area to dump out the coffee and saw Charlotte standing at the island.

“What is wrong with you?” I asked. “You know I hate cinnamon.”

“That girl is in love with you, Conner.”

“She is not.” He chuckled. “And even if she was, can you blame her?” A smirk crossed his lips. “I think someone is jealous.” I wrapped one arm around her waist from behind and softly kissed the side of her neck.

“I am not jealous.” I grabbed a piece of the heart-shaped chocolate and turned around. “Try this.” I popped it into his mouth.

“Damn. That’s really good chocolate. Where did you get it?”

“Jenni. Shaun is going to invest in the company. She thought it would be perfect for the wedding favors. We’ll have our initials in the center and then a cute thank you message on the inside lid of the box.”

“I love it. See, babe. The universe is on our side. Just another thing to check off our list.” He smiled as he kissed my lips. “Now, back to the cinnamon in my coffee and your jealousy. You know I would never look at another woman, especially some twenty-something girl.”

“I’m not worried about you. It’s the fact that she knows we’re engaged to be married. She needs to learn that it’s not okay to flirt with another woman’s man. She has issues. Maybe I should have her come see me and get to the root of her obsession with you.”

“Who has an obsession with him?” Jackson walked in. “Wait, let me guess. You’re talking about Angela?” The corners of his mouth curved upward. “I noticed the way she bats her eyes at you. ‘Oh, Dr. Kind.’” He chuckled.

“Shut the fuck up, bro.”

“I have a patient waiting for me. I’ll see you later.” Charlotte kissed me before walking out.

“It’s probably due to those videos you keep posting on TikTok. I will admit that one of you, Ella, and Lily, was cute. Don’t you dare tell our other brothers I said that.” He pointed at me. “But I am concerned about the uptick of patients that are trying to get appointments with you. I’m not sure they really have issues and need to be seen.”

“Well, we can look at it this way. We’re still getting paid for the office visit.” I grinned.



“*W*hat time is Gwen coming?” Charlotte asked as she walked down the stairs.

“Five minutes.” I glanced at my watch.

“She’s bringing samples, right?” she asked.

“I think so.”

“Good. I’ve been craving cake all day.”

“Really? Haven’t you been eating chocolate all day?”

“What’s your point, Conner?” She cocked her head.

“Ah.” The corners of my mouth curved upward. “It’s almost that time of the month. That explains your psycho fits lately.”

“That’s right.” She pointed at me. “It’s funny how I never had those before meeting you. I guess you bring out the psycho in women.” A smirk crossed her lips.

“We’re going to discuss that little comment later.” I pointed at her as I heard the doorbell ring. “Gwen.” I smiled as I opened the door. “My favorite cake lady. Come in.”

“Hello, Dr. Kind. Dr. Roman.” She smiled.

“It’s Conner and Charlotte, Gwen,” I said as I took the box from her, and the three of us sat down at the table.

“Let me guess.” She smiled. “One of the layers must be key lime and coconut.”

“Definitely, Gwen. That is non-negotiable. Right, babe?” I glanced at Charlotte.

“Yes. My future husband can have his key lime and coconut.”

“Excellent. I’ve added a new flavor that I would like you to try.” Gwen smiled as she pulled a container out of the box. “This is an almond cake with a pineapple and coconut filling.” She handed us each a plastic fork.

Charlotte and I took a bite and looked at each other.

“This.” I took another bite. “This is amazing, Gwen.”

“Oh my gosh. It’s so good,” Charlotte spoke.

“My brothers need to taste this.” I pulled out my phone and sent a text message in our group chat.

*“Get over here now. New cake flavor!”*

Within seconds, the sliding door opened, and all three of them, including Ella, stepped inside.

“Hi, Aunt Charlotte.” Ella walked over and kissed her cheek.

“Hi, sweetheart.”

“Hi, Uncle Conner.” She climbed on my lap.

“Hello, my favorite niece. Taste this.” I handed her the fork.

“It’s excellent.” She grinned.

“Wow,” Christian spoke. “I think this is my new favorite.”

“Delicious,” Nathan said.

“Yep.” Jackson nodded his head. “Excellent.”

“Thank you. I’m happy you like it. Shall I put that down for one of the layers?” Gwen asked.

“Yes.” Charlotte smiled.

After everyone had left, Ella stayed behind because she was overly excited about tomorrow.

“I can’t wait for tomorrow.” She grinned.

“Me either, kiddo. We are going to rule the O.R.” I held my hand up for a high-five.

“Yeah. We are.” She high-fived me. “Now that I’m out of school for the summer, I need to keep my brain stimulated.”

“I thought you were taking online classes,” I spoke.

“I am, but I still need to be in the O.R. learning. How long will the hip replacement surgery take?”

“About two hours.”

“That’s it?” She cocked her head.

“Yeah.” I narrowed my eye at her. “Are you disappointed?”

“Next time, I want to sit in on a longer surgery, maybe a spinal fusion?” She grinned.

“We’ll see.” I picked her up. “It’s time for you to go home and get ready for bed. We have a big day tomorrow.”

“Not with a two-hour surgery.” Her brows furrowed.

After taking Ella home, I locked up and sat at the piano. Charlotte was upstairs, and I knew if I started playing and singing, she’d come down. So, I started playing the song *When a Man Loves a Woman*. Within a few moments, she sat next to me and listened as I sang to her.

“I loved that.” A beautiful smile graced her face as I hit the last key.

“Good. Now about that comment earlier.”

“Oh shit.” She laughed as she jumped up from the bench and ran up the stairs.

I chased her, caught hold of her, and picked her up before she reached the bedroom. Her arms instantly wrapped around my neck as our eyes stared into each other.

“Did you really think you could outrun me?”

“I guess I better step up my workouts.” She grinned.

“I’ve got a great workout for us, and I’m going to work you so hard, you won’t know what hit you.”

“Bring it on, Kind. I can handle anything.”

I lay her on the bed and hovered over her. As I stared into her eyes, I couldn’t believe this amazing woman loved me as much as she did, and in just a few short months, she’d become my wife. A woman I’d share the rest of my life with and love with all my heart and soul.

“I love you, Charlotte,” I softly spoke.

“I love you too, Conner.”

“You know I live to make you crazy, right?”

“Yeah. I know.” The corners of her mouth curved upward. “But, no matter what, the universe is on our side.”

“Damn right, baby. Damn right.” I leaned in and brushed my lips against hers.

## CHAPTER 6



Charlotte

I walked into the bathroom with a cup of coffee, and Conner was cussing.

“Did you cut yourself again?” I laughed.

“I’m glad you find it amusing.”

“Come here.” I took the razor from his hand, sat on the bathroom counter, and wrapped my legs around him. “I don’t understand how a brilliant surgeon cuts himself shaving.” I gave a cocky smile as I brought the razor up to his face.

“You do know that I cut into people, right?”

“Do you want another cut on this side to match the other side?” I arched my brow. “Anyway, be quiet and be still.” After I finished shaving him, I handed him a towel.

“Thanks, babe.” He kissed me. “I need to hurry it up before Jackson gets here.”

As he was getting dressed, I went to the kitchen to wash out my coffee mug, and the sliding door opened.

“Good morning, you two.” I smiled. “Look at you, Dr. Kind. You look like you’re ready for surgery.”

“I am, Aunt Charlotte. I can’t wait.” The excitement was splayed across her face.

“Is my brother ready?” Jackson asked.

“He’ll be down in—”

“I’m ready.” Conner ran down the stairs. “Hey, you.” He picked Ella up. “Bye, babe.” He walked over and kissed me. “Text me when you’re on your way to the hospital.”

“I will. Good luck. Good luck, Dr. Kind.” I smiled at Ella.

“Thank you, Dr. Roman.”



Conner

“Are you ready, Dr. Kind?” I glanced at Ella as we finished scrubbing in.

“I’m ready, Dr. Kind.”

“Good morning, everyone. You all know my niece, Dr. Ella Kind. Ella, this is Dr. Smith. He’s an orthopedic surgical resident.”

“It’s nice to meet you, Dr. Smith.”

“The pleasure is all mine, Dr. Kind.”

“The patient is out, Dr. Kind.”

“Thanks, Ken. Okay, everyone. Let’s give Mrs. Fields a new hip.”

I was an hour into the surgery when I heard my phone ding.

“Janet?”

“It’s from Dr. Roman. She said she’s on her way.”

“Tell my beautiful fiancée that I’ll be waiting for her.”

“Where are you going?” Ella asked as she watched me.

“We’re meeting with Giuseppe to discuss the flowers for the wedding.” I smiled at her.

“You were brave doing what you did,” she said. “Personally, I would have broken up with you.”

“Ella, you’re breaking my heart. You’ll understand one day when you’re madly in love.”



“I won’t have time for love, Uncle Conner.”

“You will, my sweet niece. You will.”



Christian

I was down in the ER checking on a patient. After I finished, I walked out of the room, and Charleigh flew down the hall.

“There’s a trauma coming in. It’s Charlotte.”

“What?” I exclaimed as we ran to the entrance where the ambulances pulled up.

“All I know is that it was a car accident,” Charleigh spoke.

“Did you page, Conner?”

“I told Laurel to run to the O.R. and get him. I already paged Jackson and Nathan.”

The ambulance pulled up, and Charleigh and I ran and opened the doors.

“What happened?” I asked just as the other ambulance pulled up.

“Car vs. Car. Possible head trauma. She’s in hypovolemic shock with BP 80/60. It took us forty-five minutes to extract her from the vehicle. We could tell by how she was positioned in the car that her seatbelt was disengaged,” the paramedic spoke.

“The other driver?” Charleigh asked.

“He’s critical. It was a police chase. She was stopped at a red light when he crashed into her car.”



Conner

Another hour had passed, and I was almost finished. The O.R. door flew open, and Laurel, one of the nurses, ran in, holding a mask over her face.

“Dr. Kind. There’s a trauma coming in. ETA is five minutes. It’s Dr. Roman.”

I stopped and looked up at her as my heart pounded, and a nauseous feeling swept over me.

“What kind of trauma?”

“Car accident,” she spoke.

“Go. Go, Conner. I can close,” Dr. Smith said.

Instantly, my world stopped. “Janet, page all of my brothers now!” I shouted. “Jackson and Christian are already here.”

“Uncle Conner!” Ella cried.

“Take Ella out of here,” I said as I ran out of the O.R., tearing off my gown, gloves, and mask as I ran down the hall and to the stairwell. “Where is she?!” I yelled to one of the nurses when I reached the ER.

“Trauma room one.”

I ran down the hall and into the room where Christian, Charleigh, a couple of nurses, and Dr. Moretti were treating her.

“Charlotte! I’m here, baby.” Tears streamed down my face as I grabbed her hand.

“Her pressure is dropping, Christian,” Charleigh spoke.

“I’m here!” Jackson ran into the room and over to Charlotte. “Pupils are non-reactive. We need to get a CT now!”

“She’s got a bleed somewhere,” Dr. Moretti said as he placed the transducer on her abdomen.”

Suddenly, the machine’s beeps slowed, and she flatlined.

“NO!” I screamed.

“Get him out of here!” Jackson shouted as he started chest compressions.

“I’m not leaving her!” Two arms gripped me from behind, and I struggled to free myself from them.

“Let them save her,” Simon said as he pulled me out into the hallway.

I stood in the doorway and stared at her as her face was covered in blood, and her lifeless body lay there. I couldn’t breathe, and suddenly, all time had stopped.

“We got a pulse,” Jackson said as the beeps on the machine came back to life.

I’d never heard such beautiful sounds as I did at that moment.

“Let’s get her to CT and then right to the O.R.,” Jackson said. “Charleigh, call the O.R. and tell them we’re on our way.” Jackson walked out of the room, grabbed me, and pulled me into him. “I’ve got this.” He hugged me tightly. “We’ll get the CT and go from there.” He broke our embrace and placed his hands on each side of my face. “She will get through this. I know you’re scared, but you must be strong for her.”

“I’m coming with you to the CT room. You are not keeping me away from her.”

“Come on,” he said.

“I’m going to go find out exactly what the fuck happened,” Simon said.

## CHAPTER 7



Charlotte

“Have fun with Giuseppe.” Georgia smiled.

“Thanks.” I laughed as I grabbed a bottle of water and left the medical center.

When I climbed into my car, I grabbed my phone from my purse and texted Conner. I knew he was still in surgery, but I told him I’d text him and let him know when I was on my way. Throwing my phone back into my purse, I pulled out of the medical center parking lot. I was driving down the road when the car in front of me slammed on its brakes because they decided to turn into a shopping center at the last second. When I slammed on mine to avoid hitting them, my purse fell off the seat, and all the contents dumped onto the passenger’s side floor.

“Shit. You asshole!” I beeped my horn.

I heard my phone beep, but I needed to wait until I was stopped at a light to reach down and grab it. I could hear sirens in the distance, and I kept looking in my rearview mirror to see where they were coming from. The traffic light ahead turned red as I approached it. Unbuckling my seat belt, I leaned over to retrieve my phone. I heard a loud crash, and everything went black.



onner

While Dr. Moretti went to the O.R. to scrub in, I stepped inside the control room with Jackson, Charleigh, and Christian. The images quickly appeared, and I knew by the look on Jackson's face that he was worried.

"She has a small bleed right here and a lot of intracranial pressure. I have to get in there now and relieve that pressure. Get her out of there and to the O.R.!" He flew out of the room.

"I'm going in there with her!"

"Conner, stop," Christian spoke. "You can't, and you know it. She's in good hands. I'll be in there with Dr. Moretti and Jackson assisting. We will not let anything happen to her." He pulled me into him. "Charleigh, take him. I have to go scrub in."

"Come on, Conner." Charleigh hooked her arm around me.

"I'm fucking watching from the suite."

"Okay, and I'll be up there with you. She's going to be okay. Positive thoughts only."

As we walked to the O.R., Nathan ran down the hall after us.

"How is she?" He grabbed me and hugged me.

"Not good, Nathan." Tears streamed down my face. "She has an abdominal and brain bleed. Jackson and Dr. Moretti are operating."

"She's going to be okay, Uncle Conner," Ella cried as she wrapped her arms around my legs. "You have to believe that."

I reached down and picked her up. "I do, Ella." I kissed her forehead. "I have to get to the O.R. suite. Jackson won't let me be in the room with her."

"You know you can't and shouldn't be." Nathan hooked his arm around me. "Ella, go with Charleigh for now."

"No, Dad! I want to watch!"

I looked at Nathan as a distressed look fell over his face.

“Let her, bro.” I shook my head as I set Ella down and went to the O.R.

I stood in the operating suite with my arms crossed and my heart pounding out of my chest. What I felt was beyond scared. Nathan, Charleigh, and Ella walked in, and Nathan hooked his arm around me. Jackson looked up and gave me a slight nod before drilling into Charlotte’s head.

“She’s going to be okay,” Nathan said.

“You don’t know that,” I spoke with worry. “Anything could go wrong.”

“And if it does, the hospital’s best doctors are there. They will not let anything happen to her.”

“I’m so scared, Nathan.” I brought my hand up and wiped the tears that fell.

“I know, brother.” His grip around me tightened.

“Even if she pulls through this, we won’t know the outcome,” I said.

“Charlotte is a strong woman, Conner. She won’t give up without a fight. She’s been through too much in her life,” Charleigh said.

The door to the suite opened, and Jamieson walked in.

“Jamieson,” I said.

“I heard, Conner.” He hugged me. “I’m so sorry.”

“Thank you.”

He pushed the button to the intercom. “Do you need any help down there, Jackson?”

Jackson looked up. “Thanks, Jamieson, but I’ve got it. I’m almost finished.”

“Hi, Dr. Finn,” Ella said.

“Hey, sweetheart.”

“Were you here in the hospital?” Nathan asked him.

“Yeah. I was in a meeting when I heard.”

“I can’t stop thinking about my Uncle Ian and what happened to him,” I said.

“Conner, that was a totally different surgery and situation.” Jamieson placed his hand on my shoulder. “Charlotte is a young and healthy woman. She’ll pull through this.”

“With what deficits?” Tears filled my eyes as I looked at him.

His grip on my shoulder tightened as he let out a sigh.

The door opened, and Georgia walked in.

“My God, Conner.” She hugged me tight. “I came as soon as I could.”

“Thanks, Georgia.”

“How is she?” She turned and looked through the glass.

“I don’t know. Dr. Moretti is stopping the bleed in her abdomen, and Jackson is relieving the pressure on her brain and fixing a bleed.”

“Jesus Christ.” She wiped her eyes. “How the hell did this happen?”

“I don’t know. I haven’t found anything out because the only thing that matters now is that she survives this.”

“We’re finished.” Jackson looked up at us, and I walked out of the suite to go see him.

“Listen to me.” Jackson gripped my shoulders. “I relieved the pressure in her brain and repaired the bleed. There’s still significant swelling, and you know what that means.”

“You have to keep her in a medically induced coma.” I looked up at the ceiling to prevent more tears from falling.

“Yes. You know it’s for her own good and recovery.”

“How long?” I asked.

“The very least a week. I’ll be monitoring her progress every day.”

“And, when you bring her out of the coma? What are the chances she’ll wake up?”

“I don’t know, brother. Every patient is different.”

“And deficits?” I asked.

“You know I can’t answer that,” he spoke with sadness. “They’re prepping to take her to the ICU now.”

“Conner,” Simon walked over and hugged me.

“What happened, Simon?”

“She was stopped at a light. The car that hit her was involved in a police chase in a stolen vehicle. The driver of the other car is a seventeen-year-old male.”

“Fuck!” I placed my hand on my forehead. “Is he dead?”

“No. He’s in surgery. Another thing. It looked like Charlotte wasn’t wearing her seatbelt.”

“Impossible. She always wears it. And if she weren’t, she would have been thrown from the vehicle.”

“From what the paramedics said, it looked to them like she was leaning over the seat when the car hit her.”

“What?” I furrowed my brows. “That makes no sense.”

“I don’t know. Maybe something fell, and she bent over to pick it up. The entire family is here. What do you want me to tell them?”

“Nothing.” I shook my head. “Where are they?”

“In the surgical waiting room,” he said.

“Go on.” Jackson placed his hand on my back. “I’ll see you in Charlotte’s room.”

I entered the waiting room and stared at my family.

“Conner!” Jenni jumped up from her seat and ran over to me. “How is Charlotte?” she cried as she hugged me.

“Not good, Jen.”

My family gathered around, and each took turns hugging me.

“Jackson is putting her in a medically induced coma to let the swelling in her brain go down and heal. We won’t know



anything until she wakes up. If she wakes up.”

“Conner,” Julia hugged me. “You know I went through this. She’s going to wake up, and she’s going to be fine.”

“If anything happens to her.” Tears streamed down my face.

“Stop.” Shaun hugged me. “Nothing is going to happen to her. In fact, all of us are going down to the chapel, and we’re lighting a candle and praying harder than we’ve ever prayed.”

“Bro, Charlotte is in her room.” Christian hooked his arm around me.

“Thank you all for coming. I appreciate it, and so does Charlotte.”

As I turned to leave the waiting room, Aunt Barb walked in.

“Oh my God, Conner.” She wrapped her arms around me. “I just spoke to Nathan.” She broke our embrace and placed her hands on each side of my face. “Charlotte will make it through this. Do you understand me? She will, and so will you.”

“Thanks, Aunt Barb. I have to go be with her. I’ll talk to all of you later.”

Christian and I walked out of the waiting room and headed to the ICU.

## CHAPTER 8



Conner

I stopped in the doorway of Charlotte's room and stared at her. She was hooked up to a ventilator, and her entire head was wrapped in white bandages. Her face was swollen, and the bruising was setting in. I swallowed hard as my heart raced and tears filled my eyes.

"Are you okay?" Christian gripped my shoulder.

"Would you be if that were Charleigh lying there?" I walked into the room and looked at her vitals.

"She's stable, Conner," Jackson said. "She's comfortable and not feeling any pain. Her brain will begin healing over the next few days, and we'll go from there."

"Conner?" Charleigh spoke as she walked into the room. "Here, I held onto this." She held up Charlotte's engagement ring.

"Thanks, Charleigh." I took the ring from her and carefully slipped it on Charlotte's finger. "Can I be alone with her?"

"Of course." Jackson patted my back as he, Charleigh, and Christian left the room.

I pulled up the chair next to the bed and sat down. I couldn't believe this had happened, and I felt like I was trapped in a nightmare.

"I'm here, baby, and I'm not leaving your side. I love you so much, and you will pull through this. You're not leaving me, Charlotte Roman. I won't let you. We've built a life

together, we're getting married, and we have many more years to share our lives with each other." I wiped the tears from my face. "Do you understand me? You fight, Charlotte. You fight for your life."

"Uncle Conner?" I heard Ella's soft voice.

"Come here, sweetheart." I held out my arms.

She ran over, climbed on my lap, hugged me tight, and sobbed.

"She's going to be okay, Uncle Conner. I know she will. She has to be."

"Thanks, kiddo." I held her. "I hope so."

"Ella, there—" Nathan walked in.

I looked at him and slowly shook my head. He took a deep breath, turned around, and left the room.

Ella laid her head on my chest as we sat and stared at Charlotte.

"Are you staying the night?" Ella softly asked.

"Yeah. I am."

"Ella." Nathan walked into the room an hour later. "It's time to get you home. You've had a long day."

"Okay, Dad. Bye, Uncle Conner." She hugged me.

"Goodbye, my favorite niece."

She climbed off my lap, and Nathan took her out into the hall. A few moments later, my brothers and cousins walked in.

"Sorry, bro." Nathan walked over and gripped my shoulders from behind. "Sofia needed to take her home."

"It's okay." I brought my hand up and placed it on his.

"We're all here for you," Sam spoke in a somber voice.

"I called Grayson and Gabriel and told them what happened," Jackson spoke. "They know you're going through a lot right now, so they said they'll call you tomorrow."

“I appreciate you coming and being here for Charlotte and me, but I want you guys to go home to your family. There’s nothing you can do here.”

“Are you going home tonight?” Christian asked.

“No. I’m not leaving her.”

“Do you need us to bring you anything from home?” Nathan asked.

“No. I don’t know. I can’t think right now.”

“You need a change of clothes. You can’t stay in those scrubs,” Jackson said.

I heard the voices of a couple of nurses outside the door.

“They’re bringing him up in a few minutes. He’s going to room 2512,” one of the nurses spoke.

Jackson walked over and closed the door.

“Is it him?” I asked in an angry tone.

“Yeah, bro.”

“Like I said. Thank you for being here, but I want to be alone with her.”

“If you need anything at all, you better call us,” Stefan said.

“I will.” I stood from the chair and hugged him.

After hugging my brothers and cousins goodbye, I heard wheels coming down the hallway. Walking to the door, I stood there and stared at the boy who had caused all of this. His parents followed behind, crying, shattered, and torn apart, just as I was. I wanted to say something. I wanted to scold them and scream at them. I wanted to ask them what kind of parents they were, but I didn’t have the energy tonight. I’d save it for another day.

I walked over to the chair and laid my head down on Charlotte’s arm as I held her hand in mine for a while.

“Fuck it,” I said as I stood up and walked out of the room and into room 2512.

I stood there and stared at him as the soft beeps of the machine drowned out every other noise around. My heart raced as anger stirred inside me.

“Dr. Kind, you shouldn’t be in here,” Catherine, one of the nurses, spoke.

“Excuse me, Dr—I’m sorry, which doctor are you?” the boy’s father asked as he and his wife walked into the room.

“My fiancée is two rooms down fighting for her life because of what your son did.” I clenched my fist.

“I’m so sorry,” the mother said, tears streaming down her face.

“You’re sorry?” I spoke through gritted teeth. “She may never wake up. And if she does, we have no idea what kind of state she’ll be in.” I shouted.

“Dr. Kind,” Catherine spoke. “Please.”

I shook my head, and as I turned to walk out of the room, the erratic sounds of the machine stopped me.

“He’s coding!” Catherine shouted.

I clenched my fist and inhaled a sharp breath as I remembered my oath as a doctor.

“No,” the boy’s mother screamed.

“Get them out of here!” I shouted to another nurse that ran into the room. “We need a crash cart in here!”

I began doing chest compressions. “Push the atropine now,” I said as I stared at the monitor. “Come on. You’re not getting off that easy. Another dose of atropine.” I continued doing chest compressions, and suddenly, the beeping sounds of the machine were back.

“He has a pulse, Dr. Kind.” Catherine looked at me.

“Page his doctor,” I said as I walked out of the room.

I sat in the chair, grabbed Charlotte’s hand, and softly ran my thumb over her ring.

“I saved the boy who hit you, babe. I didn’t want to. I wanted him to die for what he did to you.” A tear fell from my eye.

“Conner?” I heard Christian’s voice.

I wiped the tears and looked at him. “What are you doing back here?”

“I brought you some things from the house, and I’m staying with you.”

“No, Christian. Go home. Go home to your girlfriend.”

“Not happening, bro.” He placed his hand on my shoulder. “I’m staying whether you like it or not. You’re my twin brother, and I’m feeling the pain and agony you’re feeling.”

He called for a nurse and had them bring in another chair.

“The boy. The one who hit Charlotte,” I said.

“What about him?”

“I was in his room, and he coded.”

“And?”

“I saved him. I didn’t want to, but I did.”

Christian reached over and placed his hand on mine. “You did the right thing, brother.”

“If he lives and she dies.” I shook my head as the tears formed in my eyes.

“Charlotte is going to pull through this. You have to believe that.”

I glanced over and saw Nathan and Jackson walk into the room.

“What are you two doing here?” I asked.

“You really didn’t think we’d let you stay here all night alone, did you?” Nathan said.

“You’re our brother, and we’re here for you and will be every step of the way,” Jackson said.

“Nathan, go home. Sofia needs you, and so do Ella and the baby.”

“Sofia wants me here. She’s fine. Plus, the rest of the family can be over in a flash if she needs anything.”

## CHAPTER 9



Conner

It had been a long week, and I'd barely left the hospital. My family visited every day, and even though Charlotte was in a coma, I knew she appreciated it. Sebastian brought me food every morning and night, and I was incredibly grateful to him. The boy in room 2512 ended up passing away a few nights ago, and as hard as they tried to bring him back, they couldn't.

It was eight-thirty p.m., and I had my head down on Charlotte's arm when I felt a hand on my shoulder. Lifting my head, I saw Everly Remington standing there.

"Hi, Conner."

"Everly," I spoke with fear. "What—"

"Relax. There's no need to be scared. Asher and I flew in last night because he and Shaun met today about a project they're working on. I was in my hotel room this morning when a boy appeared. I'm so sorry about Charlotte."

"Can you see or feel her?"

"No." She shook her head. "But the boy is here. He wants me to tell you that he is so sorry for what happened. He never meant to cause anyone harm."

"Well, he did, and I will never forgive him for what he put Charlotte through, not to mention my family and me. Do you hear me, you son-of-a-bitch?" I looked around.



“He said he doesn’t want your forgiveness, and he’s not asking for it. He just needed to tell you how sorry he is and won’t move on until I tell you. He said if he could return to that day, he would never have stolen that car.”

“He can be sorry all he wants, but it doesn’t change the fact that my fiancée is in a medically induced coma with a traumatic brain injury.”

“I’m sorry, Conner. Charlotte is a strong woman who survived something so horrific before, and I know she’ll survive this.”

“Thanks, Everly.”



I went to the cafeteria to grab a cup of coffee, and when I stepped back into Charlotte’s room, I saw Grayson and Gabriel standing at her bedside.

“There you are.” Grayson walked over and hugged me.

“We got here as soon we could.” Gabriel hugged me.

“You guys didn’t have to come. I know how busy you are.”

“You’re family, and family is there for each other,” Grayson said.

“We’re only here for a couple of days. We have to fly back on Sunday,” Gabriel spoke.

“I appreciate it.”

“How is she?” Grayson looked at her vitals.

“She’s healing. Jackson is in surgery right now but said when he’s finished, he’ll check the pressure in her brain, and maybe he’ll bring her out of the coma later.”

“You look tired,” Gabriel said as he placed his hand on my shoulder.

“Yeah.” I breathed out a laugh. “I am.”

“Hey, you two.” Christian entered the room and hugged our cousins. “When did you get here?”

“We landed two hours ago,” Grayson said.

Christian walked over to Charlotte, listened to her heart, and checked her vitals.

“She sounds good,” he said, placing his stethoscope around his neck. “Jackson just got out of surgery and wanted me to tell you that he’ll be up shortly.”

“I’m here,” Jackson said as he walked into the room. “Hey.” He smiled as he hugged Grayson and Gabriel. “It’s good to see you two. Welcome back to Los Angeles.”

“Thanks, Jackson. It’s good to be here again,” Grayson spoke.

“We just wished it were under better circumstances,” Gabriel said.

Jackson checked Charlotte’s vitals, examined her, and looked at me.

“It’s time. Let’s get Dave up here to bring her out.” A small smile framed his lips.

I was scared because I knew that once he brought her out of the coma, she wouldn’t wake up for a while, possibly days.

“You paged me, Jackson?” Dave, the anesthesiologist, walked into the room.

“It’s time to bring Dr. Roman back,” he said.

“Okay. Let’s do it.”

I carefully watched the monitor as Dave slowly reversed the medication.

“And she’s back,” he said. “Let’s switch the ventilator over and see how she breathes on her own. Conner, so that you know, she might not wake up for a couple of days.”

“I know, Dave. Thanks.” I placed my hand on his shoulder.

“I’ve been praying for her since that day. I want you to know that.”

“Thank you. I appreciate it.” My lips formed a small smile.

“Her breathing is regulated,” Jackson said. “If it stays that way, we can take her off the ventilator in a few hours.”

Jackson walked over to Charlotte, checked her head, and then looked at her vitals.

“She’s doing well. I’m very optimistic she’ll pull through this with no issues.”

“I appreciate it, bro, but no bullshit. We won’t know anything until she wakes up, and you know there are no guarantees with TBIs.” I lowered my head.

Later that evening, Jackson removed the catheter from her head and took her off the ventilator.

“She’s fighting,” Jackson said. “Her breath and heart rate are normal, and she’s stable.” We both stared at the monitors. “Now we wait for her to wake up. If she remains stable overnight, we’ll transfer her out of the ICU and into a regular room.”

It was eleven o’clock at night when Charleigh walked into the room.

“Hey.” She smiled.

“Hey. What are you still doing here?”

“My shift just ended. I wanted to see how Charlotte’s doing before I head home. Christian told me Jackson took her off the ventilator. Her stats look great.” The corners of her mouth curved upward.

“Yeah. I’m praying they stay that way. Jackson said they’d transfer her to a regular room tomorrow. I really wish my dad was here.”

“He is, Conner.” She placed her hand on my shoulder. “Do you need anything before I go?”

“Nah. I’m fine. I’m going to try and get some sleep.”

The corners of her mouth curved upward as she reached over and cupped my chin.

“Piece of advice. Get yourself cleaned up tomorrow morning. You haven’t shaved since she was brought in. Don’t you want to look your best for when she opens her eyes and sees you?”

I breathed out a laugh. “Yeah. I do. Thanks, Charleigh.”

“You’re welcome.” She leaned over and kissed my cheek. “I’ll see you tomorrow.”

The following morning, I went to Christian’s office, showered, and shaved for the first time in over a week. Christian was sitting behind his desk when I walked out of the bathroom.

“Morning.” He smiled. “I was hoping that was you in there.”

“Morning, bro. I’d love to stay and chat, but they’re moving Charlotte out of the ICU. I have to get back there.”

“I understand. I’ll be by as soon as I’m done with rounds,” he said.

Once Charlotte was settled in her new room, the flowers started pouring in.

“Uncle Conner.” Ella ran over to me as she and Sofia walked into the room.

“Hi, sweetheart.” I hugged her.

“I brought this for Charlotte.” She held up Darla, the deer. “I wanted to give it to her in the ICU, but my dad said it wasn’t allowed. Darla always comforted me when I was scared, so I know she’ll help Charlotte.”

“That’s very sweet of you. She’ll love it.” I smiled.

“Can I give it to her now?” she asked.

“Of course.”

She nestled Darla against Charlotte’s body. “Darla will keep you safe, Aunt Charlotte.”

Tears filled my eyes for a moment as I looked at Sofia.

“Look at you, all clean-shaven.” She smiled.

“Charleigh told me last night that I needed to look my best for when Charlotte wakes up. Bring my nephew over here.”

She took Nicholas from his car seat and handed him to me.

“Hey, little man.” I softly kissed his head. “I can’t believe how big he’s getting.”

“I know. All he does is eat.” She smirked.

“Well, hello.” Aunt Barb smiled as she walked into the room, holding a beautiful floral arrangement.

“Grandma Barb!” Ella ran over to her.

“Hello, sweetheart. How is our Charlotte doing today?”

“She’s stable, Aunt Barb.”

“She’s going to be in awe when she wakes up and sees all these beautiful flowers. How are you doing, Conner?”

“I’m okay.” I sighed. “Doing the best I can.”

“The worst is over. She’s out of the ICU, and she’s stable. All will be good again when she wakes up,” she said. “And she will wake up.”



It had been a week since Charlotte was moved out of the ICU, and she still hadn’t woken up. Each day that passed became harder, and the waiting was excruciating.

“Damn it!” I said as I spilled half of my coffee on my clothes.”

“Are you okay, Dr. Kind?” Chelsea, Charlotte’s nurse, asked as she hung a new I.V. bag.

“Yeah. It wasn’t that hot. Can you do me a favor and get me a pair of scrubs?”

“Of course. I’ll be right back.”

A few moments later, Chelsea returned with a pair of scrubs, and I took them into the bathroom and changed out of my coffee-soaked clothes. When I came out of the bathroom,

Charlotte's eyes were open. Nothing could have prepared me for what happened next.

## CHAPTER 10



Charlotte

I slowly opened my eyes, and a state of confusion settled inside me. My eyes hurt, and I had a killer headache to go with it.

“Charlotte? She’s awake,” a man shouted out into the hallway. “Page Jackson now!”

“The light. It hurts,” I mumbled as I shut my eyes. “Where am I?”

“You’re in the hospital. You were in a bad car accident,” he said. “Charlotte, I turned the light off. You can open your eyes. Charlotte, look at me.”

“What happened to me?” My eyes slowly opened.

“You were in a bad car accident. You’ve been in a coma for the past two weeks. Do you remember?”

“My head hurts so bad,” I moaned as I closed my eyes.



Conner

I stared at her as my heart pounded out of my chest. She was disoriented, which was to be expected. I thanked God that Jackson was at the hospital today and prayed he wasn’t in the middle of surgery.

“How is she?” Jackson ran into the room.

“She’s very disoriented and complaining of a headache. Chelsea is getting some pain meds.”

“Good. At least she’s talking. Charlotte, I need you to open your eyes for me,” Jackson said.

Chelsea walked into the room and injected Charlotte’s pain medication.

“Charlotte, we gave you something for your headache. It’ll start to kick in soon. I need you to open your eyes.”

She slowly opened her eyes and stared at us.

“Welcome back.” Jackson smiled. “Can you tell me your first and last name?”

“Charlotte Roman,” she softly spoke.

“Do you know why you’re here?” Jackson asked.

“Car accident.”

“That’s right.” He smiled.

“Are you my doctor?” she sleepily spoke.

Jackson and I both looked at each other.

“Charlotte, do you know who I am?” I asked with panic.

She slowly shook her head.

I almost lost it as Jackson reached over and gripped my shoulder.

“Charlotte, do you know who I am?” Jackson asked.

“Doctor, I think.”

“That’s right. I am your doctor. My name is Dr. Jackson Kind, and I’m a neurosurgeon. I performed surgery on your brain when you were brought in. You had a bleed and significant swelling.”

“Who are you?” She looked at me, and tears filled my eyes.

“You need your rest, Charlotte. Conner, let’s go out in the hallway.”



I was literally shaking when Jackson gripped my shoulders.

“She’s confused right now. This isn’t uncommon. The important thing at this moment is she’s awake.”

“She doesn’t know who I am!” I spoke through gritted teeth.

“Give her some time. Her brain needs to rewire itself now that she’s awake.”

I got here as soon as I could.” Christian ran over to us. “What’s wrong?”

“Charlotte is confused right now,” Jackson said.

“She doesn’t know who we are!” I spoke.

“Shit.” Christian sighed. “Confusion and disorientation are very common, Conner.”

The three of us walked back into the room, and Charlotte’s eyes opened.

“Hi, Charlotte.” Christian smiled. “Welcome back.”

“Why am I not at Hope Memorial?” she asked, and I looked at Jackson.

“Charlotte, can you tell me how old you are?” Jackson asked.

“Twenty-four.”

“Charlotte, you’re—” I began to speak, and Jackson stopped me.

“I’m so tired.” She closed her eyes. “I need to go to sleep,” she mumbled.

I walked out of the room and placed my hands on my head as I walked down the hallway.

“Conner,” Jackson ran after me, and I ignored him.

Nathan stepped off the elevator as I walked past it.

“Stop him!” Jackson yelled.

Nathan grabbed me. “What happened?”

“She doesn’t know who I am.” Tears filled my eyes.

“Come in here,” Jackson said as he opened the door to a conference room.

“What do you mean? What the hell is going on?” Nathan asked.

“Charlotte woke up, and she’s very confused right now,” Jackson said. “She didn’t recognize us, and when I asked her how old she was, she said she was twenty-four.”

“Fuck.” Nathan shook his head as he hugged me.

“Let’s give her some time. She has a bad headache. We gave her some pain meds, and she went back to sleep. Her brain needs to catch up,” Jackson spoke.

Christian walked into the room. “I just got paged, so I have to go. I’ll be back later. This is not the time for you to fall apart, my brother. Do you understand me?”

“Yeah.” I nodded.

“It’s important that we don’t overload Charlotte with too much information when she wakes up,” Jackson spoke. “We need to be very careful with what we tell her until we know exactly what’s going on.”

“Okay.” I placed my hand on Jackson’s shoulder before walking out and heading back to Charlotte’s room.

She was asleep, so I sat in the chair, placed my elbows on my knees, and held my head. Christian was right. This wasn’t the time for me to fall apart. This wasn’t about me. It was about Charlotte.

She stirred, and when I looked up, she stared at me.

## CHAPTER 11



Charlotte

I slowly opened my eyes, and the pain in my head wasn't as bad. I slowly turned and stared at the man sitting at my bedside.

"Hey." The man smiled. "How's your headache?"

"Better," I softly spoke. "You were in here earlier with the other doctor. Are you a neurologist also?"

"No. I'm an orthopedic surgeon."

"Did I break a bone or something?" I looked down at my arms and legs.

"No. You didn't break anything."

The sadness in his eyes gripped me and left me incredibly confused and terrified. I picked up the white deer that was lying next to me and noticed the large diamond on my finger. I stared at it for a moment and then looked over at the stranger staring back at me.

"I'm married?" My brows furrowed.

"No. You're engaged."

"That's impossible. I'm not dating anyone."

"Charlotte." He reached over, grabbed my hand, and I quickly pulled it away. "I'm your fiancé." His eyes swelled with tears. "My name is Dr. Conner Kind, and we're getting married on September 2<sup>nd</sup>."

“You’re lying! I’m not dating anyone! I would know if I was dating someone or engaged to be married! Who are you?” I shouted.

The doctor that was in my room earlier ran in.

“Charlotte, calm down. You need to stay calm. Your brain is still healing.”

“What is happening?” Tears streamed down my face. “What happened to me?” I struggled to breathe as fear gripped me.

The doctor held my shoulders. “Calm down. Deep breath. That’s it. Another one.”

I took in a second breath.

“Good. Now, one more,” he said.

I took in one more breath and felt my body calm.

“I want you to tell me what you remember before the accident.”

“I had just left the university and was heading to Hope Memorial for my shift.”

“What are you studying?” the doctor asked.

“I’m studying to become a clinical psychologist. I’m working on my doctorate and have an internship at Hope Memorial. Did anyone call them to tell them what happened to me?”

Both doctors looked at each other.

“Charlotte, listen to me very carefully. You suffered a traumatic brain injury from the accident.”

“I know. I remember you telling me that when I woke up.”

“Do you remember what my name is?” he asked.

“Dr. Jackson Kind. You’re my neurologist. Are you two related?” I furrowed my brows.

“He’s my brother,” Conner said.

“What you’re experiencing is retrograde amnesia,” Jackson said. “It’s a—”

“I know what retrograde amnesia is, Dr. Kind. Fuck.” Tears swelled in my eyes. “How many years did I lose?”

“It appears that you’ve lost the last ten years,” he said.

“You’re going to be thirty-four, Charlotte,” Conner said.

“No.” I shook my head as the tears streamed down my face. “I want you both to leave.”

“Charlotte—” Connor started to speak.

“I said get out!”

“Conner, come on. Let’s give her some time,” Jackson said to him.



Conner

Jackson and I left the room. I leaned up against the hallway wall and lowered my head as I rubbed the back of my neck.

“What the fuck are we going to do?” I asked my brother.

“We’ll give her time to process what we just told her. She’ll have more questions and need you to answer them when she’s ready.”

“How permanent is this? Will she ever get the last ten years of memories back?”

“I don’t know, Conner.” He shook his head. “Every person with retrograde amnesia is different. I’ll go put in the order for another CT scan. Give her some space. Don’t offer too much information unless she asks. The worst thing you can do is overload her right now.”

“She’s the love of my life, and she’s hurting,” I spoke through gritted teeth. “How the hell do I not tell her about us

and our life together? Fuck, we're supposed to be getting married in less than three months, Jackson!"

"I'm warning you right now." He pointed his finger at me. "If you don't, you will push her further and further away. She needs time. She's terrified and just woke up to find out she's ten years older."



Charlotte

I leaned over the side of the bed, pulled a tissue from the box, blew my nose, and flinched when I felt the pain in my abdomen. I was so thirsty, and my throat was killing me. I pushed the button for the nurse.

"Hi, sweetie." The nurse walked in with a smile.

"My throat hurts really bad, and I'm thirsty."

"I'll go get you some ice water. I'm really happy you're back with us." Her lips gave way to a sympathetic smile.

Conner stood in the doorway, and our eyes locked on each other.

"Is it okay if I come in?" he asked.

"Sure." I picked up the white deer and stared at it as he sat down in the chair. "I don't remember this. Did you give this to me?" I looked at him.

"No. That's Ella's deer. She brought it when you were transferred out of the ICU. She said Darla will keep you safe."

"Who's Ella?"

"She's my seven-year-old niece. She's Nathan's daughter, and she loves you very much. She's been really worried."

"Nathan? I thought Dr. Jackson was your brother."

"Nathan is my brother too, and so is Christian. Christian was the one who was in here earlier. He's my twin."

"Did I cause the accident?" I asked with worry.

“No.” He shook his head. “A seventeen-year-old boy smashed into the back of you while you were stopped at a light.”

“How is he?” I asked.

“He passed away a few days after the accident.”

“Oh.” I looked down.

He reached over, and I moved my hand away.

“I’m sorry,” he spoke.

“I’m really hungry,” I said. “And where is the nurse with my water?”

“I’ll go get you some and order you food from Sebastian’s restaurant.”

“Who?” I furrowed my brows.

“Sebastian. He’s my cousin and owns three restaurants. You love his food.”

“Okay.”

“I’ll be right back.” He walked out of the room.

I hugged Darla as I tried so hard to remember the last ten years of my life. Nothing. All I saw when I tried to remember was darkness—a black hole that went on forever.

Conner walked into the room, holding a Styrofoam cup with a straw in it.

“Thank you,” I spoke as he handed it to me.

“You’re welcome. Sebastian will be here soon with food.”

## CHAPTER 12



Charlotte

“I have questions,” I said. “I don’t have anyone else. Both of my parents are dead, and my brother is in prison. But I’m sure you already know that.”

“I do know that. I know everything there is to know about you, Charlotte.” The corners of his mouth curved up into a soft smile.

“Did I graduate? Am I a clinical psychologist?”

“Yes. You graduated with honors, a 4.0, and with awards from the APA.”

“Where do I work if Hope Memorial is closed?” My brows furrowed.

“You have your own practice at the Kind Medical Center and work one day a week here at Cedars.”

“Kind Medical Center?”

“My brothers and I own it.”

“So, we work together?” I asked.

“Your practice is down from mine.” A smile crossed his lips.

“Knock, knock.” I heard a voice from the doorway.

“Come on in.” Conner stood up.

“Hi, Charlotte,” the man spoke as he set the brown bag on the counter next to the sink.



“Charlotte, this is my cousin, Sebastian.”

“Hi,” I managed a small smile. “I’ve been told that I love your food.”

He breathed out a laugh. “Yeah. You do. How are you feeling?”

“Sore and tired.”

“You’ll feel better in no time. I need to get back to the restaurant.”

“Thanks, Sebastian.” Conner hugged him.

“You’re welcome. I’ll see you soon.” Sebastian gave me a sympathetic smile before leaving the room.

Conner reached into the bag and pulled the food from it.

“It smells good,” I spoke.

“It’s delicious.” He removed the lid from the container, pulled the tray over, and set it in front of me.

“Whitefish?” I asked.

“Your favorite.” He smiled as he removed a roll from the bag and set it down. “Also, your favorite.” He pulled out a small clear container.

“That looks like butter,” I spoke.

“It’s Sebastian’s cherry butter. You can’t live without it. Actually, none of us can.”

“How long have we been engaged?” I asked him as I buttered my roll.

“Two weeks. But we’ve been dating for over a year.”

“I find it hard to believe.”

“Why?” His brows furrowed.

“Because I don’t date. I have some major trust issues. There are things I never want people to find out about me, so I keep my distance. I can’t wrap my head around any of this.”

“Babe—”

“Please don’t call me that,” I said.

“Charlotte, we’re here to take you down for a CT scan,” my nurse spoke when she walked into the room.

“Okay. Thank you for getting me something to eat, Conner. When I get back from my scan, I want to be alone for the rest of the night. So, I would appreciate it if you weren’t here when I return.”

His eyes burned into mine, and I could see the tears start to swell.

“I’m sorry, but I need to be alone.”

“Okay, Charlotte.”

“You’ll need to remove your ring,” my nurse spoke.

I took it off and placed it in Conner’s hand.



**C**onner

I closed my hand around Charlotte’s ring and left her room. My heart was shattered, and I couldn’t think straight. I was exhausted and barely slept the past two weeks. I stayed by her side the entire time, praying that she’d wake up and everything would be fine—that she would be fine. She had no memory of me, of us, and the life we’d built together. And just when I thought nothing could shatter me more than the day of the accident, this did.

I stepped inside the house and threw my keys on the island. It felt cold and empty without her here. I gripped the island’s edge and pushed myself back, trying to control my emotions. The sliding door opened, and Sam and Stefan walked in. Neither one said a word. They walked over to where I stood, grabbed me, and hugged me tight.

“Come on,” Sam said. “Let’s go down to the beach. Sebastian is on his way home from the Brewhouse with an expensive bottle of scotch.”

“I don’t think I’m up for it,” I said.

“Too bad. You need us, and we’re here,” Stefan hooked his arm around me.

We walked down to the beach, where the rest of my cousins were gathered around the bonfire.

“Come here.” Simon stood from his seat and hugged me. “We heard about Charlotte. Listen, man. She’s alive, and she’s awake. Her memory will come back.”

“She told me to leave because she didn’t want me there. How the fuck am I supposed to deal with that?”

Simon placed his hands on each side of my face. “You’re going to take it one day at a time. That’s all you can do. She’ll feel differently tomorrow.”

“I can’t imagine what she’s going through,” Shaun spoke. “I can speak for all of us that we’re feeling every bit of your pain, and we’re all here for both of you.”

“Thanks, Shaun.” I wiped the tears from my eyes.

“What does Jackson say?” Stefan asked.

“He doesn’t know. He said everyone is different, and it’s all a waiting game now.”

“Uncle Conner!” Ella ran over to me.

“Hey, sweetheart.” I picked her up and held her tight.

“Why aren’t you with Charlotte?” she asked.

“She wanted to be alone, kiddo.”

“She’s just scared like I was when I met my dad and all of you for the first time. You’re unfamiliar to her. Does she like Darla?”

“She loves her and thanks you for letting Darla be with her.”

“We’re going to visit her tomorrow. Do you think she’ll like me?”

“Of course, Ella. She’ll love you.”

“And she’ll love you again too.” She hugged me.  
I looked at my cousins, who had tears in their eyes.

## CHAPTER 13



Charlotte

No one could understand what I felt. The physical pain was easy. It was the emotional pain I couldn't escape. Knowing I'd lost the last ten years of my life was incomprehensible. I lay in bed as I stared out the window. Nothing made sense to me. I would never allow myself to get close to anyone, yet I somehow was engaged to that man—a man who was incredibly handsome.

"Charlotte?" I heard a soft voice from the doorway.

"Yes?" I spoke as I stared at the woman who walked into my room holding a beautiful floral arrangement.

"I'm Dr. Georgia Scott-Kind. Jackson is my husband. These are for you."

"Thank you. They're beautiful. I'm sorry, but I don't—"

"I know." She sat on the edge of the bed and placed her hand on mine.

"What type of doctor are you?" I asked.

"I'm an OB/GYN and a fertility specialist. I'm also your doctor." She smiled. "We work together at the medical center."

"I can't even comprehend that I've graduated and have my own practice." My brows furrowed.

"I know it must be very scary, but you have a large family who loves you and will help you piece everything together."

"I don't have any family, Georgia."

“Yes. You do. And they’re the best people anyone could ever ask for.” She squeezed my hand. “Conner left?”

“I asked him to. I wanted to be alone. I’m a very private person, and I don’t let people inside. I’m having difficulty figuring out how I let him into my life.” Tears filled my eyes.

“You fell in love with him. He’s a very lovable man.” The corners of her mouth curved upward. “And he loves you so much, Charlotte. We all do, and we will help you get through this.”

“Do you by any chance, know what happened to my phone?” I asked.

“I don’t, but I can find out.”

“Welcome back, Dr. Roman.” A doctor walked into the room with a smile on his face. “I’m Dr. Moretti. I repaired the bleeding in your abdomen on the day of the accident. I just came to take a look at your incision. Would you mind?”

“No, Dr. Moretti.” I pulled back the covers and lifted my gown.

Instantly, my brows furrowed as I noticed the knife wound scars were no longer as visible as they were. My heart started to race as I looked up at Georgia.

“Incision looks great. Are you experiencing any discomfort?” Dr. Moretti asked.

“A little bit. Nothing too bad.”

“Okay. Your chart shows that an occupational therapist will be here in the morning to get you up and moving around. If you need anything, let the nurses know, and they’ll page me.” He walked out of the room.

“What happened to my scars?” I asked Georgia.

“Nathan, Conner’s brother, is a plastic surgeon. He fixed them for you. It’s what you wanted.”

“When you say I have a large family, who are you talking about besides you, Jackson, and Conner?”

“Oh, gee.” She laughed. “There’s a lot of us. I’ll start with the brothers. Conner, Jackson, Christian, and Nathan. Then there are the cousins. Sam, Stefan, Sebastian, Simon, Shaun, Grayson, and Gabriel. But we just found out about Grayson and Gabriel not too long ago. There’s Aunt Barb, who is coming to see you tomorrow. She wanted to come today, but Jackson stopped her and told her no.”

“Why?” I asked.

“Well, she’s special.” Georgia laughed, and I smiled. “Then there are all of us girls. We’re more sisters than friends. Julia, Alex, Emilia, Grace, Jenni, Sofia, Charleigh, and myself.”

“Did I hear my name?” A woman walked in with a smile.

“I was telling Charlotte about her family,” Georgia spoke. “Charlotte, this is Charleigh. She’s a cardiac nurse practitioner and Christian’s girlfriend.”

“Hi,” I spoke.

“Hi, sweetie. I wanted to see how you’re doing before I head home.”

“So, all of Conner’s brothers are doctors?” I asked.

“Yes. And so are Grayson and Gabriel. Grayson is a trauma surgeon, and Gabriel is internal medicine.”

I turned my head to the side and looked out the window.

“I think that’s enough information for tonight,” Georgia said as she squeezed my hand.

“We’ll let you get some rest,” Charleigh said.

“Everything is going to be okay,” Georgia spoke as she gently hugged me.

After they left, I let the tears stream down my face. I didn’t know what or how to feel about anything anymore. My heart started racing, and I couldn’t breathe. I gasped for air as I pushed the button for the nurse multiple times. I threw my legs over the side of the bed and lowered my head. My nurse ran in and calmed me down.

“It’s okay, Dr. Roman.” She helped me lie down and pulled the blanket over me. “Do you want me to give you something to help you sleep?”

I nodded.



Conner

“Conner,” I heard Georgia yell from my patio.

Turning my head, I stared at her.

“I need to talk to you,” she shouted.

“I’ll talk to you guys later,” I said as I left and went back to the house.

Georgia hooked her arm around me when I stepped on the patio, and we went inside.

“I spoke with Charlotte before I left the hospital.”

“And?”

“She’s terrified over losing her memory. I tried to fill her in about the family, and I don’t know. I think maybe it was information overload. She was asking about her phone.”

“I have a new one for her. Her other one got damaged in the accident. I’m bringing it to her in the morning.”

“Did all of her information transfer over?” she asked.

“Yeah. It did. All of her contacts, photos, videos, voice messages.”

“Good. I think that will help her understand her life before the accident and perhaps make things a little more comfortable for her. Because, honestly, Conner, it’ll be very difficult for her. I know if I were lying in that hospital bed, unable to remember the last ten years of my life, I’d be terrified.”

The sliding door opened, and Jackson stepped inside.

“There you are.” He walked over to Georgia and kissed her. “Sorry I’m so late. I got pulled into emergency surgery. I



got the scans from Charlotte's CT back.”

“And?” I asked.

“There's a small lesion on the hippocampus. We couldn't see it before because her brain had so much swelling.”

“Will it heal itself?” Georgia asked.

“It should in time. New cells will regenerate and take over. I do want to keep an eye on it, though with monthly scans.”

“Be honest with me, bro. Will Charlotte ever get her memories back?”

He stared at me with uncertainty. “Listen, Conner.” He placed his hand on my shoulder. “I can't answer that. As I told you before, everyone is different. I know you think this is the worst possible thing in the world, but it isn't.”

“How the fuck can you say that?” I shouted as I pushed his hand away.

“Because she can form new memories. A lot of people with traumatic brain injuries can't. They can't remember things that happened a minute ago, five minutes ago, or even ten minutes. Some go through the day just fine, and then when they wake up the next morning, they have no memories of the day before. Think about that.” He pointed at me. “She lost ten years of her life. Yeah, that sucks, and it's bad, but it could be far worse.”

I inhaled a sharp breath as I rubbed the back of my neck. “You're right. I'm sorry.”

“Come here.” He pulled me into an embrace. “You'll both get through this. This entire family will make sure of it.”

After Jackson and Georgia left, I went upstairs to the bed I hadn't slept in for over two weeks. Setting my glass of scotch on the nightstand, I stripped out of my clothes and climbed into bed. Picking up my phone, I brought up the pictures and videos of us. Tears streamed down my face as I stared at her smile—a smile I would give anything to see again. The light that once filled her was gone and was now replaced by fear. I let her kick me out today, but it wouldn't happen again.

Whether she believed it or not, she needed me now more than ever.

## CHAPTER 14



Charlotte

I opened my eyes and found I was still in the hospital. I prayed it was all a nightmare and that when I'd wake up, I'd be back in my bed in my apartment—no such luck. This was now my reality and not 2013 anymore.

“Good morning.” Conner walked in carrying a couple of bags and a drink tray.

“Morning.”

“How did you sleep?” he asked.

“They gave me a pill to help me, so not bad.”

“Good. I stopped at Sebastian's on the way here and brought breakfast.” He took out a Styrofoam box from the bag and set it on my tray. “It's the egg sandwich you love so much and a coffee.” The corners of his mouth curved upward. “I also have something else for you, but that'll have to wait until after you eat.”

“I'm not really hungry,” I spoke.

“I don't believe that. Go on. Eat your breakfast sandwich.”

“Can I ask you a question?” I asked.

“Of course. You can ask me anything.” He went to place his hand on mine, and I quickly pulled it away. “I'm sorry. It's a habit.”

“Do I live with you?”

“Yes, Charlotte. We live together in our beach house in Venice.”

“We bought it together?” My brows furrowed.

“No. It’s my house, and you moved in. You love it there.”

“Stop telling me what I love!” I spoke with irritation.

“I’m sorry. I’m just trying—”

“No. I shouldn’t have yelled at you like that. So, when I leave here, that means I’m going home with you?”

“Hello there. Good morning.” A handsome man walked into the room.

“Jamieson.” Conner stood up from his chair, and they hugged. “What are you doing here?”

“I talked to Jackson. Hi, Charlotte.” He smiled. “I’m Dr. Jamieson Finn, and I’m a neurosurgeon and Chief of Staff over at the UCLA Medical Center.” He extended his hand.

“Hello, Dr. Finn.” I lightly shook his hand.

“I spoke with Dr. Kind, who informed me that you’re experiencing some memory loss.”

“Ten years’ worth.” I looked down.

“Well, the important thing is you woke up from your coma, you can breathe on your own, all limbs are intact, and you can talk, comprehend, and retain short-term memory. I’d say ten years’ worth of memory loss is not all that bad.” He winked. “I have a friend who is a trauma therapist. Her specialty is working with amnesia patients, and her name is Dr. Lydia Bancroft. She’ll be by to visit you today.”

“Dr. Finn, I don’t need—”

“Yeah, you do.” A smirk crossed his lips. “In fact, I can guarantee that a lot of your own patients say the same thing.”

“Perhaps. I don’t know since I can’t even remember graduating from medical school.”

“Dr. Bancroft is one of the best. Anyway, I have to go. We’re really happy to have you back with us, Charlotte.” He

reached over and gave my hand a gentle squeeze.

After Dr. Finn left the room, Conner reached into the other bag, pulled out a box, and handed it to me.

“Your other phone was damaged in the accident, so I ordered you a new one.”

I removed the lid from the box and stared at the large iPhone sitting in it.

“Why is it so big?” I asked as I looked over at him.

He chuckled. “There have been many changes to the iPhone over the last ten years.”

I pulled it from the box and held it in my hand.

“Wow. Is this the same one I had when I got into the accident?” I asked.

“Yep. Same exact phone and same color.” He smiled. “All of your information was transferred over from the cloud.”

“How do you turn this on?”

“Here. Let me.” He reached over and took my phone.

“Good morning.” Amy, my nurse, smiled when she walked in. “You are one lucky girl. I’ve been instructed to remove your catheter and your I.V.”

“Oh. Okay.”

“Morning, Dr. Kind.” She grinned at him.

“Good morning, Amy.”

“Okay, Dr. Roman. Just relax. I’ll remove your catheter first.”

“Umm. Wait. Can you please leave the room?” I asked Conner.

“Sure.” He set my phone down and walked out of the room.

“You are one lucky lady.” Amy grinned.

“Why?”

“You’re marrying Dr. Kind. He’s a total keeper.” She removed my catheter.

“You do know that I don’t remember him, right?” I cocked my head.

“I know.” Her lips formed a sympathetic smile as she removed the I.V. “The fun part is you get to know him all over again.” She grinned as she walked out of the room.

Conner walked back in with his hands tucked tightly in his pants pockets and sat down. I picked up my phone from the tray and first noticed the wallpaper on the lock screen. It was a picture of Conner and me on a boat.

“Where was this taken?” I asked.

“On our boat. My brothers and I own it. We take it out all the time. You lo—” He stopped and cleared his throat.

“Why is it asking me to set up Face I.D.? What does it mean?”

“You can set it up, so your face unlocks your phone. That way, you don’t have to keep putting in your password.”

“I don’t understand.” I furrowed my brows.

“I’ll help you set it up.” He smiled.

“Oh, my God. That is so cool.” The corners of my mouth curved upward. “Why is there an Amazon app on here? I don’t order from Amazon. I never have and never will.”

A look of confusion swept across Conner’s face. “You’re an Amazon shopping diva. At least three to four packages are delivered to the house daily.”

“No, I’m not.”

“Oh, but you are. Click on the app and pull up your order history.”

“Hi there, Dr. Roman.” A young man smiled when he stepped inside the room with a wheelchair. “I’m Carter, your occupational therapist. I’m here to take you for some exercise.”

“I can come with you,” Conner said.

“No. It’s fine. Don’t you have to go to work or something?” I furrowed my brows.

“No. I’m on a leave of absence.”

“Oh. I’ll talk to you later.”

## CHAPTER 15



Conner

I sighed as I watched Carter wheel her out of the room. Cupping my hands in my face, I looked up when I heard Ella's voice.

"Uncle Conner?"

"Hey, sweetheart." I smiled. "Hi, Sofia."

"How are you?" Sofia set Nicholas' car seat down and placed her hand on my shoulder.

"I'm okay."

"Where is she?" Ella asked.

"She's down in the occupational therapy room. She should be back soon." I picked her up and set her on my lap.

"How is she today?" Sofia asked.

"She asked if we lived together, and when I told her we do, she didn't seem thrilled."

"It's going to take time, Conner," she said. "It's like a whole new world to her, which is scary. Once you take her home and she sees all of her things there, she'll feel more comfortable."

"Hey, Ella. Unless she asks, I don't want you to tell Charlotte too much information when she returns. Okay?"

"Okay, Uncle Conner."



Carter wheeled Charlotte into the room, and we all turned and stared at her.

“Hi,” Charlotte said as Carter wheeled her to the bed and helped her into it. “You must be Ella. Thank you for letting Darla stay with me.” A small smile crossed her lips.

“You’re welcome.”

“Hi, Charlotte. I’m Sofia, Nathan’s girlfriend.”

“It’s nice to meet you. Is that your baby?”

“Yes.” Sofia smiled. “This is Nicholas.”

“He’s adorable.”

“Hey, babe.” Nathan walked in and kissed Sofia’s cheek.

“Daddy!” Ella jumped off my lap.

“Hey, baby girl. Charlotte.” Nathan smiled.

“I’m assuming you’re the other brother. Plastic surgeon, right? The one who fixed my scars?”

“Yes. I just finished with one surgery and am about to head into another. I wanted to stop by and see how you are.”

“Thank you. I appreciate it.”

He walked over and took hold of my hand. “I know this is hard, but we’ll all help you through it. You are a very special woman, Dr. Charlotte Roman, and we love you very much.”

“Would it be okay if I spoke to Nathan for a minute alone?” she asked me.

I looked at Nathan, picked up Ella, and left the room.

“What do you think that’s about?” Sofia asked.

“I have no idea.”

A few minutes later, Nathan walked out and over to us.

“What’s going on?” I asked.

“She asked me if she truly wanted me to fix her scars or if you pushed her into doing it.”

“Are you fucking serious?” I cocked my head.

“Stop, bro. It was a simple question.”

“Jesus Christ. She probably thinks I’m some kind of douchebag.”

“You are.” Nathan smiled as he patted my shoulder.

“Nathan!” Sofia said.

“He knows I’m joking. Listen to me. She doesn’t trust any of us right now.” His pager went off. “I have to go scrub in. We’ll talk later. “Bye, babe.” He kissed Sofia. “Bye, sweetheart.” He kissed the top of Ella’s head. “Bye, little man. Daddy loves you.” He knelt down and kissed Nicholas while he slept in his car seat.

Sofia and Ella stayed for a while and then left.

“Can I ask you something?” I looked at Charlotte.

“I guess. Can’t guarantee I’ll be able to give you an answer.”

“Why did you ask Nathan if I pushed you into having that surgery for your scars?” I asked with irritation.

“He told you?” Her brow arched.

“If there’s one thing you should know about my family, we tell each other everything— and I mean everything. How could you even think I would push you into doing that?”

“Because I don’t know you. You’re nothing but a stranger to me.”

I placed my hands on my hips and paced around the room.

“I’m your fiancé!” I loudly voiced as I stared at her. “I’m sorry. It’s just—”

“Uh, hey.” Jackson walked into the room. “What’s going on?”

“Nothing.” I sighed.

“How are you feeling, Charlotte?” Jackson asked as he walked over and checked her vitals.

“Okay.”

“The rest of the family wanted to come to visit you today, and I told them to hold off.”

“Why would you do that, bro?” I asked.

“Because I’m discharging her tomorrow morning,” he said. “Your vitals are great.” He looked at Charlotte. “I spoke with your occupational therapist, who said you did really well today. There really is no reason to keep you in here. You’ll recover better at home anyway. Plus, I’m right next door if something comes up.”

“You live next door?” she asked.

Jackson looked at me. “You didn’t tell her about the family?”

“I haven’t gotten around to it yet.”

“What are you talking about?” Charlotte asked.

“Our entire family lives on one stretch of the beach, except for our other cousins, Grayson, and Gabriel. They live in Boston,” Jackson spoke.

“Oh. That’s kind of weird,” Charlotte said.

“Well, you didn’t think that before the accident.” Jackson winked at her. “Conner, can I see you out in the hallway?”

“Sure.” I followed him out of the room.

“What the hell is going on in there? I could hear you down the hall.”

“She asked Nathan if I pushed her into getting her scars fixed. Can you believe that?”

“Yes. I can believe it. She doesn’t remember anything from the past ten years. She doesn’t know you, bro. As bad as you want her to remember, she can’t, and you have to understand and accept that. She’s going to say and do things that will test you. I have the address of a support group I want you to consider attending. It’s for families of amnesia victims due to trauma.”

“Fuck that.” My brows furrowed. “I don’t need a support group.”

“Yes, you do.” He placed his hand on my shoulder. “Any one of us will go with you. All you have to do is ask. This group can help you deal with what’s happened. Now, you better calm the fuck down and get things ready for Charlotte to return home tomorrow. Understand me?”

I nodded and walked back into Charlotte’s room. She was sleeping, so I grabbed a sandwich at the cafeteria.

“Hey.” Charleigh smiled.

“Hey, Charleigh,” I spoke.

“What’s wrong?”

“Nothing.” I grabbed a tuna sandwich.

“I don’t believe you.” She grabbed the sandwich from my tray.

“Excuse me.”

“It’s on me, and we’re sitting down and talking. So, if you want your sandwich, you have to follow me.” The corners of her mouth curved upward.

I sighed as she paid for our food, and we sat at a table near the window.

“What’s going on?” she asked.

“Jackson wants me to attend a support group for families of amnesia victims.”

“Okay, and?”

“I’m not going, and it pisses me off that he thinks I should.”

“Why? Support groups are great. I attended one for a while after my heart transplant.”

“You did?” I took a bite of my sandwich.

“Yeah. I met a lot of great people who were also heart transplant patients. We shared our experiences and supported each other. Listen, Conner. No one can understand what you’re going through unless they’ve been through it themselves. The family will always be here for you and say they feel for you or

understand, but they don't. It's not possible. You need to surround yourself with others who do understand and are going through the same thing. It will help. I promise."

After finishing my sandwich, I returned to Charlotte's room, and she opened her eyes.

"*I*'m sorry if I woke you. Go back to sleep."

## CHAPTER 16



Charlotte

“You didn’t wake me.”

“Do you need anything?” Conner asked.

“We met at the medical center, right?”

He breathed out a laugh. “I could totally lie to you right now, and you would never know. But I wouldn’t do that because I don’t lie to you, and I never will. Our first meeting was at Target.”

“As in the store?” My brows furrowed.

“Yes. I was in there before you were, and I left my phone in the shopping cart. You just so happened to take the cart I had used. When I got home and realized my phone was missing, I called it from my brother’s phone, and you answered. I asked you if you could bring it out to me in the parking lot, and you went off on me like the psycho chick you were.” The corners of his mouth curved upward.

“Hold on a second. You left your phone in the cart and expected me to bring it out to you?”

“Yes. And trust me when I tell you that you lectured me and accused me of having a narcissistic personality right in the main aisle of the store. We exchanged some words, and I took my phone and left.”

“Sounds like we hated each other.”

“You could say it was hate at first sight.” His lips formed a smirk. “I was away at a medical conference when you met some colleagues of yours for dinner. That’s where you met Jackson and Georgia. They joined you for dinner, and after talking to you, Jackson asked if you would be interested in coming for an interview at the medical center. You agreed. My brothers loved you and hired you without consulting me. When I returned from the medical conference, I didn’t know who you were until you walked into the kitchen area at the medical center.”

“You must have been shocked,” I spoke.

“We both were. In fact, my douchebag brother, Nathan, probably still has the video he recorded of us. Would you like to see it?”

“Yeah. I would.”

“Okay. Hold on.” He pulled out his phone and began typing on it. A few moments later, he handed me his phone, and I watched the video his brother had sent.

“Crazy psycho chick?” I glared at him. “I highly doubt I was holding your phone hostage.”

“You were. I tried to get it from you several times, but you held it up over your head and refused to give it to me until after you psycho-analyzed me. If it makes you feel better, I thought you were the most beautiful crazy psycho chick I’d ever seen.”

“So, you didn’t want me working at the medical center?” I narrowed my eye.

“Nope, not at first. But I’m happy I never stopped harassing you.” He smiled. “You eventually came to your senses and realized I didn’t have a narcissistic personality, and you fell in love with me.” He cautiously reached for my hand, and I pulled it away. “Okay.” He nodded. “I won’t try to do that again. I promise.”

“Hello.” An older woman walked into the room. “Dr. Charlotte Roman?”

“Yes.”

“I’m Dr. Lydia Bancroft. Dr. Finn told you I was stopping by, yeah?”

“Yes, Dr. Bancroft. It’s nice to meet you.”

“Nice to meet you too. And you are?” She glanced at Conner.

“Dr. Conner Kind. I’m Charlotte’s fiancé.”

“It’s nice to meet you, Dr. Kind. I want to take some time to get to know Charlotte and talk with her for a bit. Do you mind?”

“No. Not at all. I’ll go wait in the hallway.”

“Actually, you don’t have to stay. I’ll probably try to get some sleep after we’re finished. So, maybe you should just go home for the night.”

“Yeah, Charlotte. You’re right. I’ll see you in the morning.” He leaned over and pressed his lips against my forehead, and I flinched.

He had never done that before, and my heart started racing. He probably thought he was safe because Dr. Bancroft was here.

“I saw you flinch when he kissed your forehead,” Dr. Bancroft said.

“I don’t want him touching me, and he knows it.”

“I get that.” Her lips formed a sympathetic smile.

“Dr. Bancroft, I don’t mean to be rude, but I don’t need to see you.”

“Well, you do need to hear me out. I’m a board-certified psychologist specializing in amnesia caused by trauma. I’ve been where you are, Charlotte.”

“What do you mean?” My brows furrowed.

“I was in a very bad car accident when I was twenty-six years old. My husband and I were on our way home from a birthday party one night when a semi-truck ran through the red light as we were under it. The truck hit my side. My husband



suffered a broken arm, some internal bleeding, and a concussion. I suffered severe abdominal trauma, head trauma, a broken arm, a broken leg, and a few broken ribs. It was a miracle that I even survived. I was in a coma for five months, and when I woke up, I knew who I was and who my mom and dad were, but I had no idea who my husband was. So, I know every emotion you're feeling right now. I had only lost five years of my life. I spoke with your neurosurgeon, Dr. Kind, who told me you're being sent home tomorrow. How does that make you feel?"

"Scared. I guess Conner and I live together, so I'm going to his house."

"It's your home too."

"No, Dr. Bancroft, it isn't. I live in a small apartment in L.A."

"You used to live in that apartment in L.A. ten years ago. Today, ten years later, you live in a home with your fiancé. That's your reality, Charlotte. You can try to fight it all you want, but it won't change anything. I remember when my husband told me he couldn't wait to take me home. I was terrified. I didn't know that man from Adam, and I just wanted to go home to my parent's house because that's the last place I remembered living. What I didn't know was that my parents had moved to Arizona a year before I got married. So, trust me when I tell you that I know exactly how you're feeling."

"Did you ever get your memories back?" I asked her.

"No. I didn't. But you know what the best thing I ever did was?"

"What?" I asked.

"Trusting myself enough to trust the people who knew me. That's enough for today." She reached into her purse and handed me her business card. Turning it over, I took note of the dates that were written down.

"Those are your scheduled therapy dates at my office. Call me if you feel like something is wrong or can't handle something when you leave here. But remember, Charlotte,

you're a very intelligent woman and a clinical psychologist. I know you haven't forgotten what you've learned, even though you don't remember learning it. Use the information you would give your patients for yourself."

After Dr. Bancroft left, Conner walked in.

"Sorry, I left my phone in here. I didn't want to interrupt you and Dr. Bancroft." He grabbed it from the small counter by the sink. "I love you, Charlotte."

"Don't, Conner." I looked away from him.

"No. You can't tell me that I can't say that. When I first told you that I loved you, there hasn't been a single day that has gone by that I haven't told you—not one day. And I will keep telling you every day whether you want to hear it or not. I won't kiss, hug, or reach for your hand if you don't want me to, but you will not take those words away from me. I'll see you in the morning." He walked out of the room.

"Conner, wait!" I shouted.

He walked back into the room and stared at me from a distance.

"You say you love me, right?"

"Yes. Of course, I do." He walked over to my bed.

"Then you have to try and understand what I'm going through. I'm me, ten years ago. You're saying I've changed, and maybe I have. But I don't know that right now, and I need you to understand that. The twenty-four-year-old me doesn't trust. She keeps herself locked up because she's too afraid to let anyone in because of what happened to her."

"Charlotte." His eyes filled with sadness as he held out his hand. "Please. Trust me."

I stared at his hand for a moment as a tear fell from my eye. Reaching over, I placed my hand in his as he gently squeezed it.

"I will help you try to piece the last ten years together. There's nothing I won't do to make you feel safe again."

“I just need time,” I softly spoke.

“I know you do, and I understand. I’ll see you in the morning.”

After he left, I picked up my phone, tapped the photos app, and quickly shut it. I wasn’t ready to see the life I’d left behind.

## CHAPTER 17



Charlotte

The following morning, my nurse came in and told me that they were processing my discharge. Around eight a.m., Conner walked into the room with a smile on his face.

“Good morning,” he said. “I brought your favorite maxi dress to go home in.” He pulled it from the bag and held it up.

My brow arched as I stared at it. “That’s my favorite?”

“Yeah. It is.” The corners of his mouth curved upward. “They’re processing your discharge right now. I’ll step out of the room and let you get changed.”

“Thanks.”

I sat on the edge of the bed, took off my gown, and slipped on the maxi dress Conner brought for me.

“Are you decent?” I heard from the doorway.

“Yeah. You can come in. Did you bring shoes?”

“Of course.” He smiled as he reached into the bag and pulled them out.

“Let me guess. My favorite sandals?”

“I don’t know if they’re your favorite, but they’re the only ones you’ll wear with that dress.”

“Can you put them on for me? It’s kind of hard to bend still.”

“You bet.” The corners of his mouth curved upward.

“I heard someone is leaving us today.” Charleigh smiled as she pushed a wheelchair into the room. “I will be your personal chauffeur to the car.”

“I’ll go pull the car around to the front,” Conner said as he grabbed my bag.

Charleigh took hold of my arm and helped me into the wheelchair.

“Listen, Charlotte,” she said as she knelt in front of me. “I know you’re nervous about going home, but don’t be. It’s a magical place.” She grinned. “Georgia is on one side of you, Sofia is on the other, and I’m two doors down.”

“Thanks, Charleigh.”

“Come on. Let’s get you out of here.”

Conner pulled up to the curb of the entrance, climbed out of the car, and helped me into it. I inhaled a deep breath as I could feel my heart racing. Pulling my seatbelt across me, I buckled it as Conner climbed in.

“Are you okay, ba—Charlotte?”

“I’m fine,” I spoke deadpan as I stared straight ahead.

He pulled into the driveway, and I stared at the house that was supposedly my home.

“Charlotte!” Ella ran over as Conner helped me from the car. “I’m so happy you’re home.” She threw her arms around my legs.

“Thanks, Ella.” I placed my hand on her head.

“Hey, Ella. How about if you come over later?” Conner said.

“Okay, Uncle Conner. Bye, Charlotte.” Ella smiled as she ran back to her house.

Conner opened the front door, and I looked around the beautifully decorated home when I stepped inside.

“Did you decorate this?”

“I did.” He smiled. “Then, when you moved in, you changed a few things.”

“Tell me I didn’t buy those couch pillows,” I said.

“You did. In fact, you bought them the day I met you. I told you they were ugly when I saw them in your cart, and you told me that I clearly had no taste.” A smirk crossed his lips.

“Then they stay.” A small smile crossed my lips. “Do you play the piano, or did I learn?” I asked as I walked over to it.

“I play. I’ve been playing since I was a kid.”

I walked over to the sliding door, opened it, and stepped onto the patio, taking in the gorgeous view of the beach and the ocean. A peaceful feeling swept over me—something I hadn’t felt since I woke up.

“It’s beautiful out here,” I softly spoke.

“Yeah. It is,” Conner said. “And it’s all yours to enjoy whenever you want.”

I gave him a small smile, stepped back inside the house, and stared up the stairs.

“I can help you up,” Conner spoke.

“No. It’s fine. I can get up myself,” I said as I slowly walked up each step.

“Our bedroom is on the left,” Conner said.

I stepped into the room and looked around. I first noticed the Tree of Life essential oil holder on the wall. Walking over to it, I picked up a bottle of oil.

“I’m still using these?” I glanced at Conner.

“Every day and night.”

“I take it this is my side of the bed since the oil diffuser is on this nightstand?”

“Yes. That’s your side of the bed.”

I walked over to the closet and opened it, staring at the rows of clothes that hung on the racks. Closing the doors, I stepped into the bathroom and looked around.

“I’m really tired. I think I need to take a nap.” I sat down on the edge of the bed. “Something is bothering me.” I looked up at Conner.

“What’s wrong?” He knelt before me.

“You’re not sleeping in this bed tonight, right?”

“No. I’ll sleep in the guest room. I don’t want to make you feel any more uncomfortable than you already are. Get some rest,” he said as he stood up.

Before he could walk away, I grabbed hold of his wrist. With a slight turn of his head, his eyes met mine.

“I can’t explain it. A part of me knows I can trust you, but the other part doesn’t know why.”

He sat beside me and pointed to my hand. “Can I?”

“Sure.” I turned my hand over, and he placed his hand in mine.

“I’m a very trustworthy guy. I mean, look at this face.” The corners of his mouth curved upward, and I laughed. “Who wouldn’t trust me? Seriously, Charlotte. Our love for each other is immeasurable, and I think deep down in your soul, you feel it, but your brain won’t register it.”

“That must make you feel like shit,” I said.

“It does. I won’t lie.”

“I’m sorry.” I lowered my head.

“You have nothing to be sorry for. None of this was your fault. Get some rest. I’ll bring your phone up and set it on your nightstand. The family is getting together later down at the beach for a bonfire in your honor. I know they’re all dying to see you. If you don’t feel up to it or think it’s too much too soon, you can see them another time.”

“We’ll see how I feel after my nap.”

“Okay.” He leaned over and pressed his lips against the side of my head. “I’m not going to apologize for doing that,” he said as he got up and left the room.

I pulled the covers back and climbed into the bed that was unfamiliar to me. Pulling the sheet over me, I gripped the edge as I lay there, closed my eyes, and begged for any memory to return—just one memory.



## CHAPTER 18



Conner

I was in the kitchen when the sliding door opened, and Christian walked in.

“Hey.” He walked over and hugged me. “How’s Charlotte?”

“She’s sleeping right now.”

“Did anything trigger a memory when you brought her home?”

“No.” I sighed.

“Is she coming down to the beach?” he asked.

“I don’t know. I mentioned it to her, and she said she’ll see how she feels when she wakes up.”

“It’s going to take time, bro.” He placed his hand on my shoulder.

“I know. If ever my patience were tested, it’s now.”

“I’ll see you down at the beach.” He squeezed my shoulder.

“I’m going to check on her before I head down there.”

I went upstairs and quietly entered our bedroom. I walked over and stared down at her as she peacefully slept. It was good to have her home and back in our bed again. Walking down to the kitchen, I grabbed a couple of beers and headed down to the beach.

“Hey, Conner.” Jenni hugged me. “Christian told us Charlotte is sleeping.”

“Yeah. I just checked on her.”

“Are you okay, cousin?” Simon asked.

“I honestly don’t know.” I sat down in the chair and brought the bottle to my lips.

Jackson reached over and hooked his arm around me. “You’ll be okay, bro. You just need to take things one day at a time.”

“What about the wedding?” Sam asked.

“What about it?” I looked at him. “She’s walking down that aisle on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. End of discussion.”

“And how are you going to get her to do that?” Shaun asked.

“She fell in love with me once before, and she’ll do it again. I’m going to make damn sure of that. I’ll take care of everything else that needs to be done for the wedding.”

“Bro—” Jackson spoke.

“I said end of discussion.” I finished off my first beer.



Charlotte

I opened my eyes and looked around the room. It took my brain a minute to register where I was. Sitting up, I grabbed my phone from the nightstand and stared at it, noticing I had a voicemail, so I listened to it. It was someone trying to sell me something, so I deleted it. Then I saw Conner’s name and a voice message from three weeks ago. Pressing the button, I listened to it.

*“Hey, babe. My last surgery was canceled, so I’m heading home. I’ll pick up some dinner from Four Kinds, so you don’t have to cook tonight. I love you, and I miss you. See you soon. By the way, I promise to unpack my bag tonight. I take your*

*threats very seriously. Love you, miss you, can't wait to kiss you."*

I breathed out a light laugh. Climbing out of bed, I walked over to the window and stared at everyone sitting around the bonfire. I wasn't sure if meeting the rest of the family tonight was a good idea because I was already feeling overwhelmed.

"You're up," I heard Conner's voice from behind.

"Yeah. I just woke up."

"How are you feeling?" he asked as he approached me.

"I don't know. I honestly want to crawl back into that bed and not get out of it. It looks like you're all having a good time down there."

"We always do, and you did too."

"I wish I could remember." I walked away.

"Listen, Charlotte. You had the best time when you first came here. Everyone down there loves you. You don't have to stay long. You can say hi, chat with the girls for a while, and come back to the house."

"Okay. Maybe for a little bit. Let me freshen up first."

"Really? Because I think you look beautiful. Besides, they all saw you at your worst—lying in a hospital bed, head wrapped in a bandage, tube down your throat, wires sticking out of you." A grin crossed his lips. "I have pictures if you want to see them."

I cocked my head, stared at him for a moment with a narrowed eye, and let out an involuntary laugh.

"You're a jerk."

"Yes! See." He pointed his finger at me. "You're remembering." He winked.

I shook my head as I went into the bathroom and dug through the drawers for a hairbrush.

When I reached the bonfire, a pregnant woman ran over, grabbed me, and hugged me tightly.

“We’ve all missed you so much.” She broke our embrace as her hands gripped my shoulders. “I know you don’t remember me, but I’m Jenni, and this is my husband, Shaun.”

“Hi, Charlotte.” Shaun hugged me. “It’s good to have you home.”

All the guys and girls took turns hugging me and welcoming me back. I was overwhelmed, to say the least.

“Hi, Charlotte,” A young girl walked over and took hold of my hand. “I’m Lily, Stefan and Alex’s daughter.”

“Hello, Lily.” I smiled.

“Ella and I help you bake Conner’s favorite cookies,” she said. “We always have fun. I hope we can do it again one day.”

“Yeah. Maybe we can.” I smiled. “But you’re going to have to remind me what his favorite cookies are,” I whispered.

“Okay.” A grin crossed her lips.

Suddenly, something happened as I looked at the bonfire. I could only describe it as a flashbulb going off in my mind. I grabbed the sides of my head, and Conner grabbed onto me.

“Jackson!” he shouted.

Jackson jumped up from his chair and ran over to me.

“Charlotte, what’s wrong?” he asked.

It stopped, and I removed my hands from my head.

“Nothing. I just have a little bit of a headache. I’m going to go back to the house.”

“I’ll go with you,” Conner said.

“No. You stay here with your family. I’m fine.”

“Charlotte—”

“I said stay, Conner,” I spoke with irritation.

When I reached the house, I went upstairs and opened all the dresser drawers, trying to find my pajamas. Once I found which drawer they were in, I changed, poured some oil into

my diffuser, and turned it on. Climbing into bed, I gripped the sheet and lay there, staring up at the ceiling.

“Charlotte?” Conner cautiously stepped into the bedroom.

“Is this a habit of yours?” I asked as I stared at him.

“Is what a habit?”

“You not listening to a word I say? Is that how our relationship was?”

He stood there with his hands tucked into his pants pockets and slowly nodded his head.

“Okay. You’re pissed at the world. I get that. But let me tell you something, Dr. Charlotte Roman. I listen to every word you speak. Even when I don’t want to hear what you have to say sometimes, I listen anyway. I know you can’t remember, but you healed me in ways I never thought were possible.” He pointed at me.

“Yeah, well, that woman is gone!” I shouted. “And another thing. I don’t like you!”

“Good, because I don’t like you either!” he shouted back. “And you know why? Because you’re giving up, and that isn’t the Charlotte I know. The Charlotte I know fights. I know right now you’re stuck in the past, and ten years ago, you were in the middle of healing yourself from your childhood trauma. And you did it. You fought to escape the pain and agony of what happened to you. You didn’t give up and healed yourself just like you put so much effort into healing others.”

“I don’t remember any of that! What don’t you understand?”

“I do understand, and I want one thing from you. Only one thing, Charlotte. Don’t give up. Fight to get your life back. That’s all I’m asking of you.” He shook his head, walked out of the room, and shut the door.

## CHAPTER 19



Conner

I grabbed the bottle of scotch and took it over to the couch. Bringing the bottle to my lips, the amber liquid smoothly went down my throat.

“I’m sorry.” I heard a soft voice from behind.

Turning my head, I stared at the beautiful woman I loved so much staring back at me.

“You don’t need to apologize. I’m the one who’s being a complete dick.”

“Yeah. You are.” A small smile crossed her lips as she sat down beside me. “But you’re not completely at fault. I didn’t mean it when I told you I didn’t like you. I don’t know you well enough yet to make that judgment.”

I breathed out a laugh. “I kind of missed these days.”

“What days?” she asked.

“When we first met and spewed so much shit to each other. All I can say is that you’re lucky you’re so damn sexy.” The corners of my mouth curved upward.

“How did you get me to open up to you about my past?”

“I relentlessly pursued you until you finally gave in.” A smirk crossed my lips. “But seriously. You told me the morning after you finally showed me your scars. We were sitting down by the shoreline, and you told me everything about your past.”

“I must have felt really comfortable with you.”

“You did.”

“Can you take me to my office tomorrow? I want to see where I work.”

“Of course, I’ll take you. Just let me know when you want to go.”

“Thank you.”

I caught her staring at the picture of us on the console table.

“Was this taken at Disneyland?” she asked as she reached over and picked it up.

“Yeah. We all went there for Ella’s birthday.”

“Can I tell you something?” she asked.

“Anything.”

“I haven’t been able to look at any of the pictures or videos on my phone.”

“Why?” My brows furrowed.

“At first, I didn’t know why. But after really thinking about it and when a part of my psychologist’s brain kicked in, I determined it was because I’m afraid to see what I can’t remember because I won’t know who that person who looks like me is. I’m used to being alone, Conner. In my head right now, it’s all I know. I perfected pushing people away and not letting them into my life. Something happened earlier. When we were down at the bonfire, flashes were going off in my mind as I stared at the fire.”

“What do you mean?” I asked.

“It was like someone was in my head snapping pictures with the flash on.”

“And the bonfire triggered that?”

“Yeah. I think so.”

“Some of our best times were around the bonfire.” I smiled. “Maybe you were trying to trigger a memory.”

“Maybe. I’m really tired, so I’m going up to bed.”

“Okay.” I placed my finger under her chin.

“Don’t even think about it,” she spoke.

“What? I wasn’t going to do anything.” The corners of my mouth curved upward. “I’m insulted that you think I would.”

Her eye narrowed at me as a small smirk crossed her lips, and she went upstairs. I got up from the couch and set the bottle of scotch on the bar. The sliding door opened, and my brothers stepped inside.

“Hey, bro,” Nathan said.

“How’s Charlotte?” Jackson asked.

“We got a little worried when you didn’t return to the beach,” Christian said.

“We talked for a while. She just went upstairs to bed. Jackson, she said when she was down by the bonfire, flashes were going off in her head. She told me it happened when she stared at the fire.”

“Usually, that’s a sign that the brain is trying to retrieve a memory. Nothing came through?” he asked.

“No. She said it was like someone was taking pictures with the flash on in her head.”

“I wish I could give you more answers, bro. I’m sorry. Right now, I think the best thing for her is complete rest and non-stimulation. Her brain is still healing, and it will take time for neuroplasticity to kick in.”

“She asked me to take her to the medical center tomorrow. She wants to see her office.”

“Okay. Maybe something there will trigger a memory. Just don’t keep her out all day. We’ll see you on the water in the morning. You better be there.”

“I will. Love you, douchebags.” I smiled.

“Love you too, bro,” All three spoke as they stepped out the sliding door.



I locked up the house and went upstairs. Walking into the bedroom, I saw Charlotte was still awake.

“Hey. I’m just grabbing a few things for tomorrow morning, so I don’t wake you,” I spoke as I walked over to the dresser, opened the drawer, and pulled out a pair of board shorts.

“What are those for?” she asked.

“For surfing in the morning.” I walked into the bathroom to brush my teeth.

Charlotte walked in and leaned up against the sink.

“You surf?” she asked.

“Yep. I’ve been surfing since I was a kid. My brothers and cousins meet down by the water every weekend, and we surf for a while. It’s therapeutic for the soul. My dad used to tell us that if we ever felt lost, grab our board, get in the water, and we’ll find our way back.”

“Did you teach me?”

“No.” I smiled. “You were never interested in learning. I know you don’t remember, but you knew my father way before we met.”

“I did?” Her brows furrowed.

“Yeah.” I wiped my mouth on the towel. “One of your patients was his patient. Anyway, you really liked him, which explains why you fell in love with me.” I grinned. “I’m heading to bed.” I quickly kissed her forehead before she could say anything. “Good night, Charlotte.”

“I told you not to do that, Conner.” She followed me out of the bathroom.

“I’m not apologizing, Charlotte. Good night.” I walked out of the bedroom, went into the guest room, and shut the door.

The door flew open as I pulled off my shirt, and Charlotte stood there staring at me.

“Did you need something?” I asked.

“No.” She bit her bottom lip and shut the door.

A smile crossed my lips as I pulled back the covers and climbed into bed.

## CHAPTER 20



Charlotte

I awoke the next morning, climbed out of bed, walked over to the window, and stared at all the guys surfing. Walking over to the dresser, I picked up a bottle of men's cologne, removed the cap, and brought the bottle up to my nose, taking in the scent I'd smelled since the day I woke up in the hospital. A scent that was earthy, woody, and comfort on a crisp fall day—his scent.

Setting the bottle down, I went down to the kitchen for some coffee. After opening multiple cabinets, I'd finally found the mugs and took one over to the built-in coffee machine. What the hell was this, and how did it work? The sliding door opened as I stared at it, and Conner stepped inside.

"Good morning. I didn't expect you to be up so early," he said.

"I couldn't sleep. Um, how does this thing work?"

He breathed out a laugh as he walked over and showed me. The water line is connected to it, so you don't have to worry about it running out of water. We usually keep it filled with beans, but if it runs out, they go in here." He pointed. "Just put your cup under and push this button right here."

"Thanks. How was surfing?" I asked as I waited for the coffee to brew.

"It was good. It's a beautiful day out already. I'm going to take a shower. Let me know what time you want to leave."

“Leave? Where are we going?”

His brows furrowed as he stared at me. “You wanted me to take you to your office today.”

“Oh yeah. That’s right. I guess I forgot about that. Sorry.”

“There’s nothing to be sorry for. You used to forget things all the time before the accident.” He winked and went upstairs.

I couldn’t get a certain song out of my head, which drove me nuts. It started last night when I woke up to use the bathroom, and it was still in my head this morning. Taking my coffee, I went upstairs to the bedroom to get dressed. Conner walked out of the bathroom with a towel wrapped around his waist when I walked in. I gulped as I stopped dead in my tracks.

“Oh, hey.” He walked over to the closet.

“I’m sorry. I—”

“What?” He stared at me. “Ah, that’s right. In your mind, it’s your first time seeing me like this. What do you think?” He held out his arms as a wide grin crossed his lips.

“What the hell is wrong with you?” I cocked my head as my eyes involuntarily raked over his muscular body.

“If you’re curious, I can drop the towel.”

“Don’t you dare!” I pointed at him, turned around, and went into the bathroom.



Conner pulled into a parking spot, and we went inside the medical center.

“Wow. This is really nice,” I spoke.

“Your office is on the second floor.”

I walked over to the staircase, and as I placed my foot on the first step, I turned and looked at Conner, who stood a few feet away, staring at me.

“Are you coming?” I asked.

“Yeah. Why are you using the stairs instead of the elevator?”

“I don’t know. Why?”

“Because you only ever take the stairs. Did you remember that?”

“I don’t know, Conner. I just felt like I needed to take the stairs.”

When we reached my practice, I stopped and stared at my name on the glass. Conner pulled out his keys and unlocked the door. As I stepped inside, I turned and looked at him.

“I need to do this alone.”

“Okay. Here’s the key to your office, which is right around the corner and on the left. My practice is right over there. I’ll see if I can catch up on anything. Let me know if you need me.”

“I will.” My lips formed a small smile.

I first looked around the reception area and then stuck the key into my office’s lock. Slowly opening the door, I flipped the light switch and looked around. Nothing. None of it was familiar to me at all. Walking over, I stared at my Ph.D. that hung on the wall in a large walnut-stained frame. I went over to my desk and sat down, picking up the picture of Conner and me that sat on it. Setting it down, I turned on my computer, and it instantly asked for my password. Shit. I rummaged through the top drawer of my desk to see if I’d written it down anywhere. No luck. Standing up from my seat, I walked over to the brown leather chair that sat in front of the leather couch. Taking a seat, I stared across at the couch as flashes flashed in my head of blurred visions.

“Charlotte?” I heard Conner’s voice.

I snapped back into reality as I stared at him.

“Are you okay?” He handed me a bottle of water.

“Yeah. I just had a flash. I don’t know. Something about that couch triggered it.”

“Really?” A smirk crossed his lips as he sat on the couch. “Did you see anything?”

“No. It was blurry and out of focus. Why do you have that look on your face?”

“This couch has seen a lot of action.” He grinned.

“What do you mean?” I furrowed my brows.

“Us. We have sex on it.”

“Stop it! I would never do that in my office.”

He chuckled. “Sorry to break it to you, but you do. We do. In fact, my douchebag brothers and cousins won’t sit on it. I also take naps in here.” He leaned back and placed his hands behind his head.

“What the fuck, Conner?” I shook my head and stood up from my chair. “You tell them things like that?”

“I told you before that we tell each other everything. You and the girls tell each other everything too.”

“You don’t by chance know the password to my computer, do you?” I asked.

“No, but Olivia does.”

“Who’s Olivia?”

“Your friend and receptionist. Do you want me to call and ask her?”

“No. That’s okay. I’m coming in Monday after my appointment with Dr. Bancroft. I want you to return to work also on Monday.”

“Charlotte—” He stood from the couch.

“Don’t, Conner.” I put my hand up. “Life for you and everyone else is going back to normal. Just let me do what I need to.”

“My normal is with you.”

“I’m sorry, but I’m not the Charlotte you knew—the Charlotte who fell in love with you. So, I need you to back the fuck off and let me do what I have to.”

“Got it.” He saluted me and stormed out of my office.

I sighed as I placed my hand on my forehead. Grabbing my purse and the keys to my office, I locked the doors and went down the stairs, looking for Conner.

“Have you seen Conner?” I asked the security guard.

“He left. I think he went to his car, Dr. Roman.”

“Thank you.” I stepped out the door and walked across the lot to his car. “I didn’t mean to yell at you,” I said as I climbed in and fastened my seatbelt.

“Don’t worry about it. Is there anywhere else you want to go before heading home?”

“No.”

“Fine. Home it is,” he spoke with an attitude.

Right before we were to get on the expressway, Conner noticed it was all backed up.

“Shit. There must be an accident. We’ll go a different way,” he said.

Silence filled the air as I stared out the window. “Stop!”

## CHAPTER 21



Conner

“What?” I glanced at her.

“That building back there. I feel like I know it, but I don’t know how.”

“Charlotte, that’s the apartment building you lived in when I met you.” I turned the car around.

“If I lived there, I need to see the apartment.”

“You just can’t go to someone else’s apartment,” I said.

“I don’t care.” She climbed out of the car when I pulled into a parking space.

She followed the sign to the leasing office and opened the door.

“Charlotte?” An older man stood from behind his desk.

“Do you remember me?” she asked.

“Yes. Of course, I remember you.”

“Hi, I’m Dr. Conner Kind.” I extended my hand.

“I need to see the apartment I used to live in,” she said.  
“Please.”

“Excuse me?” he said.

“Let me explain. Charlotte was in a terrible car accident and suffered a traumatic brain injury.”

“Oh, my God. I’m so sorry, Charlotte.”



“Thank you. I can’t remember the last ten years of my life. We were driving by, and when I saw the building, I felt like I knew it. Is there any way I can see the apartment I lived in?”

“You happen to be in luck. The apartment was recently painted because new tenants are moving in next week. I’ll let you in so you can see it.”

“Thank you so much.” Charlotte placed her hand on his arm. “I appreciate it.”

He led us up to her old apartment and unlocked the door.

“Take as much time as you need,” the landlord spoke.

Charlotte looked around the empty space.

“Anything?” I asked.

“No.” She shook her head.

“Your TV was over here, and your couch was right here. You had two end tables and a coffee table.”

We walked into the bedroom, and I showed her which wall her bed sat on and her dresser. We went back to the living area.

“Let’s see if this will trigger something.” I pulled out my phone, brought up Dream a Little Dream of Me by Michael Bublé, and pressed play.

Grabbing hold of Charlotte’s hand, I wrapped one arm around her waist.

“What are you doing?” Her eyes widened.

“You asked the same thing that night right here in this spot.” I smiled.

“No, Conner. This song has been in my head since the middle of last night. I didn’t even know how I knew it.”

“Are you serious, Charlotte?”

“I’m very serious. Tell me about that night.”

“Well, I’d finally convinced you to have dinner with me. When I brought you home that evening, you invited me up for a drink. I turned on this song and made you dance with me. That was the first time we danced. I also had the DJ play this

song for us at Jackson's wedding. Once the song ended, I proposed to you."

She lay her head on my shoulder, and I slowly closed my eyes as my heart beat rapidly. The song ended. She lifted her head, and her beautiful eyes stared into mine.

"You know what I think?" she asked.

"What do you think?" The corners of my mouth curved upward.

"I think that song was a little forward after our first dinner together."

I let out a chuckle. "That's the same exact thing you said that night. Did you remember that?"

"No. But any woman with common sense knows when a man is trying to get her into bed."

"I won't lie. It worked." I grinned.

"Nice try." She patted my chest and walked to the door.

"I'm not lying. We had sex right after." I followed her out of her apartment. "And by the way. That same night you lied to me."

"About what?"

"You told me your parents were killed in a car accident."

"Oh." She laughed as I opened the car door for her. "I'm sure you lied to me as well."

"Me? I would never."

Shit. As much as I wanted her to remember everything, there were a few things I hoped she didn't.

"And you're lying right now."

"The one perk of you having amnesia is you'll never know." I grinned as I buckled my seatbelt.

"You're cute." She shot me a look.

"I know. You used to tell me all the time."

“And I’m pretty positive that I didn’t mean it in a loving way.”

“Oh, you did,” I said.

“Highly doubt it.” A smirk crossed her beautiful lips.

I laughed as I drove us home.

After we got home, Charlotte went upstairs to lie down, and I grabbed a beer from the refrigerator. Stepping out onto the patio, I saw my brothers over at Christian’s.

“How did it go at the office?” Jackson asked as I sat down.

“Bro, I think some things are starting to come back.”

“What do you mean?” Christian asked.

“First, the couch in her office triggered flashes.”

“Shit.” Nathan shook his head. “Of everything in her office, the couch triggers something?”

“What did she remember?” Jackson asked.

“She couldn’t make it out. But I couldn’t take the expressway back because there was an accident and cars were backed up for miles. She told me to stop and turn around when we passed her old apartment building. She said she knew that place but didn’t know how or why. So, the landlord was there and let her see her old apartment.”

“That’s awkward,” Christian spoke.

“It was vacant. New tenants are moving in next week. Anyway, I played a song for her while we were there to see if it would trigger anything. She told me the same song had been in her head since last night, and she never remembered hearing it.”

“Interesting,” Jackson said. “Let’s hope it continues.”

“Bro, I got to thinking about something,” Nathan said. “Have you told her about her brother yet?”

“No. Not yet.”

“Don’t you think you should?” Jackson asked.

“I will. She’s been through so much. I don’t want to dump that on her right now. By the way, I’m coming back to work on Monday.”

“You are?” Nathan’s brows furrowed.

“Charlotte insisted. She said she’s coming to the office right after her appointment with Dr. Bancroft.”

“If she’s up to it, I don’t see any reason why she shouldn’t,” Jackson spoke. “The sooner she can return to her life, the better.”

“Bro, she’s been having outbursts,” I said.

“That’s fairly common, Conner. Don’t take anything she says personally.”

“I’m trying not to, but it’s hard sometimes.”

Christian reached over and hooked his arm around me.

“Patience is key, brother.”

## CHAPTER 22



Charlotte

When I reached the top step, I stared at the closed door to my home office. Opening it, I stepped inside and looked around. I'd already been in here yesterday, but only for a brief moment. I sat behind my desk and picked up the picture of Conner and me that sat in a frame. I felt something when we danced. Something I hadn't felt in years: safe. I supposed that wasn't entirely true because if he made me feel that way now, he also did before the accident. I told him everything about me, moved in, and created a life with him. I accepted his marriage proposal and wouldn't have done that if I didn't wholeheartedly love him. I just wished I could remember everything that led me to fall in love with him. What would the psychologist in me say to one of my patients if they were going through this? I placed my elbows on my desk and buried my face in my hands.

"Charlotte? Are you okay?" Conner stood in the doorway.

"Yeah. I'm fine." I stared at him.

"I thought you were going to lie down."

"I was, but I wanted to come in here and see if anything jogged a memory."

"And?" He stepped inside.

"Nope." I sighed. "Can you play me something on the piano?"

“Yeah, of course. Come on.” The corners of his mouth curved upward.

We went downstairs and took a seat on the piano bench.

“I played this song for you the very first time you came to the house. We both sang it together, so I expect you to join in.”

“If I know it, I will.”

“You know it.” He grinned as he placed his fingers on the keys and began playing and singing Tiny Dancer.

I smiled as I listened to him and joined in the chorus.

“Oh, my God. You’re so good.” I grinned as I clapped my hands. “I had no idea. Well, I’m sure I did.”

“Thank you. I’m happy you liked it.”

“Can I ask you something?” I asked.

“You know you can ask me anything.”

“Did I ever mention to you if I went and saw my brother? Right now, I never want to see him again, but I don’t know if that changed over the past ten years.”

He looked down for a moment, and when he brought his eyes back to mine, I knew something was wrong.

“Charlotte,” he took hold of my hand, “over a year ago, Aiden was in a fight with another inmate and passed away.”

“What?” I placed my hand over my mouth.

“I’m sorry. You had him cremated, and we took his ashes on the boat, and you scattered them over the water. You said that he was free of his torment and pain, and so were you.”

“And you couldn’t have told me that?” I spoke with irritation.

“You’re already going through so much, and you didn’t need that news on top of it. I was going to tell you.”

“Really, Conner? When? When the fuck were you going to tell me?” I shouted as I stood up and ran up the stairs, slamming the bedroom door behind me.

The door opened as I paced around the room, trying to calm down.

“What else aren’t you telling me?” I shouted at Conner, who stood there.

“Charlotte, calm down.”

“Don’t,” I spoke through gritted teeth, pointing my finger at him. “You have no right to tell me to calm down. You have your memories! I don’t! My God, I can’t even remember my own brother dying. And you know what really fucking sucks?”

“What? Being stuck here with me?” he asked.

“Do you always make everything about you?” I shouted.

“Yeah. I do.” The corners of his mouth curved upward, and instantly I felt calm inside.

I shook my head as a laugh escaped my lips. He put his hands up as he took a few steps closer.

“Why are you doing that?” I sighed.

“For protection in case you decide to punch me.”

“I’m not going to punch you. Have I ever done that?” I asked.

“No, but you’re a little wackadoodle right now.”

I laughed. “I am, aren’t I?”

“Come here.” He took hold of my hand and led me over to the bed. “Go on. Climb on and sit up against the headboard.”

He walked over to the other side of the bed and sat beside me, taking hold of my hand, and interlacing our fingers.

“I’m not apologizing for doing this.” He held up our hands as a smirk crossed his lips. “Tell me what really sucks, and then I’ll tell you what I think really sucks.”

“What really sucks is that of all the memories I had to lose, the one I didn’t was the one I would have been the happiest not remembering. I want to remember you and all of this. But instead, I’m left with the memories of that horrific night and

all the memories after up until ten years ago. That's what really sucks."

"I'm sorry, babe." He softly stroked my hand with his thumb. "I'm not apologizing for calling you that either."

I breathed out a laugh.

"Do you ever apologize for anything?" I asked.

"Only if I screw up." He winked. "Which isn't very often."

"I don't believe you. I listened to a voicemail from you on my phone. You said you promised to unpack your bag when you got home because you take my threats very seriously. What did I threaten you with?"

"Sex. You told me I was cut off until I unpacked the bag." The corners of his mouth curved upward. "That is one threat I don't mess around with."

I breathed out a laugh.

"Did you unpack it that night?"

"You bet I did. I ran up the stairs and put everything away the second I got home. I even did a load of laundry for extra points." He grinned.

"I'm sure you did." I laughed. "So, tell me what really sucks for you?"

"That this happened to you, and the fact that I feel totally helpless. I made a promise to you, and I never break my promises."

"What was your promise?" I stared into his beautiful blue eyes.

"That I was always going to make you happy, no matter what it takes." He brought his other hand up to my cheek and softly stroked it. "I know you want to remember everything, and if I could snap my fingers and give you those memories back, I would in a heartbeat. Even though you always tell me I act like I am, I'm not God."

"I tell you that?" I laughed.



“All the damn time.” He smiled. “But I can give you something.”

“What?”

“I can give you new memories. I just need you to trust me with your whole heart.”

“Did I trust you before?”

“See.” He shook his finger. “This whole memory loss works to my advantage. I could totally lie to you, and you wouldn’t know any better.”

“You’re an asshole.” I reached over and slapped his chest.

“I know.” He laughed. “But to answer your question, yes. You did trust me. At least, I think you did. How about we take a trip.”

“A trip?” I furrowed my brows. “Where?”

“Down memory lane. There’s a box in the closet filled with your pictures and things from your past. And there’s also a lot of videos and pictures of us on your phone you refuse to look at.”

“I haven’t gotten around to it yet,” I said.

“What do you mean? You do nothing but lie in this bed day in and day out like a sloth.”

“Oh, my God! How did I ever fall in love with you?”

“I honestly don’t know.” He laughed.

He kissed my forehead before climbing off the bed and retrieving the box from the closet.

## CHAPTER 23



Conner

“Oh, look. Here’s when you graduated from medical school.” I smiled as I showed her the picture.

“Wow. I have good taste in dresses.”

“You have good taste in everything, including boyfriends.” I winked at her with a smile.

“Shut up.” She smacked my arm. “I had a cat?” Her brows furrowed.

“He wasn’t yours. He was your neighbor’s cat. You took a picture with him because some guy wouldn’t leave you alone and kept asking you out. When you found out he was highly allergic to cats, you agreed to go out with him, then showed him that picture and told him that Mr. Snuggles couldn’t wait to snuggle with him.” I laughed.

“Oh, my God. That totally sounds like something I would do.” She laughed.

Seeing her laugh again made my heart whole. I wanted nothing more than to feel her lips on mine once again. I heard a knock at the door as we looked through her box.

“I’ll go see who that is,” I said as I climbed off the bed.

Opening the front door, I saw a box sitting on the porch. When I picked it up, I saw it was addressed to Charlotte. Looking at the return address, my heart started to race. Shit. It was our wedding invitations.

“I’ll be right back. A box for Jackson got delivered to the wrong house,” I shouted up the stairs.

Taking the box, I ran over to Jackson’s house and stepped through the sliding door.

“Hey, you.” Georgia smiled.

“Hey, Georgia sunshine. I need you to do me a favor and hold this here for me.” I set the box down.

“Hey, bro.” Jackson stepped into the kitchen. “What’s that?” He pointed to the box.

“The wedding invitations. They just got delivered.”

“Why are you bringing them over here?” His brows furrowed.

“Well, I can’t very well keep them at the house with Charlotte there and the condition she’s in at the moment. She’ll flip out if she sees them. Georgia, my beautiful sunshine on a cloudy day.” I pouted.

“Yes, Conner. The girls and I will address them and send them out tomorrow.”

“I love you so much. You are the best sister-in-law in the entire world.” I hugged her. “Thank you.”

“Babe, I can’t believe you’re doing that behind Charlotte’s back,” Jackson said.

“Why? The invitations have to get sent out—like now,” she said.

“But you don’t even know if the wedding is still on.”

“Why would you say something like that?” My brows furrowed at him.

“Because your fiancée doesn’t even remember you, let alone want to get married in a couple of months.”

“Wow, bro. What a way to kick a guy when he’s down.” I shook my head.

“I’m sorry, Conner, but what you’re doing isn’t right. You can’t force her to walk down that aisle.”

“I won’t have to. She’ll want to.”

“Jesus Christ.” He shook his head as he placed his hands on his hips. “You need to wake the fuck up and accept the fact that the wedding isn’t happening on September 2<sup>nd</sup>.”

“Jackson!” Georgia spoke.

“Fuck you, bro!” I shouted, pointing my finger at him. “I am not giving up! I will never give up on her, ever!”

“You may not have a choice but to postpone the wedding.”

I stared at him and shook my head. I knew I’d say something I would regret if I didn’t leave.

“I appreciate your support, brother.” I stormed out and back to my house.

“Is everything okay?” Charlotte asked as I walked into the room. She must have noticed the expression on my face.

“Yeah. Everything’s fine.” I smiled. “The UPS guy is always dropping our packages off at each other’s houses. How’s your trip down memory lane so far?”

“Interesting.” She looked up at me.

“Do you want some wine or something?” I asked. “I’m going to pour myself a scotch.”

“Yeah. I would like a glass of wine.”

“Great. I’ll be right back.”

After I poured our drinks, I took them back upstairs.

“Here, you go.” I handed Charlotte her wine glass.

“Thank you. What’s this app?” She held her phone up as I sat beside her.

“That’s TikTok.”

“Is it a game I used to play?”

“No.” I smiled. “It’s videos.” The second I opened the app for her, one of my videos where I was dancing appeared.

“What the hell?” She laughed. “Seriously?”

“What? It’s all in fun.” I clicked my username. “You’re in some of these videos too.” I grinned.

“What are we doing in this one?” She laughed.

“We were having a dance-off.”

“Oh my gosh. Look at how cute Ella looks.” A bright smile crossed her lips.

“Yeah. She loves to do these videos with me. Nathan hates it, though. He’s a stick in the mud. Here’s one of Christian and me dancing.”

“What’s this one?”

“Wait—”

I tried to stop her from tapping on it, but she beat me to it. It was the video from when I proposed to her captioned: *When the girl of your dreams and the love of your life says yes.*

She stared at the video and didn’t say a word.

“I tried to stop you.”

“This was at Jackson and Georgia’s wedding?” she asked.

“Yes.” I took her phone from her and exited out of the app. Setting it down on the bed, I took hold of her hand.

“The accident may have caused you to lose your memories, but it didn’t touch your soul. You are still the same woman I fell madly in love with, and nothing will ever change that. I’m not giving up on you or us. I have a motto.”

“And what’s your motto?”

“It’s you and me against the world. Nothing can break us, not your memory loss, the accident, nothing. You fight for what you believe in. You always have. That’s one thing I know you can remember. You look tired. Maybe you should get some sleep. You’ve had a big day.” The corners of my mouth curved upward as I kissed her forehead.

I climbed off the bed and was heading out of the room when she called my name.

“Conner?”

“Yeah.” I stopped and looked at her.

“Thank you.”

“You’re welcome, babe.” I winked.

## CHAPTER 24



Charlotte

“It’s good to see you, Charlotte. How have things been since your release from the hospital?” Dr. Bancroft asked.

“A little difficult.”

“I would have been surprised if you had told me everything was great.” She smiled. “Things are difficult and will be for a while. How are things with Conner?”

“He’s trying to help me the best way he knows how. He’s very supportive. I’ve been having flashes in my head, but I can’t make out anything. It’s like there’s a black curtain draped across my mind, and every once in a while, I can see flashes behind it. Sometimes a blurred image will come through.”

“That’s good. I’ve treated patients with retrograde amnesia who ended up getting some of their memories back, so it’s possible some of your memories are trying to break through. When that happens again, I want you to relax and try to get into a meditative state. Don’t fight the flashes, and let your brain relax.”

“Okay. I’ll try that.”

“Are you doing normal things at home?” she asked.

“What do you mean?”

“Are you living life? Are you going to the store, cleaning, cooking, hanging out with your family?”

“No.”

“Okay.” She nodded her head. “What happened to you, happened, and there is nothing you can do to change that, Charlotte. You can either let the situation consume you or move on with your life. It’s very important that you get back to a daily routine and get back to your life. You can spend eternity searching for your lost memories, and they may never come back. I learned from my experience that life goes on, regardless of what happened.”

“I’m going to my office after I leave here,” I said.

“Good. That’s a start. Did you drive here?”

“No. I don’t have a car yet. Conner dropped me off, and I told him I’d take an Uber to the medical center after our appointment.”

“Did he fight you on that?”

“Yeah.” I smiled. “He said he’d wait, and I told him to go to work. His life needs to go back to normal.”

“Is that important to you? That his life goes back to normal?”

“Yeah, it is.”

“Tell me how you feel about him.”

“He seems like a great guy. He’s attentive, supportive, funny.” I smiled.

“That’s the second time you’ve smiled when you’ve talked about him.”

“It’s weird because even though I don’t remember him or our time together, I feel something in my heart for him.”

“That’s the love you have for him. Your heart wasn’t damaged in the accident, Charlotte. Only your brain was. That love you felt for him is still there inside you. I like to think of it as a soul mate situation. You can meet a total stranger and feel something deeply without even knowing why.” She glanced at her watch. “Our time is up for today. Your exercise for the week is to get back into a normal routine.”



“Okay. I will definitely try to do that.”

“I’ll see you at the end of the week.” She smiled as she walked me out of her office.

Sitting in the back of the car while heading to the medical center, I pulled up the photos on my phone and scrolled through them. There were countless photos of Conner and me, the girls and me, and of the family. Videos of our time on the beach, the bonfires, the music, and all the good times I apparently had. Dr. Bancroft was right. I needed to get back to my life, and I’d figure out everything else along the way.

The driver pulled up to the medical center, and I climbed out of the car. Walking up the stairs, I first stopped at Conner’s practice.

“Charlotte. Oh my god.” A woman from behind the desk got up, walked over to me, and hugged me tightly. “You look wonderful.” She smiled. “I’m June. I’m the boy’s receptionist, assistant, and sometimes their mother.”

I laughed. “It’s great to meet you once again, June. Is Conner in his office?”

“He is.”

“Thanks. Can you point me in which direction?”

“Down the hall and the second door on the right. It’s good to see you again, Charlotte.”

I walked down the hall and lightly knocked on his office door.

“Come in.”

Opening the door, I stepped inside.

“Charlotte.” He stood up, walked over, and kissed my forehead. “How was your appointment with Dr. Bancroft?”

“It was good. I need to get a new car.”

“I know. I already bought one. It’s being delivered to the house tonight.”

“You bought one without asking me first?” I narrowed my eye.

“You loved that car. Sometimes, I thought you loved it more than me.” A smirk crossed his lips. “Anyway, you only had the car six months before the accident, so don’t be mad. If anyone should be mad about it, it’s me.”

“Care to explain why?” I cocked my head.

“Because, as I said, you loved that car more than me. So, now I have to go through that torture again.”

A smile fell upon my lips as I laughed.

“Thank you. I don’t believe I loved a car more than you, and if I did, something was seriously wrong.”

“You’ll see later.” He winked.

“I need some coffee. Is there any around here?”

“Are you kidding? Not only do we have coffee, but we also have lattes, espresso, and cappuccino. I didn’t get a chance to show you the kitchen area before. Follow me.”

When we walked into the kitchen area, Jackson and Nathan were there.

“Hey, Charlotte.” Jackson smiled as he kissed my cheek.

“Hey, you.” Nathan kissed my cheek.

“Bro,” Jackson said to Conner, and Conner shot him a look.

“This is your favorite coffee mug.” Conner held it up.

“It’s pretty.” I smiled.

“My Aunt Barb bought it for you for your birthday last year. It’s the only one you use here.”

After Conner brewed me a cup of coffee, he walked me to my office.

“Charlotte! Oh, my God.” A woman jumped up from behind the reception desk.

“This is Olivia.” Conner introduced her to me.

“Hi, Olivia.” I smiled.

“I’m so happy you’re back.” She ran over and hugged me as tears fell down her cheeks. “I’ve missed you so much.”

“I’ll let you two get reacquainted. Whenever you’re ready to leave, let me know,” Conner said.

“I will. Thanks.”

## CHAPTER 25



Charlotte

Olivia followed me into my office. Setting my purse down, I took a seat behind my desk.

“I wrote down all of your passwords.” She handed me a piece of paper.

“Thank you. I appreciate it. Do you know where the key is to this bottom drawer?”

“It’s locked in my drawer out front. I’ll go grab it.”

I stood up, walked over to my diffuser, and poured some oils into it. Olivia walked in and handed me the key to my locked drawer.

“I want to start seeing patients again, but only two a day. Since I can’t remember any of my patients, I’ll need time to review their files and my notes.”

“Okay.” She smiled. “I’ll start making some calls. I don’t know if this could help you or not, but you’re in the middle of treating a patient with amnesia.”

“I am?” My brows furrowed.

“Yeah. Her name is Willow Young, and she’s seventeen years old. You were treating her before her accident. You might want to take a look at her file.”

“Thanks, Olivia.”

I glanced at the paper with my passwords on it and logged into my computer. The first thing I saw was the picture of

Conner and me that I had set as my wallpaper. I typed in Willow's name in the search bar, and her file popped up. Clicking on it, I reviewed my notes. Before her accident, she was being treated for bulimia and anorexia. She was a gymnast and hit her head on the balance beam while doing a flip, causing her amnesia and loss of identity.

“Shit. This poor girl.”

I leaned back in my chair and sighed. Flashes began going off in my head, so I did what Dr. Bancroft told me to. I closed my eyes and tried to relax, breathing through each flash. My eyes flew open as I stared down at the bottom drawer of my desk. I remembered something. I placed a brown leather journal in that drawer. Picking the key up from the desk, I unlocked the drawer and dug through it, finding the journal buried under several file folders. Taking it out, I opened to the first page.

*My life could change in a split second, and Willow Young's accident showed me that. She is the first patient I'm treating who is suffering at the hands of amnesia. She had no idea who she was when she woke up from her accident—seventeen years gone as if she didn't exist. I'm helping her cope with it, which made me realize that it could happen to anyone at any time. Life as we know it could disappear, leaving us with a hole in our souls. I'm writing down bits and pieces of my life in case something happens to me. It's highly unlikely, but one never knows what any day could bring.*

*Dear Dr. Charlotte Roman,*

*You are a clinical psychologist and a survivor of a traumatic event caused by your mentally ill brother, who is now deceased. You've healed yourself from your childhood trauma by dedicating your life to psychology. You're also involved with a man who loves you more than life itself. A man who accepts you for who you are and who has also helped you heal from your past—a man you love more than anything in the entire world. His name is Dr. Conner Kind, and his office is down the hall. The two of you live together in a beautiful beach house in Venice. He can be a handful at times, but he's your world, and you love him, flaws and all. He brings out the*

*best in you, makes you incredibly happy, and knows you better than you know yourself. You're still waiting for his dumbass to propose, but you know he will when the time is right. The only thing you see when you think about your future is the life you built together and the beautiful children you will have. P.S. He's sexy as sin, and he will piss you off at times. But it doesn't matter because even when you're pissed at him, you find him sexier and love him a little more. Don't ask why because you're still trying to figure that part out.*

*If the time ever comes, I hope you find this, and it lessens your fears about a past you cannot remember.*

*Your past self,*

*Dr. Charlotte Roman*

“Jesus Christ.” I wiped the tears that fell from my eyes.

I couldn't believe I'd written this.

“Olivia!” I shouted.

“Yes, Charlotte?” She ran into my office.

“When did I write this? I didn't write a date down.” I handed her my journal.

She read it and looked up at me. “I don't know. About eight months ago, you mentioned that you were thinking about doing something like this because of what happened to Willow. I didn't know you actually did.”



**C**onner

I was sitting in my office when Jackson walked in.

“I don't have time, Jackson. I'm busy,” I spoke.

“How long are you going to stay mad at me?”

“Maybe the rest of my life. I really don't know.”

“Bro, I don't want you to get hurt,” he said.

“Nothing can hurt me more than I already am. You’re my brother. You’re supposed to be here for me.”

“I am here for you! I always have been and always will be. I want you to be prepared if Charlotte refuses to marry you in September. God damn, bro. It could take years for her to heal from this. I’m not saying she won’t fall in love with you again. I just think you’re expecting too much too soon, and I don’t —”

“I never expected a damn thing in my life.” I stood up and jammed my finger into the top of my desk. “I never expected to fall in love with someone that I would die for. That woman is my entire life. Without her, I don’t have one, and I’m not wasting time to make her my wife because of some dumb fucking kid who smashed into her during a police chase.”

“Nobody said you were going—”

“Is everything okay in here?” Charlotte asked as she stood in the doorway.

“Yeah. Everything is good. We’re just having a brotherly chat,” I said. “I’ll talk to you later, Jackson.”

“Yeah.” He turned and walked out of my office.

“How’s it going?” I asked her.

“It’s going okay. I thought we could get out of here and go to the grocery store. I noticed there’s barely any food in the house.”

“Yeah. We can do that.”

“Okay. What time is my car being delivered?” she asked.

“The dealership said they’d deliver it around four o’clock.”

She glanced at her watch. “So, in a couple of hours. We better get going.”

“Okay. I’m right behind you.”

“One more thing,” she spoke. “I thought maybe you could take me out on a date tonight.”

“Really?” The corners of my mouth curved upward.

“Yeah. Why not.” She smiled.

“Hold on a second.” I reached into my back pocket, took out my wallet, and opened it. “Yeah. I have some extra cash. I suppose I could take you out on a date. Just don’t pick anywhere expensive.”

She laughed as she shook her head. “You’re such a douchebag.”

“You know it, babe.” I grinned. “Come on. Let’s get the hell out of here.”



## CHAPTER 26



Conner

I stared at her from behind as she walked in front of the shopping cart, tossing things into the cart that she didn't eat anymore. I quickly took them out of the cart and put them back on the shelves.

"What are you doing?" She stopped, turned around, and I accidentally hit her with the cart. "Ouch. Damn, Conner."

"You shouldn't have abruptly stopped. I'm sorry, but it's not my fault."

"What the hell happened to the things I put in the cart?"

"You don't eat that stuff."

"Yes, I do."

"The twenty-four-year-old Charlotte might have, but the almost thirty-four Charlotte doesn't."

She stood there and glared at me. "Okay, fine. Then you do all the shopping and put what the almost thirty-four-year-old Charlotte likes in the cart."

"I will." I opened the container of blueberries, picked one up, and tossed it at her, hitting her in the back of the head.

She ran her hand down the back of her head, and I quietly chuckled. Picking up another blueberry, I tossed it at her.

"What the hell are you doing?" She turned around.

"Following you. Why?" My brows furrowed.

“It feels like something is hitting me from behind. Oh, my God! Don’t you dare say what I think you’re going to.” She pointed at me.

I couldn’t stop laughing. “That’s proof right there that you haven’t forgotten everything about me.”

“You were throwing blueberries at me, weren’t you?”

“Maybe.” I picked one up and put it in my mouth.

“You can’t do that. You have to pay for those.”

“Sure, I can. We’re paying by the container, not by the pound. I can toss all of these at you and still pay the same price.” I grinned.

“You’re so immature, Kind.”

“What did you say?” I stopped in the middle of the aisle.

“I said you’re so immature.”

“No. You called me ‘Kind.’ You always used to call me that.”

“I did?”

“Yeah. You did.” I smiled.

This was the happiest I’d been in a long time, and I couldn’t wait to take her out on a date. I pulled into the driveway and unloaded the groceries when the dealership pulled up with Charlotte’s new car.

“Dr. Kind?” A man climbed out.

“Yep. That’s me.”

“I just need your signature right here.”

I signed the paperwork and handed him his clipboard back.

“Here’s the keys to your new car. Enjoy.”

“Thank you. Enjoy the rest of your day.” I smiled as he climbed into the other car that followed him.

Charlotte walked out of the house and stopped when she saw her new car.

“Is that it?” She pointed.

“That’s it. Go take a look.” I handed her the keys.

“Oh, this is beautiful.” She smiled as she climbed inside. “I love it, Conner.”

“Yeah. I know.” I sighed, and she laughed.

She climbed out of the car, shut the door, and surprised me when she wrapped her arms around my neck.

“Thank you.” She hugged me.

Tears sprung to my eyes as I held her tight and refused to let go.

“Conner, I can’t breathe.”

“Oh, sorry.” I broke our embrace.

“I’m going inside to get ready to go out.” She smiled. “Can we take my new car?”

“We sure can.”

“Hey, bro.” I heard Christian’s voice.

“I’ll be in after I talk to my brother,” I told her. “Hey, bro.” We hugged.

“What’s going on with you and Jackson?”

“He’s being a dick.”

“Come on, bro. You know he’s just looking out for you.”

“I know.” I sighed. “Good news, though. Charlotte asked me to take her out on a date tonight.”

“Seriously?” He grinned. “That’s amazing. “Where are you going?”

“I’m taking her on the boat. Sebastian is cooking for us and will have everything set up when we get there. I thought a dinner cruise would be nice.”

“She’ll love it.” He smiled as he placed his hand on my shoulder.

“I hope so. She’s different today, bro.”

“Different, how?”

“More alive. She actually wants to do something with me.”

“Maybe she’s realizing her love for you.”

“I don’t know. I hope so.”

“Don’t forget Shaun and Jenni’s gender reveal party is Friday night.”

“That’s right. Thanks for reminding me. I better get inside and get ready to head out.”

“Have fun. I want all the details tomorrow.” He pointed at me as he walked back to his house.

## CHAPTER 27



Conner

I walked into the bedroom and nearly lost my breath when I saw Charlotte standing there in my favorite black dress.

“I found this in the closet. It’s cute. What do you think?” She smiled. “Wait. You don’t have to answer that. I’m sure you’ve seen me in it a lot.”

“It’s beautiful, Charlotte.” I smiled. “Every time I see you in it, I tell you how amazing you look.”

“Maybe you’re not such a douchebag.” A smirk crossed her lips.

“Oh, I am.” I grinned. “I’m going to change, and then we can go.”

“Okay. I’ll meet you downstairs,” she spoke.

After changing my clothes and dabbing on some more cologne, I headed downstairs and found Charlotte with her hand in a box of crackers.

“These are disgusting.” She threw the box in the trashcan.

“What do you mean? You eat those all the time.”

“They taste like cardboard. Are you fucking with me?” Her eye narrowed, and I couldn’t help but smile.

“No. I would never do that. You always grab those crackers when we sit down to watch a movie if we don’t have

any popcorn. Come on. Let's get out of here and go eat some food that doesn't taste like cardboard." I winked.

I grabbed the keys to her car and my guitar case, and we walked out the front door.

"Do you want to drive?" I held up her keys.

"No. You can drive." She climbed into the passenger side and shut the door. "Where are we going?"

"You'll see." The corners of my mouth curved upward as I fastened my seatbelt.

When we reached the marina, I opened her door and helped her from the car, gripping her hand tight and not letting go.

"A marina?" She glanced at me. "The boat?"

"Yeah." I smiled. "It's right over here."

I helped her onto the boat, and she looked around.

"Wow. This is beautiful."

"You love this boat," I spoke.

"I'm sure I do. We're having dinner on here?"

"Yeah. Sebastian dropped off dinner for us, and I thought we'd set sail for a while after we ate."

"Can I ask something of you?" she spoke.

"Sure. What is it?" I poured us each a glass of wine.

"I don't want you to pretend this is our first date, and I don't want you to be overly gentlemen-like. I want to get to know the real you without all the 'trying to impress the girl.'"

"Okay." I nodded. "But this isn't the first time I've done this for us. I'm not doing anything I normally wouldn't do. We've had many dinners together on this boat."

"I had a memory today," she said.

"You did? What was your memory?"

"I was sitting in my office, and the flashes started happening. Dr. Bancroft told me not to fight them and to try

and relax my mind when they happen. So, I did, and I remembered holding a brown leather journal in my hand and placing it in the bottom drawer of my desk.”

“That’s kind of an odd memory.” I arched my brow. “Was the journal in the drawer?”

“Yeah. It was.” She smiled.

“What was in the journal?” I asked her.

“Just notes. But the point is I remembered that.”

“Yeah. That’s great. Every memory counts, no matter how small it is. There hasn’t been anything else?”

“No.” She picked up her wine glass. “Can you tell me what happened the day of the accident?”

“What do you mean?”

“I want to know every detail of that day. If you can remember.”

“I’ll never forget it.” I sighed. “We got up that morning and got ready for work. I had cut myself shaving, and when you walked into the bathroom, you took the razor from my hand, sat on the counter, and finished shaving for me. Ella was sitting in on one of my surgeries that day, so I rode to the hospital with Jackson. Our surgical days are the same. You were going to meet me at the hospital after your last patient because—” I paused.

“Because why?”

“We were meeting with Giuseppe that night for the wedding flowers.”

“Oh.” She looked down.

“I was in the middle of surgery when you texted me to let me know you were on your way. About an hour later, a nurse ran into the O.R. and told me about the accident.”

“So, I was on my way to the hospital to pick you up?”

“Yeah. You were. I fight with myself every fucking minute over that.”

“Don’t, Conner. It wasn’t your fault. It could have happened at any time and anywhere. You can’t blame yourself, and you won’t blame yourself. It wasn’t your fault or my fault.”

“I saved that boy’s life before he passed away.”

“What do you mean?” Her brows furrowed.

“His room was a couple down from yours in the ICU, and I went there. The rage that filled me as I stared at him lying there was unreal. It was a rage I’d never felt before. Anyway, when his parents walked in, I said a few choice words to them, and when I was about to leave the room, he was coding. I never had to make such a hard decision in my life.”

“You did the right thing, Conner.” She reached over and placed her hand on mine. “You’re a doctor, and being a doctor always comes first.”

After we ate, I untied the boat and drove it out to the open water.

“It’s beautiful out here,” she said, looking up at the night sky as we sat on one of the couches.

“It truly is.”

“Are you going to play that guitar or what?” The corners of her mouth curved upward.

“You want me to?”

“Yeah. You already played the piano for me.”

“Okay.” I reached over and took my guitar from the case. “What do you want to hear?”

“I don’t know. Surprise me.”



## CHAPTER 28



Charlotte

He strummed the chords and began singing the lyrics to Fix You by Coldplay. Tears filled my eyes and steadily streamed down my face as I watched and listened to him play. My heart started racing, and when he strummed the last chord, he touched my face and gently wiped away my tears.

“I hate you,” I whispered.

“I know.” The corners of his mouth slightly curved upward as he leaned in and softly brushed his lips against mine. I wasn’t ready, but I couldn’t pull away. His lips had me in their grip, so I returned his kiss.

He pulled back and ran the back of his hand down my cheek.

“That was nice,” I softly spoke. “But I don’t have sex on the first date.”

“Yeah, you do.” He smiled. “And I swear I am not lying to you.”

I laughed and took in a breath. My body wanted him so badly, but I was scared and didn’t know why.

“I’m sorry.” I looked down.

“Hey.” He placed his finger under my chin and lifted it, so our eyes met. “You don’t ever have to apologize. I completely understand.” He kissed my forehead. “In fact, I think we need to do a little shooing before we head back.”

“What?” I laughed.

He picked up his phone, and suddenly, a song came over the speakers on the boat. Conner stood up and held his hand out.

“Shoop with me, baby.” He grinned.

We danced around the deck, and I couldn’t stop smiling and laughing.

“You’ve got some moves, Kind.” I danced around him.

“You know it, baby.”

He grabbed my hand, spun me around, and pulled me into him as our bodies moved together to the beat.

“Wow. That was fun.” I laid my head on his shoulder. “I’m really tired all of a sudden.”

“Let’s get the boat back and head home.” He kissed the top of my head.

When we arrived home, we went upstairs, and Conner grabbed a pair of pajama bottoms from his drawer.

“I had a lot of fun tonight. Thank you,” I said.

“You’re welcome. I had a lot of fun too.” He kissed my lips. “Good night, Charlotte.”

“Good night, Conner.”

He walked out of the bedroom and shut the door. I changed into my nightshirt, brushed my teeth, turned on my diffuser, and climbed into bed. Dr. Conner Kind was an incredible man, and I could see why I fell in love with him.

As I slept, I saw the black curtain where the flashing lights came from and slowly walked toward it. It hurt not only my eyes but also my head. As I approached the curtain, I found myself on the beach, at night, by the shoreline. A man was walking next to me, holding a plate with a piece of cake on it. I noticed the watch on his wrist.

“If you weren’t okay, you’d tell me, right?” I looked up, and my eyes flew open before seeing the man’s face.

I took in a long deep breath as I lay there, and my heart raced. Looking at the clock, I saw it was one a.m. Throwing my legs over the side of the bed, I sat there for a moment before getting up and walking over to the window, where I stared out at the moonlit night over the glistening water.

“Fuck it,” I said as I walked out of my bedroom.

When I opened the door to the guest room, I climbed into bed next to Conner, and he stirred.

“Charlotte?” His sleepy voice spoke.

“Shh,” I said as I snuggled my body against his.

He rolled over, wrapped his arm around me, and held me tight as I felt his lips press against the back of my head. My eyes closed, and I was out.



**C**onner

I stared at her as she peacefully slept. I was still shocked that she had come into my room last night and climbed into bed with me. Maybe she had a nightmare. It didn't matter because she was here, with me, all night, right where she belonged.

Her eyes opened, and she caught me staring at her.

“Good morning.” I smiled.

“Morning. Were you watching me sleep?”

“Yeah. I was. I always do if I wake up first. Do you always sneak into strange men's rooms in the middle of the night and climb into bed with them?”

“Only if they're sexy.” A smirk crossed her lips.

The alarm went off, and I quickly shut it down.

“Can I?” I pointed to her lips.

“Why not? You took it upon yourself to do it last night without asking.”

“You loved it.” I leaned over and kissed her lips. “We better get up and get ready for work. I have a full patient load today.”

“I have a couple of patients tomorrow, so I need to study their files today.”

“Do you want to ride in together?” I asked.

“I can drive myself.”

“Are you sure? You haven’t driven since the accident.”

“I’ll be okay.” She climbed out of bed.

After I showered and dressed, I went downstairs and made us a cup of coffee.

“Your coffee, madame.” I smiled as I handed her a cup and leaned against the island.

“Thank you. I had a memory last night. At least, I think it was. It was more like a dream.”

The sliding door opened, and Christian walked in.

“Morning, you two. Can I borrow some cream?” he asked.

“You know where it’s at, bro,” I said. “Tell me about your dream.” I stared at Charlotte.

“I was with a man. I’m assuming it was you. It was night, and there was a party going on. The man was holding a plate with a piece of cake on it, and we were down by the water. I said, ‘If you weren’t okay, you’d tell me, right?’ Does that sound familiar?” She brought her cup to her lips.

I stared at her for a moment, took her cup and set it on the island, and wrapped my arms around her.

“That was a memory. It was from my birthday party.”

“Were you okay?” she asked, breaking from my embrace.

“Yeah, I was. Thanks to you.”

“That’s amazing, Charlotte,” Christian smiled.

“Thanks, Christian. So, that would have been your birthday party too,” she said.

“I didn’t know about my brother then. Anyway, I have to get back and get this to Charleigh. I’ll see you two later.”

“What did he mean by that?” Her brows furrowed.

“Oh, my dear, Charlotte.” I hooked my arm around her. “The stories I have to tell you. We’ll talk about it later. We need to head out.” I kissed the side of her head.

## CHAPTER 29



Charlotte

I climbed into my car and took in a deep breath. I told Conner I'd forgotten something in the house and to go, and I'd see him at the medical center. The truth was, I didn't want him to see me having a near panic attack in the car. I gripped the steering wheel and lay my forehead on it. I heard a tap on the window, and when I looked over, I saw Simon standing there. He opened the passenger door and climbed inside.

"Nice car." He smiled. "It looks so familiar." He winked. "Anyway, I was driving by and saw you sitting here. Are you okay?"

"I will be in a minute."

"It's scary. I know. But a wise woman once said that sometimes we have to do the things we don't want to do, even if it's the things that scare us the most."

"I like it. Who said that?"

"You did." He smiled. "If you want, I can follow you to the medical center."

"That's very sweet of you, Simon, but I can do this."

"Yeah. I know you can. You have a good day, Dr. Charlotte Roman."

"You too, Detective Simon Kind."

He winked at me before climbing out of the car.

Before heading to my office, I stopped by Conner's to tell him I was here.

"Good morning, June."

"Good morning, Charlotte. How are you today?"

"I'm good. Is Conner in his office?"

"He's in with a patient right now."

"Okay. Can you just let him know I'm here and will be in my office?"

"You bet." She smiled.

Walking into the kitchen area for a much-needed cup of coffee, I saw Emilia and Georgia in there talking.

"Oh, good. You're here." Emilia smiled.

"We were just talking about you," Georgia said. "All of us girls are getting together for a girls' night, and you're joining us."

"That sounds like fun."

"Great. We're meeting at my house at six-thirty," Emilia said. "Don't eat because Sebastian is cooking for us."

"I won't." I laughed.

I took my coffee and went to my practice. After turning on my diffuser, I sat behind my desk and reviewed the files and notes of the two patients coming in tomorrow.

"Excuse me, Charlotte," Olivia spoke as she opened my office door. "A man and woman in the waiting room would like to speak to you."

"Who are they?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Williams."

"Do I know them?" I furrowed my brows.

"No, and I don't either. They said it's about their son Matthew."

"Is he a patient of mine?"

“No.” She shook her head.

“Okay.” I sighed. “Go ahead and bring them back.”

When Mr. and Mrs. Williams stepped inside, I stood up from my desk and walked over to them.

“Hi. How can I help you?” I asked.

I could see the nervousness on both of their faces.

“Dr. Roman, I’m Tom Williams, and this is my wife, Greta. Our son Matthew was the one who hit you.”

A knot formed in the pit of my belly as I stared at them.

“We just wanted to tell you how sorry we are for what happened,” Mr. Williams spoke.

“Please, have a seat.” I gestured to the couch.

“We couldn’t be at peace until we saw for ourselves that you were okay,” Greta said.

“I appreciate it, and I’m sorry for your loss.”

“Our son was a good boy, but he was dealing with some mental health issues that we were trying to get him help for,” Tom said as tears swelled in his eyes.

“What he did was just awful, and we wanted to apologize to you,” Greta spoke. “It’s important to us that you’re doing well.”

“I wish I could tell you that I escaped the accident with nothing but a few cuts and bruises, but I can’t. I’m suffering from a traumatic brain injury and have no memory of the last ten years of my life.”

Greta brought her hand to her mouth.

“Dr. Roman, we are so sorry,” Tom said. “We had no idea.”

Greta started sobbing, so Tom placed his arm around her and pulled her into him. I stood up from my chair and knelt in front of them, taking hold of Greta’s hand.

“It’s okay. I will be okay. I forgive Matthew for the accident, and I’m sorry that he isn’t here so I can tell him



that.”

“You are such a good person, Dr. Roman,” Greta sobbed. “I don’t know if I could be so forgiving if I were in your situation.”

“We’re good people, and we did everything right by our son, but in the end, we failed him,” Tom spoke.

“You did nothing wrong, and you both will be okay in time once you heal from this tragedy. I know it’s hard, but with some help, you will get through it. What’s important is that you put all your energy and focus into the good times you had with your son.”

“Thank you, Dr. Roman,” Greta softly spoke. “Again, we are so sorry for what you’re going through.”

“I appreciate it.” My lips formed a small smile. “Is Matthew buried at a cemetery?”

“Yes,” Tom spoke. “Why?”

“I’d like to visit him. Can you give me the address?” I stood up and grabbed a notepad and pen from my desk.

After Tom wrote down the name of the cemetery and the location where Matthew was buried, I took the notepad and set it on my desk.

“Thank you. I’ll walk you two out.”

I walked them out of my practice and to the elevator.

“You two take care.”

“Charlotte?” I heard Conner’s voice.

Turning around, I walked over to where he stood.

“What were they doing here?” he asked in an angry manner.

“They came to apologize for their son and to see how I was doing.”

“They have no right!”

“They’re good people, Conner.” I turned and headed back to my practice because I could feel an argument coming on.

“Don’t walk away from me,” he said as he followed behind me and into my office, shutting the door.

“You need to stop.” I turned around and pointed my finger at him. “They told me Matthew had some mental health issues they were trying to deal with.”

“I don’t fucking care. Obviously, they didn’t deal with his issues enough,” he spoke through gritted teeth.

“So, are you blaming my parents for what my brother did?” I shouted. “Because my parents were good people and did everything they could to try and help him!”

He looked down and placed his hands on his hips.

“I forgive him, Conner, and you know why? Because I can! I refuse to hold onto anger and resentment because it won’t change anything. Suddenly, the flashes in my head started, and I pinched the bridge of my nose and closed my eyes.

“Charlotte, what’s wrong?”

I shook my head as a picture came into focus.

“Who’s Christopher?” I looked up at him.

“What?”

“I was sitting in front of his grave. His name, Christopher Kind, was on the headstone.”

“We thought he was my brother, but it turns out he wasn’t.”

“What?” My brows furrowed.

“It’s a long story. Fuck.” He sighed as he rubbed the back of his neck and sat down on the couch. “That was the day you forgave me.”

“Forgave you for what?”

“For hurting you so badly. That was something I hoped you didn’t remember.”

“Talk, now!” I spoke in a commanding voice as I sat down in my leather chair.

“It doesn’t matter right now. You forgave me and helped me to forgive myself. I’m sorry, Charlotte. I had no right to come at you like that. You’re right. Holding onto the anger I have for that boy is consuming me because of what he took away from me.”

“Again, this is about you?” I arched my brow.

“I guess I’m good at making it seem like it.” He breathed out a laugh.

“The only way to move forward is to let the anger go. As I said, it won’t change what happened and will only hold you a prisoner in your mind. You have to let that shit go, Conner.”

“I know.” He held out his hand.

I stood up from my chair, took his hand, and sat beside him.

“Can you forgive me?” he asked.

“I already have.” I laid my head on his shoulder. “By the way, I’m going to Emilia’s tonight for a girls’ night.” I lifted my head.

“Good.” He smiled. “You always loved girls’ night.”

“I still want to hear later about how badly you hurt me.”

“We don’t really have to rehash that clusterfuck of a situation. The only thing that matters is that you forgave me, and we created this beautiful life together.”

“Yeah.” I scrunched my nose. “You’re not getting off that easy. I want to know everything.”

“Fine. But just remember that when I tell you about it, I was a real douchebag back then.” He stood up from the couch.

“What do you mean? You still are.” A smirk crossed my lips.

“Haha.” He pointed at me. “I love you, Dr. Charlotte Roman,” he said as he walked out of my office. “And I’m not apologizing for saying it either.” He shouted.

## CHAPTER 30



Conner

“I’m leaving for Emilia’s now. I’ll see you later, yeah?” Charlotte asked as she grabbed her phone from the island.

“Yeah. I’ll be hanging out with the guys on the beach.” The corners of my mouth curved upward. “Have fun.”

I grabbed a couple of beers from the refrigerator and took them down to the fire pit, where I lit it and waited for everyone to show up. Jackson walked over and sat down next to me.

“You’ve barely spoken to me, bro,” he said as he took the cap off his beer bottle and flung it at me.

“I know, and I’m sorry. I forgive you for being a royal douchebag.”

“Fair enough.” He smiled. “How was your date last night?”

“It was good. Little bits and pieces are starting to come back to her. She asked me today who Christopher was. Of all the memories stored in her head, the one that happened to pop out was the one on my birthday when I bared my heart and soul to her after I broke her heart.”

Jackson chuckled. “At least some things are coming back. I’m surprised, to be honest. What else has she remembered?”

“She remembered a little bit of our talk down by the water at my birthday party. Just a few words, though.”

“That’s odd that her memories have been from that one day.” His brows furrowed.

“Tell me about it.” I sighed. “Now she’s demanding that I tell her about that day at the cemetery.”

“And you should.”

“What’s up, douchebags.” Simon grinned as he sat on the other side of me.

“Hey, Simon. What the fuck happened now?” I stared at his black eye.

“Grace?” Jackson grinned.

“Police business.” He brought the bottle to his lips.

Both my other brothers and cousins walked over and sat down.

“Charlotte seems to be having a great time with the girls,” Sebastian said. “Honestly, you’d never know anything happened.”

“Bro, what the fuck was going on with you and Charlotte earlier at the medical center?” Nathan asked. “I was leaving the kitchen area and saw you running after her.”

“The parents of the kid who hit Charlotte paid her a visit today.” I took a sip of my beer.

“Why?” Christian asked.

“They wanted to apologize for their son and see how she was doing.”

“That was nice of them,” Sam said.

“Charlotte told them she forgave their son.”

“And that pissed you off?” Stefan asked.

“Yeah. It did. But I let that shit go. It won’t change anything.”

“I’m proud of you, bro.” Jackson placed his hand on my shoulder.

“I have some news,” Shaun said.

“Jenni’s having triplets?” Simon chuckled.

“Shut up, douchebag.” He flung a bottle cap at him. “You know the two-story apartment building on the other side of the wooden fence by my house?”

“Yeah,” we all said.

“That eye sore.” Sam shook his head.

“Guess who bought it along with the property?” He grinned.

“Shut the fuck up,” Stefan said. “Did you really?”

“Yep. Mr. Childs contacted me and asked if I’d be interested.”

“That guy is such a shady motherfucker,” Sebastian said.

“Yeah. He and Dad were rivals back in the day,” Simon said. “Why does he want to sell it?”

“Look at it. The building is practically falling apart. He lost all eight tenants he had, and for what he’s charging for those apartments, people aren’t renting. You should see the inside. It’s absolutely disgusting. He got into trouble with the IRS and owes a shitload of money in back taxes, or he’s going to prison. So, we met, and I offered to buy.”

“You are going to fix up the building, right?” I asked.

“No. I’m having it demolished, along with the wood fence, and building two more houses.”

“So, that part of the beach will also be ours?” Sam asked.

“Yep. Our stretch of the beach just got a little bigger.” He grinned.

“May I ask whom you are allowing to move into these houses you plan on building?” Simon asked. “There aren’t many people out there that will put up with our shit.”

“I’m hoping that Grayson and Gabriel will move here.” The corners of his mouth curved upward.

“That’s a big hope, bro,” Stefan said. “They seem to be content in Boston.”

“We’ll see. I’m sure between all of us, we can talk them into moving here. Besides, they belong here with us,” Shaun said.

“I agree,” I spoke. “The medical center sure could use an internist.”

“Yeah. We definitely could,” Jackson spoke. “The only issue is Grayson.”

“His job requires a hospital setting,” Christian said. “I’m sure George would hire him if he wanted to work at Cedars.”

“Don’t mention any of this to them,” Shaun said. “Not until everything is finalized. The next time they come to visit, we can feel them out and get their thoughts.”

“Anyone hear from Mom lately?” Sam asked.

“She texted me yesterday to see how Charlotte was doing,” I said.

“She hasn’t been to see her?” Shaun asked.

“Not since the hospital,” I spoke.

“And you don’t find that a little strange?” Simon asked. “She’s always around and up in our business.”

“She’s probably busy with Henry,” Stefan said. “Fuck. I can’t get used to that.” He shook his head, and we laughed.

“I don’t know. She wouldn’t ignore us because of him,” Sebastian said.

“Are you still sleeping in the guest room?” Simon asked me.

“Unfortunately.” I sighed. “But she came into my room last night in the middle of the night and snuggled against me.”

“Why?” Nathan asked.

“I’m not sure.”

“Sam, it’s time to put the girls to bed!” Julia yelled from Sebastian’s patio.

“Looks like the party is breaking up,” I said.

“Nah. Only for those who have kids. We’re good.” Simon grinned.

“As much as I love hanging with you douchebags, I should get home to Charlotte. I’ll talk to you guys tomorrow.”

I walked through the sliding door and saw Charlotte sitting on the couch in the living room.

“Hey.” I smiled as I sat beside her. “Did you have fun with the girls?”

“Yeah. I did.” The corners of her mouth curved upward. “Did you know that Shaun and Jenni’s gender reveal party is this Friday?”

“Yeah. I can’t wait to find out what they’re having.” I took a few strands of her hair between my fingers. “I really enjoyed holding you last night.” A small smile crossed my lips.

“I enjoyed it too. I was so restless after that dream. Somehow, I knew I could go back to sleep if you were with me.”

“That was the little voice inside your head saying, ‘Go to him, Charlotte. He’ll wrap you up in hugs and kisses, and you’ll never be the same again.’”

“Knock it off.” She laughed as she slapped my chest. “Tell me how you broke my heart.”



## CHAPTER 31



Conner

“You haven’t forgotten about that, eh?”

“No.”

“In my mind, I was saving you from me. I had a lot of issues regarding relationships. We all have. I pushed you away to the point that you hated me. But I didn’t do it because I didn’t love you. It was the opposite. I loved you too much, and it scared me. You found me that day at the cemetery. You got in my head without me even realizing you did that. In case you don’t know, you have a real talent.” I smiled. “I talked, you listened. You talked, and I listened. Then you forgave me, and we lived happily ever after. Can I ask you something? I want you to put your therapist hat on and really think about what I’m going to ask.”

“Okay.”

“The past couple of memories or partial memories you’ve had have been specifically about that same day, my birthday. Why do you think that is?”

“I don’t know. That day has some specific meaning, and without me having every single detail, I can’t really say.”

“Well, you did rape me.” I grinned.

“What?” Her brows furrowed.

“At the cemetery and after our talk, you said we would be friends, and that’s how it had to be. After my party, you left and were back five minutes later. I opened the door, and you

threw yourself at me, told me to shut up, and you forced me to have sex with you.” A smirk crossed my lips.

“First of all, there was no forcing you to have sex.”

“How do you know? You can’t remember that day or night. You forced me to have sex with you, Charlotte Roman.”

“Oh, my God. Stop saying that.” She pinched my arm.

“Ouch.” I laughed. “You always do that when you don’t like something I’m saying.” I pulled her onto my lap.

“I do?” Her hands were planted on my shoulders.

“Yes. Clearly, you were born with that issue. You were probably a pincher as a kid.”

“I remember my childhood, and I was not. In fact, I don’t think I’ve ever pinched anyone before. So, clearly, you bring out the pincher in me.”

Our eyes stayed locked on each other as I raised my hand and softly stroked her cheek.

“You have the most beautiful eyes I’ve ever seen.”

“You’re just trying to charm me.”

“I don’t have to try. I already did.” I smiled.

“I want you to sleep with me tonight,” she softly spoke.

“You do?” I pushed a strand of her hair behind her ear.

“Yeah.”

“Okay, but clarify something. When you say ‘sleep’ with you, do you mean actual sleep or sex? Because I don’t want to assume anything, and then your pinchers come out.”

“Shut up.” She laughed as she smashed her mouth into mine. “Does that answer your question?”

“Hold on tight, baby.” I held her as I stood up from the couch, and her legs tightened around my waist.

I carried her up the stairs and to our bedroom. Laying her down on the bed, I hovered over her.

“Are you sure? You’re not drunk or anything, right?”

“Shut up.” She smiled and pressed her lips against mine.

I’d waited weeks for this moment, and even though we’d had sex on the daily before the accident, this was new to her, and I needed to remember that. I sat up and pulled my shirt over my head, tossing it over the side of the bed. She took down the straps of her dress and lifted herself up as I slowly pulled it off her, staring at the beautiful and sexy body I’d missed so much. Our lips met and tangled while my hand traveled down her torso and the front of her panties, feeling the wetness already there. I sucked in a breath as I slowly dipped a finger inside and enjoyed hearing the soft moans that escaped her lips. My mouth slowly moved down her as my tongue slowly stroked each of her breasts, giving special attention to her hardened nipples. She moaned as her fingers tangled through my hair, causing my hard cock to spasm fiercely. As badly as I wanted to be inside her, pleasuring her in the way she loved so much was my first priority.

“Oh, God,” she moaned as I pulled down her panties and my mouth explored her.

The taste of her was even sweeter than before. My tongue circled her swollen clit a few times before my lips wrapped themselves around it. She gripped the sheets, and her back arched when I dipped my fingers inside her. Bringing my other hand up to her breast, I gently massaged it as my thumb ran circles over her hard nipple. Her moans increased with intensity as her body tightened and an orgasm tore through her. I stood up and took down my pants, noticing how her eyes lit up when she looked at me.

“How can I not remember that?” She pointed to my hard and throbbing cock.

I chuckled as I hovered over her and kissed her lips.

“Maybe this will jog your memory,” I softly spoke as I gently slid inside her.

Our lips tangled, and our tongues danced as I thrust in and out. The warmth that enveloped me was overpowering as pleasure tore through me. To be inside her again was like a dream, and I never wanted it to end. Her nails dug into the

flesh of my back as soft noises escaped both our lips. Everything that had happened fell to the wayside, and I was only focused on the present moment.



Charlotte

I'd never felt anything like it, at least not that I could remember. My body trembled, and my heart rapidly beat as this man took me to another world. With each long and deep thrust, my body was overjoyed as another orgasm came, and my legs tightened around his waist while my moans let him know how much pleasure he had given me.

"I can't hold back any longer," he breathlessly spoke as he slowed his thrust, and his cock exploded while he was buried deep inside me.

My fingers softly stroked his back as his body lowered to mine. I could feel the racing of his heart and the warmth of his breath against my neck. He pushed himself up and passionately kissed me before climbing off and rolling on his back.

"I hope I didn't hurt you," he spoke as he turned on his side and stared into my eyes.

"No." The corners of my mouth curved upward as I brought my finger to his lips and gently stroked them. "You were amazing."

"So were you." The back of his hand stroked my cheek as a smile fell upon his lips.

"You wore me out, Dr. Kind."

"Then we better get some sleep." He kissed me and held out his arm as I snuggled against his body.

As I lay there, I thought about the save-the-date card I saw at Emilia's house on her refrigerator. We hadn't even talked about the wedding, and we needed to. How could I marry someone I barely knew?

## CHAPTER 32



Charlotte

I was sitting and talking to a patient when flashes of light started in my head again. I tried to ignore it as my patient was talking, but I couldn't.

"Will you excuse me for a moment?" I said as I got up and walked out of my office.

Heading to the bathroom, I locked the door and gripped the edge of the sink as I lowered my head and took in a few deep breaths.

*"Ever since I was twelve, I never felt safe. But with you, that feeling is gone as if it never existed. You make me feel safe and secure, Conner, and I will always love you for that."*

I gasped as I looked up and stared at myself in the mirror. After finishing with my patient, I grabbed my phone and noticed I had a missed call and a voice message. Pressing play, I listened to it.

"Dr. Roman, this is Joseph from Cartier. I wanted to let you know that the custom-ordered wedding band you purchased is in, and you can pick it up at any time."

I swallowed hard as I set my phone down. Burying my face in my hands, I heard my office door open.

"Charlotte, are you okay?" Olivia asked.

"Yeah. I'm just a little tired." I lied. "Since I don't have any more appointments for the day, I'm going to head out. I have some errands to run."

“Okay.” She smiled. “Have fun.”

“Thanks.” I grabbed my purse and phone and walked down to Conner’s practice. “Is Conner in his office?” I asked June.

“Yes, Charlotte.” She smiled.

Walking down to his office, I opened the door and saw him staring out the window.

“Hey.” He smiled when he turned and saw me.

“Hi. I’m heading out for the day. I have a couple of errands to run.”

“Oh. Okay. What errands?” His brows furrowed as he walked over to me.

“Just a couple of things I’m out of that I need to pick up. No big deal.”

“Okay.” He kissed my lips. “Be careful.”

“Sure thing, Dad.” My lips gave way to a smirk. “I’ll see you later.”

“Excuse me,” he spoke as I began leaving his office.

“Yeah?” I turned and looked at him.

“It’s Daddy.” He winked, and I couldn’t help but laugh.

I drove to Cartier, and when I stepped inside, I was promptly greeted.

“Dr. Roman.” The man smiled. “It’s good to see you again.”

“Joseph?” I cocked my head.

“Yes.” He gave me a strange look.

“You’ll have to forgive me. I lost part of my memories in a bad car accident a few weeks ago, so I don’t remember you.”

“Oh, my gosh, Dr. Roman. I’m so sorry.”

“Thank you. Can I see the wedding band I ordered? Because honestly, I have no memory of it.”

“Of course. Come with me to one of the rooms in the back, and I’ll show you.”

I followed him into a room where I sat at the table while Joseph went to get the ring. He entered the room, took the seat across from me, and placed the platinum-beveled-edged band on a royal blue cushion in front of me.

“Do you remember when I ordered this?” I asked as I picked it up and looked at it.

“As in the day?” he asked.

“Yes. I need you to tell me the details of when I first walked in.”

“Well, you came in, and I asked you what I could assist you with, and you said you were here to look at wedding bands for your fiancé.”

“He wasn’t with me?” I furrowed my brows.

“No. You were alone. I showed you several of our wedding bands, and you picked this one. You told me it was perfect and knew he’d love it.”

“Why did I order it? You didn’t have his size in stock?”

“You had it inscribed, Dr. Roman.”

I turned the band and read the inscription.

*I’ll love you forever. Take this off and die.*

I placed my hand over my mouth and started laughing. Then the tears began to fall.

“Oh, Dr. Roman. What’s wrong?” Joseph asked.

“I don’t know, Joseph. I’m a mess. My life is such a mess right now. I’m supposed to be getting married on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, and I don’t know if I can do it.”

“Do you love him?” he asked as he reached across the table and placed his hand on mine.

“I don’t know. I think so. I know I was in love with him when I read something I’d written down before the accident.”

He reached over and pulled a tissue from the box sitting on the table.

“I think this ring says it all, Dr. Roman. You were in here for over two hours trying to pick the perfect ring for him. You told me that you would feel it when you saw the right one. This specific ring had just arrived in our brand-new collection and hadn’t been displayed yet, so I went to the back and pulled it out to show you. The second you saw it, you looked at me and said, ‘This is it, Joseph. This is the ring I’m going to slip on my future husband’s finger on our wedding day.’ You were so happy, Dr. Roman, and even happier when you asked me if you could have it inscribed, and I said yes. Listen. I’m not supposed to do this, but I don’t care because you’re a very special lady, and you’ve been through a lot. There’s something I would like you to see.”

“See what?”

“Follow me.” He smiled.

He led me to a small room with monitors set up and a security guard sitting in a chair in front of them.

“Steve, I need you to pull up the security footage from this date.” He handed him a piece of paper. “And I need you to forward until you see Dr. Roman walk in, please.”

“Here you go,” Steve spoke as he stood up from his chair and told me to sit down.

Tears swelled in my eyes as I watched myself the day I was in here looking at wedding bands for Conner—a day I never knew existed.

“Thank you, Joseph.” I stood from my chair and hugged him.

“I forgot to mention that the wedding band is non-returnable because you had it inscribed.” He smirked. “I would hate to see this beautiful ring sit in a box and tucked away in a drawer.” He handed me the small velvet box.

“Thank you.”

“My pleasure, Dr. Roman.” He walked me out.



## CHAPTER 33



Charlotte

When I arrived home, I ran upstairs and changed my clothes. Pulling the ring box from my purse, I hid it in the back of one of my dresser drawers. The front door opened as I walked down the stairs, and Conner walked in.

“Hey, babe.” He smiled.

“Hi. How was work?”

“Ah, you know. Hip pain, knee pain, shoulder pain, joint pain.” A smirk crossed his lips. “Did you get your errands done?”

“Yeah.” I followed him into the kitchen and set my journal down on the island.

“Do you want to go out for dinner tonight?” he asked.

“I was thinking we could just stay in and maybe order a pizza or something.”

“Sounds good to me.” He opened the refrigerator and pulled out a beer.

“Conner, we need to talk about something.”

“Okay. What’s wrong?” He picked me up and set me on the island.

“What are you doing?”

“You like to sit up here when we talk because you like to be at eye level with me. I put my hands on each side of you

like this and intently listen to every word you say.”

“That’s weird. You’re making that up.”

He chuckled. “I swear to God, I’m not making it up. And I don’t argue with your weirdness. I just go with the flow.” The corners of his mouth curved upward. “Now, what do you want to talk about?”

I stared into his mesmerizing blue eyes and didn’t feel as nervous to say what I had to say to him. I’d noticed he had a way of calming me just by his presence.

“We haven’t discussed the wedding at all,” I said.

He tilted his head back and looked up at the ceiling as he sighed.

“I didn’t think you were ready to discuss it, and I didn’t want to push you.”

“I keep asking myself the same question. How can I marry someone I don’t even remember and barely know.”

“Charlotte—”

I brought my finger up and placed it on his lips. “Let me finish.”

“In my heart right now, I believe you’re an amazing man. You’re full of love and wisdom. You’re sexy and handsome. When you love, you love hard. You’re funny and witty, and everyone loves you. All of this is new to me because I remember that I lived my life alone, and that’s how I chose to live. I wake up in the hospital, and suddenly, I have this amazing man I’m engaged to, a wonderful family, and everyone telling me how happy I was and how perfect my life was. The part I struggle with is having no memory of that at all. I’ve seen the pictures and the videos, and clearly I can see that I lived this amazing life. Remember that journal I told you about?”

“Yeah.”

I reached over and picked it up. “This is it.” I handed it to him. “I told you all that was in there were notes. There aren’t

any notes in there. But there is a letter I wrote to myself about eight months or so ago.”

“Do you want me to read it?” he asked.

“Yeah. I do.”

He opened the journal, and tears filled his eyes as he read what I had written down.

“Why would you write this?” he asked.

“I don’t know if I ever told you this, but I was treating a girl who was seventeen years old for anorexia and bulimia.”

“Wait a second. Isn’t she the gymnast who fell off the balance beam, hit her head, and lost all of her memories?”

“Yeah. She’s the one. I guess that happening to her rattled me and made me see that our identity could be wiped away at any time. The crazy thing is that I wrote that, and this happened to me and to us. I’m guessing the last thing I ever wanted to forget was you.” I brought my hand up and wiped the tears from his eyes. “I had another memory today during a therapy session with a patient. We were sitting on the couch, and I was telling you how safe you make me feel and that I would always love you for that. Then, I received a call from Joseph.”

“Who’s Joseph?” His brows furrowed.

“He’s a salesman at Cartier, where I purchased your wedding band. He called to let me know it was in, and I could pick it up. That’s where I went after I left the medical center. I told him about the accident, and he let me watch the security footage of the day I was there picking out your ring.”

“You never told me you bought it,” he said.

“I was in there a couple of days before the accident. Anyway, I’m trying to say that I don’t want to cancel or postpone the wedding. If we were happy and in love before the accident, I know we were meant to be together in my heart. I could spend the rest of my life searching for my past, and I really don’t have the energy to do that. Besides, the chances of getting my memories back are slim. So, I want to take it one

day at a time. I also want you and the family to continue helping me piece the last few years of my life back together.”

He brought his hands up and held my face in his hands.

“You have no idea how happy you’ve made me.” He brushed his lips against mine. “Nothing in this world could ever keep us apart, babe. I love you so much.” He hugged me as my legs wrapped tightly around his waist.

“Conner, I—”

He broke our embrace and stared into my eyes. “You don’t have to say it back because I know you will when you’re ready. Even though you were telling me how much you loved me our first week at the medical center together.” A smirk crossed his lips.

“I can guarantee you that I wasn’t saying that. From what you told me and that video I saw, I was likely telling you how much I hated you.” The corners of my mouth curved upward.

“Yeah.” He sighed. “Those were some good times, babe.”

“Shut up.” I laughed.

“Can I tell you something?” he asked.

“Of course.”

“I’m quite offended how you called me a dumbass in your journal.”

“Obviously, I was a little upset that you hadn’t proposed to me yet.”

“Seriously, Charlotte. I am so happy you wrote that down. You’re very smart.” He grinned.

“Yeah. I’m starting to see that.” The corners of my mouth curved upward. “You’re going to have to fill me in on what we’ve done for the wedding and what still needs to be done. Did we even order the invitations?”

“Uh, yeah. They’ve been sent out already.”

“Oh, okay. So, we did that before the accident.”

“Again, I could totally lie to you right now.”

I cocked my head as I narrowed my eye at him. “What do you mean?”

“Well. They came, and I had the girls address them and send them out.”

“After the accident?” My brows furrowed.

“Yeah. You were walking down that aisle one way or another, Dr. Roman. I wasn’t letting this accident stop that.”

“Okay. What about my dress? Did I even get one yet?”

“Jenni has your dress. She designed and made it for you along with the bridesmaid’s dresses.”

“Oh wow. Really?” My brows raised in surprise.

“Yeah. We can discuss more later.” He picked me up from the island. “Right now, I need to take you upstairs.”

“I’m hungry,” I said as he carried me up the stairs.

“Sorry, babe. You’ll have to wait until I’m finished with you. Then, I’ll order you anything and everything you want. Deal?” He laid me on the bed.

“Deal.” I smiled. “Something else has been circling around in my head, and I can’t seem to stop it.”

“What?” His lips trailed across my neck.

“I keep hearing the phrase, ‘The universe is on our side.’ Does that mean anything?”

His eyes stared into mine as he hovered over me. “It means everything, sweetheart.”

## CHAPTER 34



Conner

Her hips moved back and forth as she rode me while my hands played with her beautiful breasts. Soft moans escaped us both as the pleasure of each other tore through us. Her hands stayed planted on my chest as her body orgasmed, causing my cock to spasm and explode inside her. I could barely breathe, and my heart raced out of my chest.

“Fuck.” She smiled as she went to climb off me, and I stopped her.

“Oh no. You stay right where you are.” I grinned.

She leaned forward and buried her face into the side of my neck while I held her tight and refused to let her go. She made me the happiest man in the world again, and I couldn’t wait to make her my wife. It felt as if a huge weight had been lifted off my shoulders.

“Can I get off now?” she asked. “I have to pee.”

“I suppose.” I let her go, and she shook her head at me with a smile.

I climbed off the bed and pulled on a pair of sweatpants.

“Can I have my ring back?” she asked as she walked out of the bathroom.

“I’ll give it back to you in due time.” The corners of my mouth curved upward.

“What?” she asked with surprise.

“You heard me.” I kissed her forehead, went into the closet, and grabbed a t-shirt.

“You really won’t give me my ring back?”

“Nope. Not yet.” I smiled.

“You’re such an asshole. I changed my mind. I am not marrying you, Dr. Kind.”

“Yes, you are.” I winked as I left the bedroom.

“Yeah, well, I’m going to find it and put it on! So there,” she shouted as I walked down the stairs.

“Good luck finding it, babe.” I laughed.

Was it wrong of me to keep her ring from her after telling me she would still marry me? Probably. But she didn’t remember the first time I proposed to her, so I wanted to do it again.

I grabbed a beer from the refrigerator and leaned up against the island, waiting for her to come down.

“Did you find it?” I grinned.

“No.” Her eye narrowed. “Forget it. I don’t want that stupid ring anyway.”

“Sure, you do.”

“No, I don’t, Kind.” She pointed her finger at me, and I laughed.

“What do you want for dinner?” I wrapped my arms around her waist and kissed her lips.

“Pizza, salad, and breadsticks.”

“I got you, babe.” I smiled.

After we ate, I texted my brothers and cousins to meet down at Shaun’s house.

“I’m going to run down to Shaun’s. He just texted me and needs my help with something,” I lied.

“Okay. I’ll be upstairs searching for my ring,” she said.

“You won’t find it.” I chuckled. “But be my guest.”

I walked down to Shaun's house, where my brothers and cousins were gathered in the living room.

"What's going on?" Jackson asked as I stepped through the sliding door.

"Yeah, bro. Why couldn't we meet down on the beach?" Nathan asked.

"Because I didn't want Charlotte to see us. I have some news."

"Uh-oh," Sam said.

"Charlotte told me earlier that she still wants to go ahead with the wedding." I grinned.

"Thank God." Jackson hooked his arm around me.

"We knew you could do it, cousin." Simon grinned.

"This calls for a celebration." Shaun smiled as he walked over to the bar and poured all of us a glass of scotch.

"What made her decide to go through with it?" Christian asked.

"She wrote about me and our life together in one of her journals about eight months ago. She was treating a patient at the time who fell off the balance beam and lost all of her memories."

"I remember her telling me about that patient," Jackson said. "Shit. I totally forgot all about that."

"And she received a call today from Joseph at Cartier. My wedding band was in and ready to be picked up."

"Did she pick it up?" Stefan asked.

"Yeah. She told him about the accident, and he let her watch the security footage from the day she was in there."

"Wow. That was really nice of him," Sebastian said. "We're so happy for you, Conner."

"Thanks. Anyway, I called all of you down here because I wanted to tell you about the wedding, and I want to propose to her all over again since she can't remember it the first time."



“What do you need us to do?” Shaun asked.

“I was hoping you and Jenni wouldn’t mind if I did it after your gender reveal tomorrow night. By the way, where is Jenni?”

“She’s on her way home. She got stuck at the studio with something,” Shaun said. “And no, we wouldn’t mind at all. In fact, we’d be extremely happy.” He smiled.

“Thanks, Shaun. She’s mad at me right now.”

“Why?” Jackson asked.

“Because she asked for her ring back, and I told her no. She’s been searching the house for it. So, I’m going to need that back tomorrow.” I glanced at Christian.

“Bro, don’t push her buttons.” Nathan chuckled.

“She’ll be fine.” I smirked.

The front door opened, and Jenni walked inside.

“Holy shit and be still my heart. To what do I owe this hotness of a welcome home?” A grin crossed her face.

“Hey, babe.” Shaun walked over and kissed her. “Conner has some news for us.”

“Oh yeah? What’s going on, Dr. Kind?” She walked over to me.

“Charlotte and I talked, and the wedding is still happening on September 2<sup>nd</sup>.”

“Oh, thank God.” She hugged me. “I was afraid I was going to have to knock some sense into her.”

“Conner asked if it would be okay to re-propose to her tomorrow after our gender reveal,” Shaun said.

“Yes! Oh my God, yes! You didn’t even have to ask.”

“I know how important the gender reveal is, and I didn’t want to take anything away from you two.”

“Please.” She placed her hand on my chest. “There will be plenty of gender reveals. It’s not every day you get to propose

twice.”

“Babe, what do you mean there will be plenty of gender reveals?” Shaun asked.

“This probably won’t be our only one, Shaun. I won’t be like my sister. I want more than two babies with you.” She smiled.

“Oh. Okay,” he said, and I noted the panic in his voice.

“I’m going upstairs to shower. I’m happy for you, Conner.” Jenni kissed my cheek.

Sam hooked his arm around Shaun when Jenni was out of earshot. “Trust me. You’ll be joining the vasectomy club soon.” He patted his back.

## CHAPTER 35



Charlotte

“Have you given up looking for your ring?” He smirked when he entered the bedroom and saw me sitting on the bed with my laptop.

“Which brother did you give it to?” I arched my brow.

“Don’t you worry about that.” He climbed on the bed and kissed my lips. “What are you doing?”

“Research on retrograde amnesia. I’m still going to continue my therapy with Dr. Bancroft.”

“Good. I was hoping you would.” He climbed off the bed and went into the bathroom. After a few moments, he walked into the bedroom, completely naked, and climbed on the bed, closing my laptop.

“What are you doing?” I laughed as he lay there.

“Waiting for you to set your laptop on the nightstand so I can fuck you.”

“We just did it, Conner.”

“And?” His brow arched. “We used to do it three times a day, every day.”

“We did not.”

“Yeah, we did. Once in the morning before work. Then in your office around lunchtime. And then again at night before we went to sleep. You couldn’t get enough of this.” He pointed to his hard cock. “And you demanded that we did it three

times a day. You threatened to break up with me if I didn't accommodate your needs."

"You are such a liar!" I laughed as I grabbed one of the pillows and hit him with it.

He laughed as he took my laptop from my lap and set it on the nightstand. Hovering over me, he brushed his lips against mine.

"A guy can try, right?"

"How long will you continue to tell me things that didn't happen?" I asked as I wrapped my arms around his neck.

"For as long as it suits my needs. I think I need a therapy session, Dr. Roman." The corners of his mouth curved upward before his mouth smashed into mine.



Conner was at the hospital in surgery all day, and I wasn't seeing patients today, so I took the day off from the medical center. Taking my cup of coffee down to the beach, I sat on the warm sand and stared out at the infinite body of water before me.

"Aunt Charlotte!" I heard Ella's voice from behind.

Turning around, I smiled as she ran across the sand.

"Hi, Ella." I hugged her.

"What are you doing out here?" she asked as she sat beside me.

"Just enjoying the beautiful calm day. How about you?" I glanced at her.

"I was at the kitchen table on my computer and saw you sitting by yourself. I hope you don't mind me wanting to say hi."

"No. Of course not. I'm happy you're here."

“I’m so excited for tonight.” She beamed. “I can’t wait to find out what gender the babies are and for when Uncle Conner re—Oops.”

“For when Uncle Conner what, Ella?”

“I can’t tell you. I shouldn’t have said anything.” She looked down.

“It’s okay. Sometimes things slip out when we don’t want them to. But now that you’ve slipped, you might as well finish what you were going to say.”

“Will you promise to act surprised and never ever tell Uncle Conner I told you?”

“I promise.” I smiled. “I can keep a secret better than anyone.”

She stared at me momentarily as if she didn’t believe me.

“I’ll be right back.” She jumped up from the sand and ran back to her house.

A few moments later, she returned and handed me a one-dollar bill.

“What is this for?” I asked.

“If you accept that dollar, it makes me your patient. Then you’re bound by doctor-patient confidentiality and can’t say a word to anyone, especially Uncle Conner.”

“Okay.” I laughed as I shoved the dollar bill into my pocket. “So, Ella, my patient. What is Uncle Conner planning that you’re excited about?”

“He’s going to re-propose to you tonight because you can’t remember the first time he did, and he feels really bad about that.”

“Really?” Tears swelled in my eyes.

“Yes. I overheard my dad telling Sofia last night. I’m happy you’re still marrying him, Aunt Charlotte. I’ve never seen him the way he was when you had your accident. It really scared me. I tried to be there for him as much as I could.”

“And I thank you for that.” I reached over and grabbed her hand. “He’s very lucky to have a little girl like you who loves him and cares so much for him.”

“He never left your side, and he cried a lot.” She looked down. “He played his guitar for you too.”

“He did?”

“Yeah. He would sing to you, hoping you’d hear him and wake up.”

I raised my hand and wiped the tear from my cheek.

“I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to make you cry.”

“You didn’t, sweetheart. I’m just a little emotional these days.”

“Because you lost your memories?”

“Yeah.”

Ella climbed on my lap, and I wrapped my arms around her as we stared at the waves crashing against the shore.

“The most important thing, Aunt Charlotte, is you’re alive. You shouldn’t let the memories bother you so much. Yeah, it sucks. But think of all the new memories you’re going to create, and do you know what the best part is?” She tilted her head back and looked up at me.

“What?” I smiled.

“You get to fall in love with Uncle Conner all over again. It’s like falling in love with your soulmate for the first time.”

“Yeah. It is.” I smiled.

“I can’t wait to meet my soulmate and experience that kind of love. Of course, I’ll be way older because my career will always come first.”

“Good. You always keep that positive thought in your head, and your prince charming will come into your life when you least expect it.”

“Like Uncle Conner did?”

“Yeah. Like Uncle Conner did.” The corners of my mouth curved upward.

## CHAPTER 36



Conner

I walked through the door and threw my keys on the island in the kitchen.

“Charlotte?” I shouted.

“Upstairs in the bathroom.”

I walked up the stairs and into the bedroom, pulled my shirt over my head, and tossed it on the bed.

“Hi,” Charlotte smiled through the mirror as she applied her makeup.

“Hi.” I kissed the side of her neck. “How was your day off?”

“It was good. How did your surgeries go?”

“Good. My last patient gave me a scare when her blood pressure bottomed out.”

“Is she okay?”

“Yeah. She’s fine.” I grabbed a washcloth, my razor, and shaving cream.

“Do you mind?” She asked as she pointed to my razor.

“Umm.” I looked at her.

“Oh, come on. You said I always did this.” She smiled as she jumped up on the counter and wrapped her legs around my waist.

“That was pre-traumatic brain injury and amnesia.”



“I haven’t forgotten how to shave, Conner. I just forgot about you.” She grinned as she dabbed my nose with shaving cream.

“You’re in a good mood today,” I said as she lathered my face with shaving cream.

“I called Giuseppe, and we’re meeting him tomorrow at his shop to go over the flowers for the wedding,” she said. “I remembered you saying his name, and when I scrolled through the contacts in my phone, his name was in there.”

“That’s great, babe.”

“Don’t talk, or I’ll cut you. Also, we need to stop at the cemetery tomorrow after meeting him.

I went to speak, and she stopped me.

“I said don’t talk. I want to go see Matthew’s grave. *Why the hell do you want to do that, Charlotte?*” she spoke in a rough voice. “Because I want to, Conner. I want to tell him I forgive him and think you should too. *Why the hell would I do that after what he did?*” Her rough voice spoke. “Because we discussed this already, and you said you would let it go. So, prove to me that you have.”

I grabbed her wrist and brought the razor away from my face.

“First of all, your imitation of me is lousy, and second, you don’t have to be so dramatic. I’ll take you.”

“Thank you. And my imitation of you was spot on.” The corners of her mouth curved upward.

Before we left for the Brewhouse, where the party was being held, I ran over to Christian’s to get Charlotte’s ring.

“Thanks for holding this for me, bro.”

“You’re welcome. It’s going to be a great night.” He grinned.

“Yeah. It will be. Charlotte asked me to take her to the cemetery tomorrow to visit the grave of the guy who hit her.”

“Why?” His brows furrowed.

“She wants to tell him she forgives him and wants me to do the same.” I sighed.

“How do you feel about that?”

“I don’t know. I already told him I’d never forgive him when he was standing in Charlotte’s room when Everly was there.”

“Doesn’t matter, bro. What’s done is done. Charlotte is alive and recovering. He, on the other hand, is buried six feet in the ground. Sometimes we have to forgive the people who hurt us the most.”

I knew he was referring to the people who raised him.

I placed my hand on his shoulder and smiled. “You’re right. Thanks, bro.”

When Charlotte and I stepped inside the Brewhouse, she looked around.

“Wow. This is so nice. Do you guys have a lot of parties here?”

“Either here or at Four Kinds.” I smiled.

“I’m so happy to see the two of you,” Georgia ran over to us and hugged Charlotte.

“You’re looking quite lovely, Georgia sunshine.” I grinned as I kissed her cheek.

“Uncle Conner! Aunt Charlotte!” Ella ran over, and I scooped her up.

“Hello there, my favorite niece.” I kissed the side of her head. “I miss you. Why haven’t you been coming over like you used to?”

“Because my dad said you and Aunt Charlotte need time alone.”

“Ah. Well, I think you should start coming over more. We still need to play the new Call of Duty game that just came out.”

“Definitely. I can’t wait to beat you!” She grinned.

“Not this time, sweetheart. I have a new strategy.” I winked.

“Charlotte, darling. How are you?” Aunt Barb walked over and hugged her.

“I’m good, Barb.”

“Where have you been, Aunt Barb?” I asked.

“I’ve been busy. Besides, I didn’t want to intrude on you and Charlotte. I know the two of you needed your time.”

“Come on, everyone! It’s time to eat,” Sebastian said.

“Did Sebastian close this place down for the party?” Charlotte asked.

“Yeah. He always does when it’s a family thing.”

After we ate, it was time to find out the gender of Shaun and Jenni’s twins.

“Okay, let’s find out the sex of these babies!” Georgia grinned as she called Shaun and Jenni over to where the two large black bags hung from the ceiling.

“Did you hang those up?” I asked Sebastian.

“Yeah.”

“So, you know what the twins are, and you didn’t tell us?” I arched my brow.

“No. The bags were already stuffed with balloons when I hung them.”

Shaun and Jenni took hold of the strings on Baby A’s bag, and when we all counted to three, they pulled them, and several blue balloons fell out.

“Ha! Look at you having a boy!” Simon shouted as he pointed his finger at Shaun.

“Now, onto Baby B!” Georgia shouted.

Once again, we counted to three, and when Shaun and Jenni pulled the strings, several pink balloons fell to the floor.

“YES!” Jenni shouted. “One of each!”

“Damn! I knew you couldn’t shoot for two.” Simon hugged Shaun. “Congrats, bro.”

After we all hugged and congratulated Shaun and Jenni, it was time to put my proposal in motion.

“I think we need some music.” Sebastian winked at me.

The song, Dream A Little Dream of Me, loudly played over the speakers as I took Charlotte’s hand.

“Oh, listen. It’s our song. May I have this dance?”

“Of course.” She smiled.

“I can’t believe Shaun and Jenni are having a boy and a girl,” I said as I stared into her beautiful eyes.

“I think it’s great. Now they don’t have to have anymore.”

“Why?” My brows furrowed. “You want more than two children.”

“No. I think one or two is enough,” she said.

“Since when? You told me you’ve always wanted at least four.”

“Never. I never said that.”

“How do you know? You can’t remember.”

“Because right now, I remember always wanting one or two.”

“Well, you changed your mind when you met me.” I grinned.

“You’re making up stories again, Kind.” She narrowed her eye.

I let out a chuckle as I kissed her forehead. The song ended, and it was time. Getting down on one knee, I took the ring from my pocket and held her hand in mine.

“Dr. Charlotte Roman.” I winked at her as I held up her ring. “I wanted to do this the same exact way as the first time, but Jackson and Georgia refused to do the wedding thing all over again. So, I figured tonight would be the next best thing. I love you more than life. You’re my lover and best friend, and I

can't wait to spend the rest of my life with you. Charlotte, will you marry me?"

"Yes, Conner. I will marry you." She smiled as I slipped the ring on her finger, and everyone shouted and clapped.

## CHAPTER 37



Charlotte

I was restless as a dream held me captive, and I couldn't wake up. I could hear Conner's voice in the distance, but the flashes in my head kept me from waking. Suddenly, my eyes flew open, and I only saw Conner gripping my shoulders as I lay flat on my back. It took me a minute to register that I was home and in my bed.

"Thank God. Are you okay?" Conner asked with panic. "You were moaning and tossing and turning. I couldn't wake you up."

"I had a memory.

"What was your memory?" he asked as he reached over and turned on the lamp.

Sitting up, I brought my knees to my chest and hugged them.

"The accident." I stared at Conner.

"You remember the accident? How?"

"I don't know. My purse fell off the seat, and everything, including my phone, dumped on the floor. I heard my phone ding, so when I stopped at the traffic light, I unbuckled my seatbelt and reached for it." Tears filled my eyes. "I heard the loud crash, and then everything went black. I wasn't wearing my seatbelt, Conner." Tears streamed down my face.

"Oh, babe." He wrapped his arms around me.

“This head injury may not have happened had I left my seatbelt on.”

“Don’t. Do not blame yourself. This was not your fault.” His grip around me tightened, and his lips pressed against my head.

“I’m so sorry.” I sobbed.

“You have nothing to apologize for.” He held me tight as I drifted back to sleep.

The alarm went off and woke both of us up. Conner reached over, shut it off, and placed his arm around me.

“You better get up,” I said. “You don’t want to keep your brothers and cousins waiting.”

“I’m not leaving you. Go back to sleep.” He snuggled against me.

I removed his arm and threw back the covers.

“Well, I’m leaving you.” I climbed out of bed.

“What? What the hell? Get back in this bed.”

“Nah. I’m awake now. So, you can either go back to sleep or go hit the waves with your family.” I pulled his board shorts from the drawer and threw them at him.

I went down to the kitchen and made a cup of coffee. When Conner walked in, I stood up against the island with a smile on my face.

“I love you.” He walked over and kissed my lips.

“I love you too.” I smiled as he opened the sliding door.

He stopped, looked at me, and closed the door. Walking over to where I stood, he grabbed my face and smashed his mouth against mine.

“Say it again.” A grin crossed his lips.

“I love you, Dr. Conner Kind.”

“Damn right, you do.” He winked and walked out the sliding door.



Conner

Hearing her say those three words to me again made me feel like I was on top of the world. I grabbed my board and paddled out to where my brothers and cousins were.

“There you are,” Nathan said.

“What the hell, Kind?” Simon asked.

“I wasn’t even going to come, but Charlotte made me.”

“What’s going on? Up too late having sex?” Christian grinned.

“Well, yeah.” I smiled. “She had a memory in the middle of the night, and I couldn’t wake her up.”

“What was her memory?” Jackson asked.

“The accident. Her purse fell off the seat, and her phone fell out. She heard it ding, and when she stopped at a light, she removed her seat belt and reached down to get it.”

“Shit,” Shaun said.

“Well, at least we know what actually happened,” Simon said. “Are you okay?”

“Yeah. I’m fine. She blames herself. She said if she would have had the seatbelt on, she most likely wouldn’t have suffered the brain injury. But, on a positive note.” I smiled. “She told me she loves me as I was walking out the door.”

“That’s wonderful, cousin.” Sam reached over and placed his hand on my shoulder.

“It sounds like things are finally going back to normal.” Stefan smiled.

“Yep. One day at a time.”





Charlotte

Of course, the one memory I never wanted to remember came flooding back like a wave crashing into the shoreline. I was still shaken by it, but after doing some serious thinking while Conner was surfing, I had two options. I could either dwell on it for the rest of my life and let it consume me, or I could move on with my life as I had been.

A couple of weeks had passed, and it was my thirty-fourth birthday. I still couldn't grasp that I was ten years older. I hadn't had another memory since the night I remembered the accident, and I was okay with that. I accepted the fact that I might never get any of them back. But if I did get one here and there, I would take it and be grateful. Meanwhile, Conner and I were making new memories together.

"Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday to my beautiful fiancée, whom I love so much. Happy birthday to you." Conner grinned as he walked into the bedroom carrying a tray with a single rose in a vase, coffee, and a stack of chocolate chip pancakes with a lit candle in the middle. "Happy birthday, babe." He set the tray across my lap and kissed my lips.

"Thank you." I smiled.

"Don't forget to make a wish."

I closed my eyes, made a wish, and blew out the candle.

"You didn't have to make me pancakes."

"Oh, I didn't. Sebastian did." He grinned as he climbed onto the bed next to me. "But I asked him. It's the thought that counts, right?"

"Yes, definitely." I kissed him.

I cut a piece of the pancake and brought the fork to my mouth.

"Oh, my God. These are delicious."

"They do smell good. Can I have a bite?" Conner asked.

I cut a piece, brought the fork up to his mouth, and then quickly brought it to mine and ate it.

“Hey,” he said.

“What?” I asked with a mouthful of pancakes.

“Why did you do that?”

“Oh, I thought about letting you have a bite. It’s the thought that counts, right?” I smiled.

“Wow. You’re lucky it’s your birthday.” His eyes narrowed, and I laughed.

“You know, I got to thinking,” I said.

“About what? How much of a pancake hoarder you are?”

“Grow up, Kind.”

“Never.” A smirk crossed his lips. “What were you thinking?”

“About how you never asked to see your wedding band.”

“I figured you would show me if you wanted me to see it.”

“Do you want to see it?”

“Of course, I do. Then I can tell you if I’ll wear it.”

My jaw dropped as I stabbed his arm with the fork.

“Ouch.” He laughed.

I set the tray to the side, climbed out of bed, and grabbed the box from the drawer. Flipping open the lid, I handed it to him.

“Wow, Charlotte. This is beautiful.”

“Do you really like it?” I asked.

“I love it.”

“I had it inscribed. See.”

“I’ll love you forever. Take this off and die. Jesus, Charlotte!” He laughed. “I didn’t think I could love you any more than I already do. You never have to worry because once this ring is on my finger, it’s never coming off.” He leaned

over and brushed his lips against mine. “Don’t move. I’ll be right back.”

A few moments later, he walked back into the bedroom with two wrapped gifts.

“Open this one first.” He smiled as he handed me the first gift.

With a smile, I unwrapped the box, removed the lid, and stared at the book inside with the word, *Memories*, written across it. Picking up the book, I opened it and looked at the pictures that were inside it—pictures of the family and us.

“Conner, this is—”

“It’s a memory book of us by date and place.”

“This is absolutely beautiful. I can’t believe all the details you added. I didn’t know you knew how to scrapbook.” A smirk crossed my lips as my brow arched.

“I may have had a little help from the girls.”

The arch in my brow raised a little higher.

“Okay, fine. I provided all the pictures, but it was my idea.”

“I love it. Thank you.” I leaned in and kissed him.

“I have one more for you.”

I opened it and flipped open the lid, which revealed a beautiful silver watch.

“Oh, Conner. This is gorgeous.”

“I know you don’t remember, but it’s the watch you wanted. I was going to buy it for you for Christmas, but they were sold out, and didn’t know when they were getting more in. I saw it when I went to Cartier to thank Joseph for letting you watch the security video. I hope you still like it.”

“I love it.” I smiled as I removed it from the box and placed it on my wrist. “I love you. Thank you for the beautiful gifts.”

“You’re welcome, babe.” He brushed his lips against mine.  
“We need to get ready to head to the boat. So, I have one more gift for you, but it’s in the shower.” The corners of his mouth curved upward.

## CHAPTER 38



Conner

We took both boats out for the day and had one big birthday bash for Charlotte. She didn't know that my brothers and the girls were riding back with the others while we spent the night on our boat.

"Fun times." Christian smiled as he walked over and hooked his arm around me.

"Definitely, bro." I raised my beer bottle to him.

"What are you two doing?" Jackson asked as he and Nathan walked over.

"Talking about what douchebags you two are." I grinned.

"Very funny," Jackson said.

"I need you guys to come with me somewhere on Monday," Nathan said.

"Where?" I asked.

"To look at engagement rings for Sofia."

"It's about damn time." I placed my hand on his shoulder.

"I know." He breathed out a laugh. "I feel like such an asshole. I love her so much, and I should have asked her when we found out she was pregnant with Nicholas. There was just a lot going on with Jackson getting married and finding out about Uncle Ian and our cousins. Then there was Charlotte's accident. I just wanted to wait and ask her when everything calmed down, and I could focus solely on her."

“When are you going to ask her?” Jackson asked.

“Next weekend when we’re in Vegas for the bachelor/bachelorette parties.”

“Excellent!” I grinned. “Perfect time and perfect place.”

“What about Ella?” Christian asked. “Won’t she be upset she won’t be there?”

“I already talked to her about it, and she said she’s okay with it as long as one of you Facetime her so she can watch.”

“I can do that.” I smiled. “I wouldn’t want her to miss out. Come on. Let’s get Charlotte’s cake ready.”

“And I’ll grab your guitar,” Christian said.

I went inside the cabin and lit the candles while the girls had Charlotte sit down. I stepped onto the deck holding the cake with thirty-four lit candles as Christian strummed Happy Birthday on the guitar, and we all sang to her. After she blew out the candles, I took my guitar from Christian and sat across from her.

“I have one more present for you.” I smiled. “I was going to sing this to you at our wedding, but the girls advised against it.”

“Why?” She laughed.

“You’ll see.” Julia smiled at her.

I began strumming the chords and singing, How Long Will I Love You, to her. Uncontrollable tears streamed down her face from the first verse to the last. Setting my guitar down, I helped her from her seat, and hugged her tight.

“I love you, Conner. Thank you.”

“I love you too, babe, and I always will.”

“I would have killed you if you had sung that at our wedding.” She whispered in my ear. “It would have been the shortest marriage in history.”

“I know. That’s what the girls said.” I chuckled as I broke our embrace and kissed her.



Nathan

There were two pivotal moments in my life. The first was when I found out I had a daughter, and the second was when I first laid eyes on Sofia. I chose to propose to her in Vegas because I knew she'd never see it coming, and I wanted it to be a surprise. Plus, it was the perfect place since all of my family, including Grayson and Gabriel, would be there.

After celebrating all day and part of the night, we gathered in front of the Bellagio fountain. Between the lights, music, and water, I knew it was the perfect place to ask her to become my wife.

"This is so beautiful." Sofia smiled as she lay her head on my shoulder.

"You're beautiful, babe." I kissed the top of her head and glanced over at Conner to get his phone out. "You know I love you, right?" I asked her.

"Of course, I know." She lifted her head, and a beautiful smile crossed her lips. "I love you too."

I inhaled a deep breath and took hold of her hand.

"I really mean it, babe. I love you to the moon and back and a thousand times over." I smiled. "I never thought I'd ever be able to open myself up to anyone, but you walked into my life and took that fear away. I never thought I would need someone in my life the way I need you. You love me unconditionally, and you love Ella just as much. Then, you gave me the best gift of all: our son. You are the most important person in my life. You're my best friend, and I don't know what I would do if I ever lost you."

"Nathan." Tears filled her eyes.

Pulling the ring box from my pocket, I got down on one knee. "Will you do me the honor of marrying me and becoming my wife for as long as we both shall live?" I flipped open the lid.

She placed her hand over her mouth, tears falling down her face.

“YES! I will marry you, Nathan!”

With a smile, I took the ring from the box and placed it on her finger. My family shouted and whistled, as did the strangers who stopped to watch. I stood up, grabbed her, and spun her around.

“I was so not expecting this.” She grinned.

“Good. I wanted you to be surprised.” I kissed her lips. “I love you, future Mrs. Nathan Kind.”

“And I love you, Dr. Nathan Kind.”

Our family took turns hugging and congratulating us.

“Another wedding to attend.” Grayson shook his head. “Congrats, cousin.” He hugged me.

“Thanks, Grayson. I’m happy you and Gabriel were able to meet us here.”

“We wouldn’t miss it for the world. We were worried Conner and Charlotte wouldn’t have a wedding.”

“So were we. But it all worked out.” I smiled. “How about you? Have you met anyone special in Boston?”

“God, no. All of this is awesome and special for all of you. For us, we’re happy with our lives the way they are.”

“We said that same shit.” Simon walked over and hooked his arm around him. “You just wait, my cousin. Your time is coming. L.A. is full of beautiful single women if you decide to move—oh shit.”

“If we decide to move to L.A.?” Gabriel said. “What is he talking about?” He looked at Grayson.

“I have no clue.”

“Good going, douchebag.” Shaun slapped Simon on the back of the head.

“Ouch. Damn, bro.”

“I’m building two houses on the beach next to mine.”



“How? Isn’t there an apartment building on the other side of the wood fence?” Grayson asked.

“Yeah. It’s a long story. Anyway, I bought the property, the fence and the building are coming down, and two houses are being built. I was hoping you two would like to buy them and move here with us.”

“Wow,” Gabriel said. “I don’t know what to say.”

“Shaun, as much as we’d love to, I’m still in my residency at Mass General,” Grayson said.

“I know, but by the time the houses are done, you won’t be. It was just a suggestion. I’d talk to George at Cedars about bringing you in as a trauma surgeon, and Gabriel could start his own Internal Medicine practice at the medical center.”

“That’s right,” I said. “We’d love to have you there.”

“Listen, douchebags,” Simon said. “You’re a Kind, and we all belong together on the beach, living our best lives ever. There’s no reason for you both not to make the move. Unless you hate us? Do you hate us?” Simon’s eyes narrowed.

“Shut up.” Grayson laughed. “You know we love all of you.”

“We do, and we’re happy things worked out the way they did,” Gabriel spoke. “We’ll give it serious thought and let you know.”

“That’s all we ask.” Shaun smiled.

“But be warned.” Simon pointed at them. “You might fall in love and be really happy like we all are.” He smirked. “It happened to our other cousins.”

“Trust us. We’re happy with our bachelor lives,” Grayson said.

“Yeah, and no one is taking that away from us.” Gabriel smiled.

The two of them walked away, and Simon hooked his arms around Shaun and me.

“We’ll see. They don’t stand a chance if they move here. But I’m ready.”

“Ready for what?” I asked.

“To intervene, give my lecture, blah, blah.”

Shaun and I both laughed as we shook our heads.

“If you’ll all excuse me. I need to take my beautiful fiancée back to our suite to celebrate our engagement in private.”

## CHAPTER 39



Charlotte

I was at Jenni's studio, standing on a platform while she checked the fit of my wedding dress, when a wave of nausea swept over me, and I placed my hand over my mouth.

"Hey. Are you okay?" she asked.

I stood there for a moment, and it passed.

"Yeah. I just felt a little nauseated."

"Do you want some water?"

"No. I'm fine. It's been happening all week. It comes in waves."

"Could you be pregnant?" A smile crossed her lips.

"No. No way." I furrowed my brows.

"Are you sure?" She grinned.

"Yes. I'm positive."

"Okay. But if it continues, you better take a test to make sure. You don't want to be drinking at your wedding if you are."

"I'm not." I smiled with uncertainty.

After I left the studio, I climbed into my car and gripped the steering wheel. Ever since the accident, I have had times when I would forget certain things. One of them was to take my birth control. I expressed my concern to Georgia, and after

I finished this last pack of pills, I was switching to getting the shot every three months.

I found Conner and Ella playing Call of Duty on the couch when I arrived home while Nicholas was nestled on Conner's lap.

"What's going on here?" I smiled as I walked over and kissed the top of Conner's and Ella's heads.

"Nathan asked if we could babysit while he and Sofia went out with their friends tonight to celebrate their engagement, so I went over and grabbed these two, so they could get ready in peace. I hope you don't mind."

"Of course not." I picked Nicholas up from his lap. "I love having these two over."

"Oh, come on, Ella! What the—"

"Sorry, Uncle Conner, but your new strategy sucks." She giggled.

"You better watch it, little girl, or I'm calling Uncle Christian over here."

"You can't. He's at the hospital." She laughed.

Nicholas started to fuss, and then a loud scream came from him.

"He's probably hungry," Conner spoke. "Sofia said he probably would be around this time."

"Are the bottles in the refrigerator?"

"Yeah. I can feed him, babe."

"I've got it." I smiled. "I'll feed him upstairs."

After I fed the baby and burped him, I laid him down on the bed next to me and played with him. Conner walked in, sat on the bed, and picked him up.

"Are you having fun with your Auntie Charlotte, little man?" He smiled at Nicholas as he held him up in the air.

"Where's Ella?" I asked.

“She ran home for a minute. She forgot her laptop, and she wants to show me something.”

I sat there and watched the way Conner was with Nicholas. The way he was playing with him and talking to him. I didn't doubt that he would make a wonderful father. He loved kids, and I saw it in how he acted with his own niece and nephew and with Stefan's and Sam's kids.

“What?” He smiled at me.

“Nothing. You're just really good with kids.”

“I've always loved kids. Isn't that right, Nicholas?” He held him up, and Nicholas vomited all over him. “Except when they do that.”

I laughed as I climbed off the bed and grabbed a towel from the bathroom.



The same nauseous feeling swept over me the following morning as I was getting ready for work.

“What's wrong?” Conner asked. “You've barely touched your coffee.”

“Oh really?” I looked in my cup and played dumb. “I'm drinking it. I'm just trying to hurry up and get ready since someone wouldn't let me out of bed.” I smirked.

“It was worth it, wasn't it?” He smiled as he kissed my lips, and I wanted to throw up.

“Yep. Sure was.”

“I'll meet you downstairs, babe.”

“Okay.”

The second he walked out of the bathroom, I closed the door and leaned over the toilet, praying I'd vomit so I could feel better. Nothing came up, so I dumped most of my coffee into the sink, washed the sink out to get rid of any evidence, and went downstairs.

“See. I drank it.” I smiled.

I didn’t have a patient until ten o’clock, so I walked over to Georgia’s office when Conner and I arrived at the medical center. She wasn’t in her office, so I went to the kitchen area to see if she was there.

“Good morning.” She smiled as she waited for her coffee to brew.

“Do you have a few minutes?” I asked.

“Yeah. Of course. Is everything okay?”

“Not here.”

“Okay. Let’s go to my office,” she said, grabbing her freshly brewed coffee.

We stepped inside her office, and I shut the door.

“What’s going on?”

“I think I’m pregnant.”

She placed her hand over her mouth and smiled as she stared at me.

“What symptoms are you experiencing?”

“I’ve been really nauseated since last week. It comes and goes in spurts, and I think I’m late.”

“You think?”

“You know I have trouble remembering to take my pills, so I’m all screwed up.” I placed my hand on my forehead.

“Okay. Just relax.” She gripped my shoulders. “I’ll draw your blood right now and send it down to the lab as a stat test.”

“Okay.” I nodded.

“Don’t panic just yet. You could have a bug or something.”

## CHAPTER 40



Charlotte

About thirty minutes later, Georgia opened my office door and stepped inside.

“You’re pregnant, Charlotte.” She smiled.

Tears filled my eyes as I stared at her.

“You’re not happy?” She gave me a sympathetic look.

“I am. I want kids with Conner. I just didn’t expect it to happen so soon. I’m still healing from the accident and a little worried about my memory issues.”

“You are and will be fine. Trust me. You are not the first woman who has expressed this kind of concern. Conner is going to be over the moon about this. You know how much he loves kids. And he will be a wonderful dad.”

“I know he will be. At least I don’t have to worry about him freaking out in a bad way.” I smiled.

“No.” She laughed. “No, you don’t. According to your HCG numbers, you’re five weeks pregnant. So, I’m scheduling you an appointment for next week, and I want you to start taking these.” She pulled a pill bottle from her coat pocket and handed it to me.

“Prenatal vitamins.” I smiled as I looked at the bottle.

“When are you going to tell Conner?”

“After work.”

“You do know that he won’t be able to keep it a secret. The rest of the family will know in seconds.”

“I know.”

“It’s a good thing the wedding is in a couple of weeks. Jenni will kill me if she has to alter my dress again.” I laughed.

“Oh.” Georgia scrunched her face. “You won’t be able to drink at your own wedding.”

“I already thought about that. It’s okay. Alcohol is overrated. At least I’ll have Jenni there as part of the non-alcohol club.”

“Hold on a second. I’ll be right back,” she said.

A few moments later, she walked back into my office with Emilia. “We’re all sisters, and we tell each other everything. It’s been a crazy morning at the practice of Dr. Georgia Scott-Kind.”

“What are you talking about?” Emilia and I both looked at Georgia.

“Two of my sisters both found out they’re pregnant on the same day.” She smiled.

“Oh my, God!” Emilia and I both screamed as we hugged each other. “How far along are you?” I asked her.

“Seven weeks. You?”

“Five weeks.”

“Ah, we get to be pregnant together. This makes me so happy.”

“Me too.” I hugged her again. “When are you telling Sebastian?”

“Tonight. When are you telling Conner?”

“Tonight.”

“Okay. We both know the guys can’t keep anything to themselves, so we better prepare ourselves for a bonfire tonight.”



“Welcome to the non-alcohol club at my wedding.” I grinned.

“Oh shit.” A serious look crossed her face. “I forgot. Damn.”

“You two will be fine.” Georgia smiled. “I’ll drink your drinks for you.” She hooked her arms around us.

“Now we need to convince Sofia not to get married before we have these babies.” A smile crossed my lips.



After work, I ran to the grocery store and picked up a few things for dinner. I thought of a cute way to tell Conner I was pregnant. Since I really didn’t have time to cook baby back ribs, I called Sebastian and asked if I could pick some up from the restaurant on my way home. He said he’d have them ready and waiting for me when I arrived.

After picking up the ribs, I went home and started prepping dinner.

“Hello, beautiful.” Conner smiled as he walked through the front door and kissed my lips.

“Hey.” I smiled.

“You’re cooking?” His brow arched.

“Yes.” I slapped his chest with the dishtowel in my hand.

“What are you making?”

“You’ll see. Go upstairs and change. It’s almost ready.”

“Okay.” He grinned.

The smell of the baby peas and carrots cooking made me nauseous. I wanted to die when I walked into Four Kinds to pick up the ribs. I set the table and told Conner to sit down.

“I can help, babe.”

“No. You sit there and let me serve you.” I smiled.

I set the food on the table and took the seat across from him.

“We have a salad made with baby spinach. Baby back ribs, baby red potatoes, and baby carrots and peas.”

“Damn. It looks and smells delicious. Thanks, babe. I can’t believe you did this.”

“I couldn’t remember if you like cooked BABY carrots and BABY peas.”

“Yeah. They’re fine.”

“And you like BABY spinach, right?”

“Yeah. I love baby spinach. Damn. These ribs are good.”

“You mean the BABY back ribs?”

He stared at me for a second, and I smiled. He’d finally figured it out.

“Hold on a second. Did you get these ribs from Sebastian?”

“YES!” I shouted.

“Okay. I’m sorry. I didn’t realize you were trying to pass them off as if you made them.”

“Oh, my freaking God, Conner! Look at the dinner I made you.”

“I am, babe, and I’m enjoying every bit of it.” His brows furrowed. “What is wrong with you?”

I took a moment to calm down and smiled sweetly at him.

“Baby back ribs, baby spinach salad, baby red potatoes, and baby carrots and peas. What do all those foods have in common?”

He looked down at his plate and then back at me.

“I don’t really know.” He nervously answered.

Thank God I had a backup plan. Even Ella could have figured it out. I stood up from my chair and went into the

laundry room, where I had the small gift bag hidden. Grabbing it, I handed it to him.

“What’s this?” A grin crossed his face.

“You’ll see when you open it.”

He removed the tissue paper, reached into the bag, and pulled out a yellow pair of baby booties.

“Baby booties?” He looked at me, and then suddenly, his eyes grew wide. “Holy shit! Are you pregnant?”

I stood there and nodded my head as tears filled my eyes.

“Oh, my God. We’re having a baby!” He jumped up from his chair and pulled me into him.

“Yes, Conner. We’re having a baby.”

He broke our embrace and held my face in his hands. “I’m going to be a father, Charlotte.” Tears filled his eyes.

“Yes, Conner.” I smiled as a tear fell down my cheek. “You’re going to be a father.”

“How? How did this happen? You’re on birth control.”

“Blame it on the traumatic brain injury.”

“Jesus, Charlotte. The dinner. Every food has the word baby in it. That’s how you were trying to tell me.”

“Yes, and you’re an idiot.” I smirked.

“In my defense. I would never have guessed that. When did you find out?”

“Today. I talked to Georgia, and she ran a pregnancy test. I’m five weeks.”

“Oh, baby.” He pulled me into him and hugged me tight. “You have made me the happiest man on earth. I love you so much.”

“I love you too, Conner.”

“I can’t wait to tell my brothers and cousins. You’re happy about it, right?” he asked as he stared into my eyes.

“Yes. I’m very happy. Shocked, but happy.”

“You know what, babe? The universe—”

I brought my finger up, placed it on his lips, and shook my head no.

“You’re right. Screw the universe.” He kissed me, then got down on his knees, pressing his hands and lips against my belly. “Hey, little one. It’s your daddy. You are so loved already, and I can’t wait to meet you.”

I softly ran my fingers through his hair as he spoke to our child.

“There may be twins in there.” He looked up at me. “Wouldn’t that be great?” A grin crossed his face.

“Twins don’t run in my family.”

“How do you know? You can’t remember much.” He grinned.

“Now that you mention it, I can’t remember much. I couldn’t even remember to take my pills when I needed to. You know what that means?”

“What?” He stood up and gripped my hips.

“I’m not even sure if the baby is yours. For all I know, I could have slept with someone else and forgot.” A sinister smile crossed my face.

He pointed his finger at me as he tried to speak, but nothing would come out.

“I win.” I smiled and walked away. “Oh, by the way, we’re waiting until seven o’clock to tell the family.

“Why? Why can’t I shout it out now?”

“Because Emilia just found out today as well that she’s pregnant, and the four of us are telling the family together.”

“What?” Conner placed his hands on his head. “Sebastian is going to be a father too?”

“Yep.” I smiled.

“Damn. He must be on cloud nine. I know they’ve been trying for a long time.”

“They were going to start IVF next month if they didn’t get pregnant,” I said.

The sliding door opened, and Sebastian and Emilia stepped inside.

## CHAPTER 41



Conner

“You!” I pointed at Sebastian with a smile as he walked over and hugged me.

“Congrats, cousin,” he said.

“Congrats to you and Emilia too. Oh my God.” I broke our embrace and gripped his shoulders. “We’re going to be fathers. Congratulations, mama.” I hugged Emilia as Sebastian hugged and congratulated Charlotte.

“Thank you, Conner. Congratulations, Daddy.” She smiled.

“I lit the firepit and texted everyone to meet us down there,” Sebastian spoke.

“Okay. Let’s tell the family that two new babies are coming.” I grinned as I hooked my arm around Charlotte.

“We know how excited you two are to tell the guys, so you two can announce it.” Charlotte smiled.

“This is why I love this woman.” I smiled at Sebastian. “But all four of us will announce it together.”

The four of us walked down to the beach, where the entire family was gathered.

“What’s with the emergency family meeting?” Sam asked.

“On the count of three. One. Two. Three! We’re having a baby!” The four of us shouted at the same time.

“What?” Simon laughed as he stood up. You two are pregnant?” He pointed to Charlotte and Emilia.”

“Yep.” I grinned.

Everyone shouted and clapped as they congratulated us.

“Come here.” Christian grabbed me and hugged me tight. “I can’t believe this.”

“Me either, bro. I’m still in shock.”

“Uncle Conner!” Ella ran over to me.

“Hey, pumpkin.” I picked her up.

“I’m so happy for you, Aunt Charlotte, Sebastian, and Emilia. It’s raining babies. They’re everywhere!” She hugged me.

I chuckled. “It seems like it, doesn’t it?”

“You’re going to make a great dad.”

“Thank you, sweetheart.” I hugged her tight.

“Will we still be able to play Call of Duty?”

“You bet we will.”

“Good. I’m going to teach the baby how to beat you when he or she is older!”

We all laughed as Nathan patted my back. I glanced over at Jackson, who had tears in his eyes.

“Bro, what’s wrong?”

“Nothing. It’s just not that long ago that I was operating on her brain, and I wasn’t sure if she was going to make it. Then she woke up and had no memory of you or any of us. Now look. Not only are you still getting married, but you’re also having a baby together.” He hugged me. “I’m so damn proud of you, brother.”

“Okay. Stop.” I broke our embrace and wiped the tears from my eyes. “She’s alive because of you, and I owe you my life for that.”

“Okay, douchebags.” Simon walked over, and I could see the tears in his eyes. “Enough. We have some celebrating to do.”

“When are you telling Mom?” Stefan asked Sebastian.

“I’ll give her a call tomorrow. Where the hell has she been?” Sebastian asked.

“I don’t know, but I’m getting kind of worried,” Sam spoke.

“You know what? Let’s call Aunt Barb right now,” I said as I pulled out my phone and dialed her number.

“Conner, is everything okay? Is Charlotte okay?” she answered, and we all looked at each other.

“Yeah, Aunt Barb. Charlotte is fine. No one has heard from you in a while. We’re starting to worry.”

“You’re sweet, but there’s no need to worry.”

“Mom, it’s Sebastian.”

“Oh, hello, darling.”

“Conner and I have some news to tell you.”

“Okay. What’s going on?”

“Emilia is pregnant,” Sebastian said.

“And so is Charlotte,” I spoke.

“Oh, my goodness, boys. Congratulations. I’m so happy for both of you. We’ll all go out and celebrate as soon as I get back. I have to run.”

“Mom, wait—” Sebastian said.

*Click.*

“Did she just hang up on us?” Sebastian looked at me.

“I guess so.”

“And where the fuck is she?” Simon asked. “She didn’t tell us she was going out of town. What is that woman up to?” He narrowed his eye.





“Okay, you two. Let’s get this ultrasound going and see if we can hear the heartbeat.” Georgia smiled. “Oh, look at that. There’s your baby.”

I squeezed Charlotte’s hand as tears filled my eyes.

“And there’s the heartbeat. It’s nice and strong. Everything looks good.”

After work, Charlotte and I stopped at Target on the way home to pick up a few things we needed. My phone kept falling out of my shorts pocket, so I tossed it in the front of the cart and found Charlotte in the baby section looking at baby blankets.

“Look how cute this is.” She grinned.

“It’s very cute. Do you want to buy it?” I smiled.

“Yeah. I do.” She tossed it into the cart. “We need to go to the home section.”

“Why?”

“I want to look at pillows.”

“For what?” I arched my brow.

“To sleep on.” She cocked her head. “Mine isn’t comfortable anymore.”

“How is that possible when you barely sleep on it?” I asked as we headed to the home section.

“What are you talking about?”

“Ninety percent of the night and time, your head is on my chest. You don’t need a new pillow. Yours is fine.”

She stopped the cart in the middle of the aisle and stared at me.

“What?”

“You’re afraid that my new pillow will be too comfortable, and I won’t need your chest anymore.” She grinned.

“I have no idea what you’re talking about, Dr. Roman.”

I walked ahead of her and stopped when I noticed she wasn’t following me.



Charlotte

Flashes began going off in my head again, so I stopped and breathed through them.

“Charlotte, what’s wrong?” Conner ran over.

“Right here. This spot. This is where we met.”

He looked around. “Oh yeah. It is.” A grin crossed his lips.

“You were yelling at me.”

“I was defending my—wait a minute. Are you remembering that?”

“Bits and pieces. You told me I wasn’t nice or normal?” I cocked my head.

“You weren’t at that time. Come on, babe. Let’s keep moving.”

“Conner, you said—”

“Keep moving along, Charlotte. Keep moving along.” He stood behind me, grabbed the cart, and pushed me away from that area.

After we put our things from Target away, I went upstairs and hung out over the toilet for a while because I felt like I was going to be sick. I never knew when it would hit, but when it did, it hit hard.

“Ah, your favorite spot,” Conner said when he walked into the bathroom.

“Emilia said she feels a little nauseous when she first wakes up, and then it’s gone in ten minutes, and she’s fine the rest of the day. Why can’t I be like that?”

“Because you’re special.” He leaned over and whispered in my ear.

“You’re lucky I don’t have the energy to slap you,” I said, and he chuckled.

“You know, babe, I really miss running the diffuser at night,” he shouted from the bedroom.

“I have a solution for that.”

“What?” he asked.

“You can sleep in the guest room and run it all you want.”

“No can do, babe. You need my chest since you didn’t get a new pillow.”

“Because someone rushed me out of the store!”

I stood up from the floor, changed into my nightshirt, and climbed into bed next to Conner. Pulling out my journal from the nightstand, I began writing in it while Conner read my *What to Expect When You’re Expecting* book.

“Dear me, Conner got on your nerves today, and it took everything for you not to kill him,” I spoke out loud as I pretended to write it down.

“What? You did not just write that.” He grabbed my journal and looked at it.

I sat there with a wide grin on my face.

“No journaling for you tonight.” He set my journal down on his nightstand.

I scooted down and lay on my side as Conner did the same and faced me.

“Seeing our little peapod today was incredible.” A smile crossed his lips as he softly stroked my belly.

“Yeah. It was. It made it more real.” I smiled. “Don’t forget I have my appointment with Dr. Bancroft tomorrow. I’ll be in the office after.”

“*You* don’t forget you have an appointment with Dr. Bancroft tomorrow.” A smirk crossed his lips as he leaned in

and kissed me.

## CHAPTER 42



Charlotte

I was standing in the middle of the suite in my wedding dress when there was a knock at the door.

“I’ll see who it is,” Charleigh said. “This was just delivered for you.” She smiled and handed me a beautifully wrapped, elongated box and a card.

Opening the card, tears filled my eyes when I read it.

*To my beautiful future wife,*

*You know how tradition goes. Something borrowed, something blue, something old, and something new. This is something new for you. When I saw it, I knew it would look beautiful on you. I hope you love it as much as I love you. See you soon, babe.*

*Love forever,*

*Your future husband*

“Oh crap. Why do these guys have to do this?” Jenni said as she grabbed a tissue and handed it to me.

I took the wrapping off the box and opened the lid. Inside sat a beautiful diamond bracelet.

“It’s so beautiful. I can’t believe he did this,” I said.

“Yes, you can.” Georgia laughed. “We all can believe it.”

I removed the bracelet, and Charleigh placed it on my wrist.

“It looks perfect with your dress.” She smiled.

“Has anyone seen my phone?” I asked.

“It’s right here,” Julia handed it to me.

I sent Conner a text message.

*“Thank you for the beautiful bracelet. I love it so much.”*

*“You’re welcome. I hope you don’t love it more than me.”*

*“That’s undecided at the moment. I’ll let you know later.”*

*“I’ll see you soon, my bride. I love you.”*

*“I love you too, my groom.”*

There was another knock at the door, and when Georgia opened it, Barb walked in.

“Charlotte, darling. Look at you. You are gorgeous.” She kissed my cheek.

“Thanks, Barb. You look stunning.”

“Thank you. I couldn’t look this good without a Simply Jenni dress.” She smiled.

“Have you been to see the guys yet?” Jenni asked.

“No. I’m stopping by their suite after I leave here.” She took hold of my hands and gave them a gentle squeeze. “I know the road has been difficult for you, but you’re a strong woman, Charlotte, and you’ve come a long way since the accident. I’m very proud of you.”

“Thank you, Barb. I appreciate your kind words.”

“You all look stunning.” She smiled. “I’ll see you in the Gardens. It’s almost time.” She smiled as she walked out of the suite.

“Okay. Let’s get your veil on and make any necessary adjustments before we take you down to your handsome future husband.” Jenni smiled.



Connor

I had just finished putting on my tuxedo when there was a knock on the door.

“I’ll get it,” Simon said. “Hello, Mother.” I heard him say.

“Hello, boys. Conner, my darling.” She walked over and hugged me. “You look as handsome as ever.”

“Thank you, Aunt Barb.”

“Gabriel. Grayson.” She walked over and hugged them. “It’s good to see you both again.”

“Good to see you too, Barb.” Grayson smiled.

“So, Mom.” Simon walked over and hooked his arm around her. “We’re going to have a little chat once the wedding is over.”

“A chat about what, Simon?”

“About you and what’s going on.”

“Nothing is going on, darling. Put your detective instincts away.” She patted his chest. “I’ll see you boys in the Gardens.”

“Your bowtie is crooked.” Nathan walked over and straightened it. “Are you ready?” He gripped my shoulders.

“Are you? Your day will be here before you know it.”

“Speaking of,” Jackson spoke. “Have you and Sofia set a date yet?”

“No. Not yet. We’re discussing it.” He smiled.

“It’s time,” Christian said as he glanced at his watch. “Let’s go get you married.” He patted my back.



I stood there with my brothers and cousins and wasn’t nervous. This day almost didn’t happen for two reasons. One was because we weren’t sure if Charlotte was going to make it, and two, she lost her memories of me. I was

nothing but a complete stranger to her when she opened her eyes. Now, she would become my wife and the mother of my child. I had nothing to be nervous about because she was here, and I thanked God every day for that.

“You okay?” Jackson asked.

“I’m fucking wonderful, bro.” I smiled.

The music started to play, and the girls slowly walked down the aisle one by one, as did Lily and Ella. Henry looked like such a little man walking down the aisle holding the white satin pillow that held the rings. Ella gave me a small wave as a bright smile crossed her face.

The wedding march began to play, and my heart beat out of my chest because I couldn’t wait to see my bride. Tears filled my eyes the moment I saw her, for she looked more beautiful than ever. As she approached where I stood, I held out my hand, and she took it with a smile on her face.

“You are absolutely gorgeous.” A smile crossed my lips. “Shall we get married?”

“Yes. Let’s do this.” She grinned. “After all, we do have a baby on the way.”

I let out a light chuckle, and the minister said some words before we took our vows.

“Charlotte, we made it.” The corners of my mouth curved upward. “I’ve never loved anyone as I love you. I’ve told you many times, but then the accident happened, and you didn’t remember. So, I reminded you every day, even though you didn’t want to hear it. You are the most beautiful woman in the world, and I will spend the rest of my life telling you how much I love you. Standing up here today in front of all these people confirms that nothing could ever tear us apart. You’re my soulmate for life, and I couldn’t be happier. I love you, babe, and making you happy is my only priority in life. If you’re sad, I will take your sadness away. If you’re stressed, I will help ease it. If you need help, I’m there in a flash. I will do everything and anything for you for the rest of our lives.” Tears filled my eyes.



She took in a deep breath as a tear fell from her cheek.

“Conner, when I woke up in that hospital, you were nothing but a stranger to me. I could have just walked away, but somehow, I knew I could trust you. You’ve helped me in so many ways, and I will spend the rest of my life thanking you for that. Even though I couldn’t remember, I was shown that I loved you more than life before the accident. And the best part of not remembering was that I got to fall in love with you all over again. As soulmates, we’re bound by an unbreakable string. I love you with all my heart and soul and will love you for the rest of our lives. You’re my person, and I thank you for the love, support, and happiness you give me every single day.

I brought my hand up and wiped away her tears before wiping mine.

“It’s time for the exchanging of the rings,” the minister spoke. “Conner, repeat after me. I, Conner, take Charlotte to be my lawfully wedded wife. To have and to hold, love, honor, cherish, and obey—”

“Wait? What? Obey?”

“Just go with it, babe.” Charlotte grinned.

“Why not. I already do anyway,” I said as everyone laughed.

I slipped the ring on her finger and pressed my lips against it. After Charlotte placed the ring on my finger, the minister pronounced us husband and wife.

“You may kiss your bride, Conner.” He smiled.

“I’ve been waiting all damn day to do this.”

Everyone shouted and clapped with happiness as our lips met for the first time as husband and wife.

After everyone left the Gardens and went inside to the Crystal Ballroom for appetizers and drinks, the wedding photos began.

“Welcome to the marriage club, cousin.” Simon patted my back.

“Thanks, Simon.”

Once the pictures were over, I whisked Charlotte away for a moment so we could be alone before heading to the reception.

“That dress is stunning.” I smiled.

“Thank you. Jenni is so talented. You look sexy as fuck in that tuxedo. I’m happy this is my first time seeing you in one.” A grin crossed her face. “I love my new bracelet. When did you have time to go buy it?”

“I bought it the same day I bought your watch. I’m not gonna lie. I spent a pretty penny that day.” I smirked. “But I would spend thousands on you every day because you are worth every penny.” I leaned in and brushed my lips against hers.

“Good. Then I’ll be connecting your credit card to my Amazon account.”

“Now, now, Charlotte. Let’s not get all crazy.”

She laughed as I pulled her into me.

“Shall we go greet our guests and thank them for coming to our wedding?” she asked.

“Yeah. Let’s go.” I grabbed her hand. “I can’t wait to introduce you to everyone.” I smirked.

“Very funny.”

## CHAPTER 43



Charlotte

After the DJ announced us, we stepped into the ballroom while all of our guests shouted and clapped.

“I’m going to grab a drink. Do you want a water or something?” Conner asked.

“Water would be great.”

“I’ll be right back.” His lips met mine.

“In case I haven’t told you. You look gorgeous.” Jackson smiled as he kissed my cheek.

“Thank you, brother-in-law.” I grinned.

“Hey, bro.” Conner walked over and handed me my drink.

“This place looks as beautiful as it did when Georgia and I got married,” Jackson said.

“Thanks. I did a good job, didn’t I?” A grin crossed Conner’s lips.

“Excuse me?” I laughed.

“What?” He cocked his head. “You were still deciding whether or not you were going to marry me, and there was still a lot to do.”

“Conner. Charlotte.” A handsome man and a beautiful woman walked over.

“Asher, my man. Thanks for coming.” Conner hugged him. “Everly, you look as gorgeous as ever.” He hugged her.

“Charlotte, these are our friends from New York, Asher and Everly Remington.”

“It’s nice to meet both of you again.” I smiled as I hugged them.

“Everly is the one I was telling you about.”

“Oh. You’re the one who saw the boy who hit me in my room, right?”

“Yes. He was very sorry about the accident.”

“I forgave him. I hope he’s at peace.”

“He is.” She smiled. “And so is your brother.”

“Conner told me about that and how you told me. Thank you.”

“How about my dear old dad?” Simon walked over and hooked his arm around Everly. “Any more secrets he wants us to know?”

“No, Simon.” She smiled. “He’s at peace.”

“Good. You never know with him.” He sighed.



Conner

I walked over to Grayson and Gabriel and hooked my arms around them.

“Your first Kind wedding. Is it giving you the urge to find someone and get married here?” A smirk crossed my lips.

“That would be a no,” Grayson said.

“We love weddings.” Gabriel smiled. “As long as they’re not ours.”

“How’s Charlotte feeling these days?” Grayson asked. “Is she still experiencing nausea?”

“Luckily for her, it’s down to one time a day, and it’s usually around noon.”

“Hey, you three.” Nathan walked over. “Have you noticed that Aunt Barb is acting weird? Something must be going on with her and Henry.”

“Why do you say that?” I furrowed my brows.

“I don’t know. Something is off. Sam even mentioned it.”

It was time to eat, so we took our seats at the bridal table.

“I’m starving,” Charlotte said. “I haven’t eaten since this morning.”

“Babe, you didn’t forget you’re pregnant, did you?”

Her brow arched as she stared at me.

“What? I’m pregnant? When did that happen?”

“Very funny, babe.” I kissed her forehead. “God, I can’t wait until we cut the cake.”

“Why?” she asked.

“Because it’s the best cake ever. You are obsessed with the key lime coconut.” I grinned.

“Conner!” Georgia reached over and slapped my arm.

“What?” I laughed.

“I know for a fact you’re lying because I’m not big on key lime.” Charlotte rolled her eyes. “There better be another flavor somewhere in that huge cake because I know I wouldn’t have let you choose key lime coconut for all the tiers. I don’t even need a memory to know that.”

“Don’t worry. There is.” I winked at her.

After we ate, Charlotte and I walked over to the table that displayed our five-tier wedding cake. I picked up the knife and looked at her.

“Let’s do this.” I grinned.

She stood there and stared at it. “It’s so beautiful. I don’t want to cut it. I just want to stand here and stare at it.”

“Babe, take hold of the knife so we can cut it together. Come on.” I grabbed her hand and placed it on the knife.

Placing my hand on top of hers, I brought it up to the cake, and she pulled it back.

“It’s just too pretty.”

“Cut the damn cake, Charlotte!”

“You really want that key lime coconut, don’t you?”

“You know I do, and that’s why you’re stalling. I know your little games. Besides, our guests are waiting for their piece.”

“Fine.” She smirked as we cut into the cake. “Ha!” She laughed. “I do believe this is white with a cheesecake filling!”

“Fuck. Where’s the key lime coconut?”

“Don’t worry, Dr. Kind. We’ll cut all the layers and bring you your key lime coconut,” one of the waiters said.

“Aw.” Charlotte pouted. “Here. Have a taste.” She smashed the cake against my mouth. “Don’t even think about it, Conner. I’m pregnant.”

“You’re using the pregnancy card already, I see. Okay. You win.” I held my hand behind my back, and Christian discreetly grabbed a slice and gave it to me. “I love you.” I leaned in to kiss her, brought my hand around, and smashed the cake against her mouth.

“Conner! Oh wow. This is really good.”

After we cleaned ourselves up, the DJ announced it was time for our bridal dance. I wanted it to be extra special. While Emilia played the piano, Alex beautifully sang Can’t Help Falling in Love.

I took Charlotte’s hand and led her to the dancefloor.

“Oh, my God. I didn’t know Alex could sing like that?”

“Yeah, you did, babe.” I smiled as I held her close. “When we picked this song together, I wanted it to be extra special for us.”

“You are the most amazing man in the world. Do you know that? Wait. Don’t answer. I already know what you’re

going to say.” A smile fell upon her lips.

“Damn right, I am.” I kissed her.

Our wedding was a blast. Between the alcohol, great conversations, and all the dancing everyone did, we all had a great time.

I was talking with my brothers and cousins when Henry and Aunt Barb walked over.

“Boys. I’m happy you’re all together. There’s something I need to tell you.”

“What’s up, Mom?” Stefan asked.

“Henry asked me to marry him, and I’ve accepted his proposal.” She held out her hand.

“WHAT?” Simon spit out his drink.

My brothers and I looked at each other and didn’t say a word.

“Mom, are you serious?” Sam asked.

“Very serious. Do you not see the diamond on my finger, Samuel?”

“You haven’t known each other that long,” Sebastian said.

“It doesn’t matter if we knew each other for a week. When you know you’re meant to be with someone, you know. Isn’t that right, darling?” She kissed his cheek.

“That’s right, sweetheart.” Henry smiled.

“Congrats, Aunt Barb. That’s amazing.” Christian smiled, and I slapped the back of his head.

“Yeah. Congrats.” Shaun faked a smile.

“This is ridiculous.” Simon shook his head.

“I’m sorry you feel that way, Simon. Conner, it was a beautiful wedding.” She hugged me. “Have a wonderful time on your honeymoon.” She kissed my cheek, and she and Henry left.

We all stood there and looked at each other in shock.

“I’m not buying this bullshit. I’m telling you. She’s up to something,” Simon said.

“Whatever, bro. Just accept it, and let’s move on.” Sam placed his hand on Simon’s back. “There’s nothing we can do. We have our own lives to worry about.”



## CHAPTER 44



Charlotte

We hugged our family goodbye before we headed up to our suite, for we were leaving early in the morning for St. Lucia and wouldn't see them again until we returned home.

"Have the best honeymoon ever," Charleigh said as she and the other girls hugged me.

"Make sure to Facetime occasionally or send us videos," Grace said.

"We'll miss you guys," Sofia said.

Conner grabbed my hand as we said goodnight to everyone and headed to the elevator.

"Two weeks of uninterrupted bliss." He grinned.

"We definitely need it after everything we've been through." I smiled.

Conner picked me up and carried me inside the room when we reached our suite.

"Damn. This dress is heavy."

"But it's so beautiful," I said. "I don't want to take it off."

"I'm sorry you feel that way, babe. It's coming off."

I smiled as he set me down on the floor.

"Then get to work, husband." I turned around, so my back faced him.

“My pleasure, wife.” His lips trailed across my neck as his fingers unbuttoned my dress.

Our wedding night was just as beautiful as our wedding day, and one that would forever be etched in my mind. I never thought I could be so happy. Even though I had very little memory of our time together before the accident, it didn't matter anymore. We would spend the rest of our lives creating new memories every day, not just with the two of us but with our baby.

Our two-week honeymoon went by way too fast. Our first week in St. Lucia was beautiful, and we had the best time. But our week in the Maldives, in our private over-the-water bungalow, took the cake. I had never experienced anything like it.

“I don't want to leave,” I said as my head rested on Conner's chest.

“Me either, babe. Maybe we should move here. We could raise our child in the lap of luxury.”

I lifted my head and smiled at him. “That would be nice, but you would never leave your family.”

“For this, I would.” A smirk crossed his lips.

“No, you wouldn't.” I playfully slapped his chest.

“Fine. I wouldn't. I'd miss those douchebags too much. This is our last morning in this bed with this view. Let's make good use of it before we have to get dressed and head to the airport.” He rolled me on my back and hovered over me.

“I love you so much, Conner.” I wrapped my arms around his neck.

“I love you too, Charlotte.” His lips met mine.



*C*onner

As much as I loved St. Lucia and the Maldives, it was good to be home. I set our suitcases down in the living room and opened all the windows to let some fresh air in. I smiled when I saw Ella standing at the sliding door, trying to open it. Walking over, I unlocked it and immediately picked her up.

“I missed you and Aunt Charlotte so much!” She hugged me tight.

“I missed you too, my favorite niece. It’s so good to see you. How were things while we were gone?” I asked.

“Good. Now that you’re back, can we make some TikTok videos?”

“Of course.” I kissed her forehead. “Can you give me a day, though?”

“Yeah.” She smiled as she placed her hands on each side of my face.

“Hey, Ella.” Charlotte walked down the stairs and took her from me.

“Hi, Aunt Charlotte. I missed you so much.”

“Aw, I missed you too.”

I saw Charlotte whispering in Ella’s ear.

“Uncle Conner, take the luggage upstairs so you can start unpacking and give me my present.” She grinned.

“Wow, Charlotte. Using our niece to get me to unpack already?”

She stood there with a bright smile on her face. “Yes. Yes, I am.”

“Please, Uncle Conner.”

“Fine.” I grabbed our luggage and took them upstairs. “You purposely put her present in my suitcase so you could force me to unpack already,” I said as they followed me up the stairs.

“Yep. I sure did,” Charlotte spoke.

Charlotte was tired and wanted to lie down for a while, so I texted my brothers and cousins to meet me on the beach.

“Welcome back, brother.” Christian hugged me.

“It’s good to be back.”

“Welcome home.” Jackson hugged me.

“Yeah, bro. We missed your dumbass.” Nathan grinned as he hugged me. “Ella told me Charlotte made you unpack already.” He snickered.

“Yeah. Yeah. Actually, I’m happy she did. Everything is put away, laundry is being done, and all is good.”

“How was the honeymoon?” Simon grinned as he walked over and hugged me.

“Perfection.” The corners of my mouth curved upward.

“Did Charlotte have any memories come back while you were on your honeymoon?” Jackson asked.

“Nope. Not one.”

“Don’t forget she has her scan on Monday,” he said.

“I know. I haven’t forgotten.”

“Shaun, I see the fence is gone that Uncle Henry put up.”

“Yep. Everything is right on schedule.” He smiled.

“Did you and Sofia set a wedding date yet?” I glanced at Nathan.

“Not yet. We’re still discussing it.” He smirked.

“Just pick a fucking date, dude. It’s not that hard.”

“We will. We have things we need to plan around, like her recitals and all the babies that are coming. We need every one of you there with us. Would you appreciate it if we set a date around when your baby is due, and then you and Charlotte can’t be there? Same with Sebastian and Emilia.”

“True.” I brought the bottle to my lips.

We all sat there drinking beer and talking when Simon’s phone rang. Pulling it from his pocket, he answered it.

“Hey, Mom. What’s up? What happened? Mom!”

“What’s going on?” Sam asked.

“Mom said she needs us to come over right now. Something’s wrong.”

We all jumped up from our seats and drove two separate cars. When we pulled into the driveway, we ran up to the door, and Simon opened it.

“Mom?” Simon shouted.

“In the living room,” she said.

When we reached the living room, nothing had prepared us for what we saw—a room destroyed, Henry lying on the floor, and Aunt Barb bleeding.

“Mom! What are you doing?” Simon shouted.

“Aunt Barb!” I exclaimed as she stood there, pointing a gun at Henry.

“Your mother shot me!” Henry lay on the floor holding his leg.

“You’re lucky I didn’t go for your balls,” she spoke calmly.

“You shot your fiancé? What the fuck, Mom!” Simon shouted. “Put the gun down now!”

She locked the gun and handed it to Simon.

“Jesus Christ.” Shaun sighed.

“We need to stop the bleeding,” Jackson said as he and Nathan ran over to Henry.

“What the hell happened?” Simon commanded. “And since when do you own a gun?”

*T*hank you for reading A Kind Wedding: Conner & Charlotte. I hope you enjoyed it!

Will Nathan & Sofia finally set a wedding date? What the heck did Barb do, and why? Find out in the next book of the Kind Brothers Series: *A Kind Wedding: Nathan & Sofia*.

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