

USA TODAY BESTSELLING AUTHOR

EVE LONDON



*Galentine's
Groupies*

He's going to rock
her all night long.

ROCKED BY

The Roadie

ROCKED BY THE ROADIE

GALENTINES GLOBETROTTERS SERIES

EVE LONDON

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Dear Reader,

Thanks for picking up this copy of *Rocked by the Roadie*, part of the *Galentines Groupies* series. I can't wait for you to meet Hendrix and Daisy. If you love their story and want to learn more about my books (and get a free novella!) you can sign up for my newsletter [here](https://www.evelondonauthor.com/sign-up-for-my-newsletter/):
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XOXO,

Eve

Rocked by the Roadie

Two hearts, one bed, no looking back.

Daisy

When the hottest boy band on the planet gets back together for an epic reunion tour, there's no decision to make. I'm going. It's been ten years since I've had the chance to hang out with my groupie besties. They don't know it yet, but my parents are forcing me to settle into a life they've pre-planned, right down to the man they want me to marry. I've got one final weekend of freedom to make memories that will last forever. Memories that will hopefully include the tattooed, bearded roadie whose hotel room I end up sharing. Especially since there's only one bed.

Hendrix

I'm not looking for anything but a paycheck when I take over the stage set up crew for an overhyped reunion tour. All I want is to do my job and get enough dough to buy a private little place in the country. But after one glance at Daisy, I'm a goner. The curvy blonde is too young, too smiley, too everything, including too far out of my league. Somehow, that doesn't stop her from falling into my bed. Now I need to figure out a way to keep her there or risk losing my heart forever.

HENDRIX

“*W*hat the fuck is that?” Jelly, one of the other roadies helping with stage construction, nudged me in the ribs.

“Dammit!” I jerked my head up, dropping the huge bolt I was about to secure in the process, and glanced over at the woman walking across the stage. Time slowed down while my pulse sped up. Long blonde hair framed a face that belonged on the cover of a magazine. Her curves seemed to go on forever. I forgot about the ratchet in my hand, forgot I still had a whole set to construct and not enough time to do it, and stared at the goddess as she passed.

“Did you see that?” Jelly asked.

“Are you kidding me?” I turned to him, already feeling slightly possessive of the curvy blonde. “If she was a dream, I don’t ever want to wake up.”

“Not the chick,” Jelly said. “She’s fine as hell, but I was talking about the furry thing sticking out of her purse.”

I squinted at the pink bag tucked under the woman’s arm. A tuft of white hair stuck out of the top. “Who do you think she is?”

“Probably another superfan who’s been waiting ten years to throw herself at one of the guys in the band.” Jelly snorted. “You should see the length some of these women will go to for a shot at a few minutes of fame.”

I looked down to try to locate the bolt I'd dropped, then gave up and eyed the blonde instead. She had on thigh-high black boots with narrow, spiked heels. Her hair was pulled away from her face in a sleek ponytail that hung halfway down her back, and her hot pink mini dress barely covered her full, round ass. While I stared, the heel of her boot lodged between two panels of the stage. She stepped forward, lost her balance, and fell to one knee.

"Oh, shit." In seconds, I was by her side, offering her my hand. "Are you okay?"

"I'm fine. I should have known better than to wear these boots today." She took my hand. A zap of electricity traveled up my arm as I helped her to her feet. "Shoot. Where's my purse? Where's Growler?"

"Here's your bag." I picked it up and handed it to her.

She pulled the tiny furball out and cradled it against her chest. "Are you okay, Growler? I'm such a klutz."

The little dog lapped at her fingers with its small pink tongue. I'd never seen a dog that fucking little, but it appeared to be unharmed. The blonde, however, still had her heel lodged in the crack of the stage. She tried to lift her foot, but it wouldn't budge.

"Do you need a hand with that?" I nodded toward her boot. Some of the other guys putting the set together had started to take notice. So did the asshole working security at the venue, who wasn't part of the tour.

"Here, can you hold Growler for a second?" She thrust the ball of fur at my chest.

"Yeah, sure." Instinct had me reaching for the miniscule critter. He looked more like a lover than a fighter, especially with the pink bow tie around his neck and another one holding that tuft of hair together. "Why do you call him Growler?"

On cue, the dog let out a low, menacing growl.

I lifted the furball up to look him in the eyes. "I get it. He likes to let everyone know he's in charge, huh?"

“Careful!” The blonde reached for the dog just as he lunged at my face.

The sharp sting of his tiny teeth piercing my chin almost made me drop the little fucker.

“I’m so sorry.” She grabbed Growler from my hands. “You’re bleeding. Are you okay?”

I wiped the back of my hand across my beard. There wasn’t much blood, and I’d survived a hell of a lot worse. “Yeah. I’m fine.”

“He sometimes gets nervous around men. I think he was mistreated by his first owner.” She put the dog back in her bag and pulled out a tissue. “Let me at least wipe the blood away for you.”

I held still while she dabbed at my face. The scent of her perfume wrapped around me and pulled me closer. Despite the bite from her miniscule companion, I wanted to find out more about her.

“If you take off your boot, I’ll get you unstuck.”

“Thanks.” She leaned over and unzipped her boot, flashing me with an eyeful of cleavage in the process. This woman was going to be trouble. I could feel it deep down in my bones, just like my foster mom could predict an incoming storm. “There. I’m free.”

She stepped out of her boot as the security guard from the venue approached. He was one of those guys who had to stick his nose into everything to prove his importance. I’d dealt with plenty of his type during my time in the service.

“What’s going on over here?”

“Nothing. Just a snafu with the stage.” I tried to cover for her while she unzipped her other boot, though it was getting more and more difficult to think on my feet since all the blood in my body was rushing away from my brain and straight toward my cock.

“Is that a,”—the security guard squinted at the bag on the ground—“a dog? We don’t allow dogs in the venue.”

The blonde's face fell. She glanced up at me as she captured her bottom lip with her teeth. "It's—"

"My dog," I said. "And he won't be a problem. I've already got clearance from the tour manager to have him here. If you have an issue with that, take it up with your boss."

The security guard narrowed his dark eyes like he was sizing me up to see if I was telling the truth. Something in my glare must have convinced him. He mumbled a few words too low for me to hear, then turned to head back to his position by the door.

"Thanks so much for your help. We never actually introduced ourselves, did we? I'm Daisy." She pulled her other foot from her boot, then picked up the bag holding the ferocious little dog.

"Nice to meet you. I'm Hendrix." Without her boots on, the top of her head barely came to my chin. Damn, she was young. Bright-eyed and full of sunshine, too. A sense of protectiveness washed over me. I wanted to wrap my arms around her, minus the weird little dog who looked like a furry rat, and keep her safe from the big, bad world.

"This isn't how I planned to start my backstage tour." Daisy glanced around, oblivious to the rest of the roadies who'd stopped working to stare in appreciation. "I've had a string of bad luck lately."

"You and me both." Though my "string" had lasted the better part of the past twenty years. I bent down to free the heel of her boot from the crack. My low vantage point put my eye to navel with her. Damn, I would have given just about anything to run my palm over the curve of her hip and up her side. I never thought I had a "type" before. Turns out my type was Daisy. Everything about her turned me inside out.

She waited while I rocked the boot back and forth, then finally freed it from the crack. Except for a few scratches across the heel, her boot seemed to still be in one piece.

"Here you go." Reluctantly, I handed it over. I wasn't ready to say goodbye, but didn't know how to extend our time

together. She looked like a clean-cut sorority girl, and I was a gruff and grumbly prick who was probably old enough to be her daddy.

She took the boots in one hand. “I’m supposed to be meeting some friends. Do you know Shelby? She works on the tour.”

“I think I saw her out front.” Nudging my chin toward the set of doors across the arena, I tried to come up with a reason for her to stay. Then it came to me—the dog. I held out my hands. “If you’re not heading out right away, I’d better hold on to Growler for you. Unless you’ve got somewhere else you can leave him?”

Daisy drew in a big breath. “I guess I didn’t think that far ahead. He usually goes everywhere with me. I didn’t want to leave him at the hotel all by himself.”

“I’ll be here for another couple of hours. He’ll be fine with me.”

She looked around the stage. “Are you sure he won’t get hurt? I don’t want him to get stepped on or stuck in a crack like I did.”

“He can ride around in my pocket.” Far enough from my face to minimize the risk of the angry little fur-rat taking another chunk out of my chin. I pulled on the deep pocket on the thigh of my work jeans. “Plenty of room for him in there.”

“Are you sure you don’t mind?” A glimmer of hope sparkled in her eyes. Though I was far from it, she looked at me like I was some kind of savior in denim.

I’d subject myself to a hell of a lot more than an hour or two with a vicious ball of fur to have her look at me like that again. “I don’t mind at all.”

“You’ll need to take him out to go potty.” She picked up her bag and rummaged through. “Here’s his leash and some scented bags for his doodles.”

“Doodles?”

“When he poops,” she whispered. “You have to pick it up and throw it away. You can’t just leave it in the grass.”

A pooping, biting dog... even knowing that, I was still in. Getting to see her when she came back for Growler would be worth it. “Don’t worry. There’s no grass right outside the arena anyway.”

Her brows drew down. “Oh, he’ll only go on grass. Maybe this is a bad idea.”

We’d only just met, but I couldn’t stand the disappointment in her voice. I was no fucking hero, but I wanted to be one for her. I lowered my voice to minimize the risk of one of the other guys hearing me. “I’ll find a patch of grass for him to do his doodles, okay?”

“You’re sure?” Her lips split into a gorgeous smile that lit up my insides like fireworks on the fucking Fourth of July. And for a second, she looked at me like I wasn’t just a sorry-ass, unlucky loser.

“It would be my absolute pleasure, Daisy.” Fuck, I loved the way her name felt on my tongue. I took the purple leather leash studded with square-cut rhinestones and the bright pink roll of plastic baggies. I’d never hear the end of it from the guys watching, but at that moment, I didn’t give a damn about anything except knowing I was the one who made her pouty pink lips spread into that mega-watt smile.

“Thanks so much. Give me your phone, and I’ll add my number so we can stay in touch. If you need anything, please call.”

I handed her my phone and cursed myself for the thoughts rolling through my head. There were plenty of “needs” a woman like Daisy could help me with, but none of them were appropriate to mention out loud.

“There. Now text me, so I have your number and we’ll be connected.”

Connected. Yeah, I could go for that. Except I could guaran-fucking-tee it that her vision of “connecting” and mine were on opposite sides of the spectrum.

“I’ll be back in just a bit.” She bent over to slide her feet into her boots and tug the zippers all the way up her thighs. Then she rose to her tiptoes and pressed a quick kiss to the scruff on my cheek. “Thanks, Hendrix.”

I forced the heat from my veins by imagining myself standing in an ice-cold bucket of water. Even then, my cheek still tingled from the barely there kiss. I watched her go until she disappeared through the doorway at the other end of the arena. Maybe, just maybe, my luck was starting to change.

DAISY

Flipping all over myself and pawning my precious pup off to a tattooed, muscled, bearded man wasn't how things were supposed to go today. When I found out Soul Obsession was getting back together, I absolutely had to make time to see them in person one more time. Especially since one of my fan club bestie's big sisters was actually working on the tour. I'd wanted to see them in Houston, but one of my cousins was getting married that weekend. Then I bought a ticket to see them in Austin, but my mom guilted me into helping her with one of her charity galas. Now the tour was almost over, and I hadn't had the chance to meet up with my besties and relive the old days.

This was my last chance to have fun on my own terms. I hadn't told the girls yet, but my parents were getting tired of me not living according to their plan. Come Sunday morning, they expected me to show up to brunch at their country club to meet the man they'd picked out for me to marry. It seemed medieval, but they had their reasons. It didn't seem to matter that I didn't agree with them. We'd gone round and round and round about it until I couldn't take it anymore, and I jumped in my car and drove up to Dallas.

I was living on borrowed time, but I was going to make the best of it. For the next two days, I'd promised myself I wouldn't even think about what was waiting for me at the end of this trip.

Giddiness bubbled up inside my chest as I practically skipped across the arena floor toward the doors Hendrix had

pointed out. The guilt of leaving my furbaby with a stranger almost made me turn around and head back. But then the door in front of me opened and I caught a glimpse of a table stacked high with concert gear.

Growler would be okay for a little while. Hendrix didn't seem like the kind of guy who'd run off with a woman's dog. Besides, I had a tag on Growler's collar that would let me track him down. My furbaby might be a little upset that I'd left him, but I'd order him a steak from room service tonight to make it up to him.

Feeling a little better about leaving him behind, I pushed through the doors and stepped into the outer ring of the arena.

Merchants had already started setting up booths with tour merchandise. I recognized some of the same graphics from sweatshirts and t-shirts I'd bought all those years ago along with tons of new designs. My platinum Amex was definitely going to get a workout while I was here.

"Daisy?" A voice I'd recognize anywhere came from behind me.

"Shelby!" I flung myself into her outstretched arms. "It's so good to see you. I can't believe you get to work behind the scenes on Soul Obsession's reunion tour. What a dream job!"

She pulled back first and gave me a quick once over. "You haven't changed a bit. Seriously. You still look the same as you did the last time I saw you."

"The last time you saw me was on a video chat only a couple of months ago." The same video chat when she spilled the beans that Soul Obsession was going on tour. Laughing, I drew her in for another hug. "You sure have changed. I can't believe you're expecting. How's it been going? Where are the rest of the girls?"

"I can barely keep track of the band, much less the girls. This tour's been a wild time so far. I'm sure you've heard about all the excitement."

"If by excitement, you mean most of my friends falling in love with hotties on the tour, then yes, I think I'm all caught

up.” I wished nothing but the best for my besties, though a small part of me was the teeniest bit envious. I’d been mentally prepared to meet my soulmate for years, but he hadn’t shown up yet. In just a few days, it would be too late. There was no way a man my parents picked out for me would line up with what I wanted in a lifelong partner.

“Good, because I don’t have time to fill you in.” Shelby linked her arm with mine and headed away from the doors. “I’ve got a VIP group here that’s doing a tour of the venue. You’re more than welcome to join in. The guys won’t be here until tomorrow, but plan on meeting them before they go onstage and then you’re welcome to join us for a late dinner after the show tomorrow night.”

I tried to keep the excitement bubbling up in my chest from leeching into my voice. “A late dinner with the band?”

Shelby nodded. “And the girls. Though I heard rumors about them trying to get together for lunch while the guys are doing sound checks and stuff tomorrow.”

I couldn’t believe I was going to meet the members of Soul Obsession. Each one of them held a special place in my heart and had been the object of my teenage crush at one point or another over the years.

“Thank you so much for setting everything up.”

“You’re so welcome.” Shelby let go of my arm and pulled a lanyard from her bag. A laminated VIP pass dangled from the end. “Here are your credentials. I’d keep it hidden until you need it to get backstage tomorrow. You don’t want anyone to rip it off your neck, girl.”

My hand shook as I took it from her. I’d met some super famous people in my life thanks to my dad’s partnership in a high-profile law firm and my mom’s social connections. But getting to breathe the same air as the members of Soul Obsession meant more to me than all my other celebrity meet and greets combined.

“There’s the VIP tour. I told them you’d be joining in. I’ve got to get back to work, but I’ll see you tomorrow, okay?”

Shelby drew me in for another quick hug.

“Thanks so much. I owe you big time.” I stuffed the pass into my pocket and made my way toward the edge of the group, ready to find out if the woman leading the tour knew as much as I did about my favorite band.



THREE HOURS LATER, I dragged myself back to the spot where I'd left Growler. There had been a dozen guys setting up the stage before, but they were all gone. Cold fear spread through my belly. I didn't see Hendrix right away and immediately worried that something bad had happened.

“There you are.” Hendrix stepped out from the side of the stage with Growler's leash in his hand. My little fur baby wagged his entire behind when he saw me. “I was just taking him out to do a doodle.”

The icy grip around my heart relaxed its hold. I ran as fast as I could in my ridiculous boots to meet him at the edge of the stage.

“Hey, baby. I missed you so much.”

“I'm pretty sure he missed you too.”

“Of course he did.” I picked Growler up and planted a kiss on top of his adorable little head. “How was he?”

“We got along okay, though I'm pretty sure I'll never hear the end of it from the other guys.” Hendrix rubbed his hand over his beard.

“The end of what?” I asked.

His slow smile spread across his lips, and I found myself smiling back in return. “Some of the guys thought I looked a little funny with such a small dog.”

“Please don't tell me your masculinity was threatened,” I teased.

“No chance of that.” He walked toward me with a cocky swagger in his step. “Rest assured my man card is still intact.”

“Oh, thank goodness. It’s been a long day, and I’m not sure I have it in me to build your ego back up.” I didn’t usually flirt with men I didn’t know very well, but I had a feeling Hendrix could take it. His easy smile sent flutters through my belly, and the way he handled Growler could have softened even the hardest heart.

“Where are you and the beast staying tonight?”

“Oh, um, I’ve got a room at a hotel nearby.” The question caught me by surprise. I couldn’t tell if he was asking because he wanted to make sure I had somewhere to stay or if he planned to show up on my doorstep later.

His low laugh rumbled from somewhere deep down inside his chest. “I’m not going to stalk you, sweetheart. It’s dark out, and I want to make sure you get where you’re going safe and sound. Come on, I’ll walk you.”

Relief coursed through my limbs. “You don’t have to do that.”

“Yeah, I kinda do.”

“And why is that, exactly?” I wasn’t sure how I felt about a stranger walking me to my hotel. It was only a few blocks away.

“First, because I was raised by a woman who believes chivalry isn’t dead. Second, because I wouldn’t be able to catch a wink of sleep tonight without knowing you and the beast made it to the hotel. There are rats running around on these streets that are bigger than him.”

My grip on Growler tightened. “I’d hate for you to miss out on your beauty sleep on account of me.”

“That’s more like it.” Hendrix picked up my bag and nudged his chin toward the door leading to the loading dock behind the arena. “Ready to go?”

“I suppose.”

“Which hotel is it?”

“The Magnum. According to the map, it’s just a couple of blocks over.” I hadn’t paid too much attention when I grabbed a ride share for the quick trip from the hotel to the arena earlier this afternoon. I’d arrived too early to check in, but I’d stopped by to drop off my bags, so I didn’t have to haul them around with me.

“Right this way.” Hendrix led the way, slowing his stride so I could keep up with him.

I didn’t want to admit it, but I was glad to have the company. Though I’d spent tons of time in Dallas, I wasn’t used to walking the downtown streets alone. And Hendrix looked like a man who could hold his own. Walking by his side made me feel safe. I felt practically petite since he towered over me and had biceps almost as big around as my thick thighs. He was hot in a bad boy, rough and tumble kind of way, and I tried not to picture how his beard might feel on my cheek as we made our way to the hotel.

“How long have you been with the band?” I asked.

“Oh, I’m not with the band.” He chuckled as he answered. “I got pulled into this tour when a guy I used to work with broke his arm setting up the stage. I’ve been with them since Houston. I live in Broken Bend, so I was pretty much local and could take over for him right away.”

“Broken Bend...” I’d heard that name before. “That’s not too far from Houston, right?”

“Not too far at all.”

For some reason, knowing he lived in Texas made me trust him even more. Sure, there were plenty of assholes and creeps who lived in my home state—and I’d gone out with more than my fair share—but there was also comfort in having something in common. Based on the tattoos peeking out from under his t-shirt and knowing he was several years older than me, it might be the only thing we shared.

“Here we are.” Hendrix gestured for me to enter the revolving door first, then came in behind me.

There was more than enough room for both of us but sharing that small space with him had my heart rate jumping. I could feel the warmth of his breath on my shoulder and the heat from his body even though he wasn't anywhere close to touching me. It had been so long since I'd been with a man that I'd almost forgotten what it was like—the intoxicating pull of attraction. My breath caught in my chest, and I swayed on my heels.

“Easy there.” Hendrix took my elbow and steered me out of the revolving door and into the gorgeous lobby.

I loved staying at boutique hotels when I traveled, and The Magnum was one of my favorites. Full of understated elegance, they catered to a clientele who appreciated and expected nothing but the best.

“I can take it from here. I just need to check in and get my bags from the concierge.”

“You sure?” He eyed me through half-lowered lids, almost like he wasn't quite ready to say goodbye yet.

“Miss Bremer?” An impeccably dressed man with slicked back hair and a hotel nametag approached. I recognized him as one of the guest attendants who'd helped me on previous trips.

“Yes?” I turned toward him with Growler still perched in my arms. Maybe he wanted to offer me an upgrade. I'd booked a suite already, but some of the higher-level floors had apartment-style rooms.

The man shot a quick glance to Hendrix then back at me. Lowering his voice, he leaned in. “There's been a problem with your reservation. My apologies, but we aren't going to be able to accommodate you this weekend.”

I looked around, sure that one of my friends had paid the man to prank me. “That's a good one. I'm assuming my room's ready by now?”

His lips stretched into a thin line and a deep furrow bisected his brows. “I'm not sure you understand. Your payment method failed to authorize. We had to release your reservation.”

My heart skipped several beats before it started pounding in my chest. “There has to be some mistake. Maybe I gave you the wrong card.”

He shook his head. Not a single hair moved. It was like his whole head had been painted with shellac. “I’m sorry. The hotel is booked. You’ll have to make arrangements elsewhere. I’ll have your bags brought out.”

“Everything okay?” Hendrix asked. Great. Now the rough and tumble roadie would think I was some deadbeat who couldn’t pay her bills.

“No, everything’s not okay. There has to be some sort of mistake.” I pulled my wallet out of my bag and slid my backup Visa from its slot. “Can you try another card?”

“I could, but if it comes back with the same message, I’d have to confiscate it and destroy it.” The attendant bit down on his lip, almost like it pained him to have to tell me that. “I’m sure you don’t want to cause a scene like that.”

“Come on, Daisy. We’ll find you another hotel for tonight.” Hendrix grabbed the handle of my giant suitcase.

“I don’t understand what happened. That card doesn’t even have a limit.” Mumbling like an idiot, I let him lead me back toward the revolving door. “There’s no reason it would be shut down. I share that account with...” The realization of what had most likely led to my card being declined crashed down on me. “Oh my god. I’ve been cut off.”

HENDRIX

I couldn't make out much from what I could hear of Daisy's end of her phone conversation. It sounded like her parents didn't want her making the trek to Dallas and had cancelled all her credit cards to try to force her to come home. There was no way I could relate. I'd been raised in foster care after being abandoned by both of my parents and had been supporting myself since the day I turned eighteen and joined the service.

She finally hung up and slid her phone back into her pocket. I waited for her to fill me in. One thing I'd learned from my years in the Army was to not go poking my nose into other peoples' business unless I wanted to get involved. And as much as I wouldn't mind spending more time with the curvy blonde beauty, I had enough problems of my own without taking on some of hers as well.

"I can't believe it. They cut me off." She put her hands to her cheeks and looked up at me.

The hopelessness in her eyes did something funny to my gut. I clamped down on my reaction, forcing myself to stay neutral. "So, you're going to head back home?"

"No. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity. I don't know when all my girlfriends will be in the same place again. There's no way I can leave now. I haven't even seen everyone yet." She shook her head. "They think they can control me, but I'm so tired of it."

“So, call up one of your friends and see if you can crash with them tonight.” The solution seemed easy enough to me.

Tears filled her lower eyelids. “I can’t. They don’t get into town until tomorrow. The only one here tonight is Shelby. She’s already done enough by getting me a VIP pass.”

“Then I’ll loan you some cash. You can get a room at the hotel where I’m staying. It’s not The Magnum, but the rooms are clean, and you’ll be comfortable enough for one night.” The urge to not get involved surged through me, but I wouldn’t leave her in the middle of the sidewalk in downtown Dallas with her luggage and the fur-rat she called a dog. I could be an asshole sometimes, but only when necessary, and never to a woman in need. Especially not one whose face had been burned into my brain and who’d made me laugh out loud for the first time in years.

“I can pay you back as soon as I get home.” She drew in a shaky breath.

“I’m not worried about it.” Satisfied we had a plan and that I was less than fifteen minutes away from the cold six-pack I had chilling in my mini fridge, I grabbed the handle of her suitcase again and headed down the sidewalk.

We didn’t talk much on the short walk to my hotel. When we entered the lobby, it seemed smaller and dingier than it had when I left this morning. I tried to see it through Daisy’s eyes. Instead of fresh flowers, there were some plastic ferns set around the perimeter. Instead of thick drapes, mini blinds covered the windows. Still, it was better than sleeping on the street.

I approached the desk to see about getting her a room, preferably on a floor far away from mine. Knowing she’d be sleeping under the safe roof would be difficult enough. I couldn’t have her on the same floor.

Daisy waited by the vinyl-covered bench on the opposite wall. I offered her a reassuring grin that everything would be settled soon.

Ten minutes later, I knew I was in trouble.

“Did you get a room?” Her hopeful smile lit up her whole face.

“They’re booked. Thanks to the reunion tour and a couple of huge conferences, every hotel within a twenty-mile radius is booked solid.”

“You’ve got to be joking.” Her smile slid while her eyes widened. “What am I going to do?”

I had an idea, but I was reluctant to mention it. Seeing her lips turn into a frown and the tears threaten had me blurting it out. “You can stay with me tonight if you want. Tomorrow you can meet up with your friends.”

Time stretched while I waited for her to shoot me down. *Please, shoot me down.* I wasn’t ready to spend the entire night knowing she was in the same room.

“I don’t want to impose.” Hesitating, she bit down on her bottom lip.

I tried not to focus on her mouth. Damn, thinking about the things that woman could do with those full lips would keep me up all night long. “It’s not imposing. I have to be up early to head back to the venue anyway. We’ll barely be in the room together.”

“If you’re sure...”

I wasn’t sure, but I pasted on a half-smile and tried to convince both of us. “Come on. Let’s get your stuff up to the room then we can bring Growler back down to do a doodle and grab something quick for dinner. What do you say?”

A slight nod of her head sealed my fate. She followed me to the small elevator, and we rode up to the ninth floor in silence.

“Nine’s my lucky number.” Daisy got off the elevator with a little spring in her step. “You being on the ninth floor must be a sign.”

I chuckled as I pulled out my key. “You believe in that kind of stuff?”

“Of course. Don’t you?”

The lock on the door turned green, and I held it open for her to enter the room first. “Nah. But I’ll tell you what I do believe... that I’m probably the most unlucky guy you’ll ever meet.”

“Why do you say that?” She stepped into the dark room.

“I think I was cursed as a baby.” My tone teased, but I was serious. I’d never met anyone who’d had a lifelong streak of bad luck like me. Though Daisy sure seemed to be having a hell of a run today.

“We’ll have to come up with some sort of ritual to lift your curse then.” Her hand patted the wall in search of the light switch.

Our fingers found it at the same time. That damn spark I’d felt earlier returned. Touching her shouldn’t make me feel like a high school kid with a crush, but it did. I flipped the switch then pulled my hand back. Light from the bedside lamps filled the room. At least someone had come in and made up the bed. Still, the lack of ambience had to be a disappointment considering Daisy had expected to stay in a suite at The Magnum.

“Oh.” Her hand went to her chest. Growler did what he did best and let out a low warning growl.

“I know it’s not much compared to The Magnum, but—”

“It’s not that.” She set the dog down on the worn carpet.

“What is it then?” I braced myself for her answer. From what I’d learned about her so far, she was used to a certain class of living. This was probably the first time she’d stepped foot in a two-star hotel.

She turned to me, her chin tipped up, her eyes a little wider than before. “There’s only one bed.”

I almost burst out laughing at her reaction, but I stifled the chuckle before it wrangled its way through my chest. “Yeah. Because I prefer not to have my feet hanging off the end of a double.”

“But where am I supposed to sleep?”

“Sweetheart, you can sleep wherever you want. I told you I won’t touch you. If you want to build a pillow wall between us to make sure our toes don’t accidentally bump in the night, that works for me.” I wheeled her suitcase into the room and lifted it onto the luggage rack. “You hungry?”

She glanced around the room like she was searching for some hidden pull-out bed. “I don’t know.”

“You don’t know if you’re hungry?”

“No. I mean, yes, I’m hungry. I don’t know if I’m comfortable sharing a bed with a stranger.”

Growler sniffed around the floor. Though I’d had to leave my dog with one of my foster brothers when I took the job to go on the road, I could recognize an animal looking for a place to do his business. “You want to stand here and think about it, or should we get the fur-rat downstairs before he decides to doodle on the carpet?”

Daisy snapped out whatever internal monologue she’d been listening to and picked up the dog. “Fine. Yes, let’s grab something to eat. I’m sure we’ll both feel better about this on a full stomach.”

If that’s what she needed to tell herself, that was fine with me. The only way I’d feel better about the entire situation was if I woke up immediately to find out it had all been a dream. Because spending the next few hours trying not to think about the curvy, young blonde in my bed was going to test every ounce of willpower I’d ever possessed, and then some.

DAISY

I didn't even think about not being able to pay for dinner when Hendrix mentioned grabbing a bite. So far, I owed the man for half a night's hotel room, plus the cost of a greasy burger and fries. He'd also ordered himself a beer and some fruity drink brimming with alcohol for me. Hoping the liquor would wash away my reservations, I'd downed it in record time and made it through another one before we left the hole-in-the-wall burger joint. I guess I needed to add two drinks to my running tab as well.

Growler had behaved and stayed under the radar thanks to Hendrix sneaking him small bites of burger. Now, back at the hotel, Hendrix had offered for me to use the bathroom first. As much as I wanted to take a hot shower and wash away my bad luck from the day, being naked with him right outside the door seemed too intimate. I brushed my teeth, changed into my silky pajama shorts and matching tank, then crossed my arms over my chest and made a mad dash toward the bed.

Only he was already on it, his big body sprawled across the side where I usually slept. He had one arm behind his head while he flipped through TV channels. Growler nestled up against his side. Looked like the two of them had worked through any issues they'd had earlier. I had to walk around to the other side of the bed before I could hide under the thin comforter and scratchy sheet.

Without a word, Hendrix got up, set the remote next to me, and disappeared into the bathroom. My pulse thundered hard through my ears. I couldn't believe I was about to share a

room, much less a bed, with him. Limiting myself to a single pillow, I took his suggestion to build a pillow wall with the others. It's not that he wasn't attractive. He'd caught my attention as soon as I set eyes on him. Even now, thinking about the way his t-shirt had bulged around his biceps sent heat hurtling through my belly. He was the antithesis of the type of man my parents had picked out for me. I could tell just by looking at him. Yet underneath the tough, gruff exterior, I'd glimpsed a soft side.

I relaxed a smidge and pulled one of my arms out from under the covers to wrap around Growler. Most people thought I'd rescued him, but he was the one who'd saved me. I'd been holding off my mother's matchmaking attempts while trying to find a charitable cause that she would approve of when I heard about the no-kill shelter on the news. She almost had a stroke when I got involved in fundraising for the shelter, but it was too late. I'd fallen in love with the place and the good work they were doing. I'd also fallen in love with Growler.

I flipped off the TV and tried to get comfortable. Sleeping on the wrong side of the bed felt weird, but I wasn't going to make a big deal about it. Hendrix was kind enough to share his room. I didn't want him to think I was some diva who couldn't adapt.

I'd just started to drift off when the bathroom door opened. With my eyes closed, I hoped he'd assume I'd already fallen asleep. The mattress dipped as he climbed under the covers. I'd left him a pillow for his head, so hopefully he wouldn't disturb the divider between us.

"You asleep, sweetheart?" His tone held a gruff huskiness that instantly had me thinking about the last erotic romance novel I'd listened to on audiobook. I squeezed my legs together and tried to ignore the hollow ache pulsing in my core.

"Not yet."

"I'll probably be up before you in the morning. You a coffee drinker?"

Coffee. Shoot, I hadn't thought that far ahead. The Magnum always had a tray delivered with French press coffee and freshly baked pastries in the morning. I licked my lips, almost able to taste the sweet strawberry filling from one of their warm Danishes.

He shifted his weight. Awareness of how little distance separated us made my skin tingle.

"Well?" he prompted.

"Coffee, yes, please. That would be great."

"How do you take it?"

"I prefer a French press, but—"

"What the hell is a French press?" He must have propped himself up on an elbow because his voice came from above my head.

"Never mind. Just a little cream and sugar would be great."

"That I know how to do. Goodnight, Daisy." He settled back down on the bed again and rolled away from me.

"Goodnight, Hendrix." I laid there for a long time, listening to his breathing even out. Finally, sometime during the late hours of the night and the early hours of the morning, my eyelids grew heavy, and I drifted into a dream starring a bearded, tattooed hottie.



THE PILLOWS WERE GONE. I jerked awake, completely aware that the lumpy wall separating me from my bedmate had disappeared. My arm draped over washboard abs covered in twisting black ink and my leg hiked up to rest right on top of the firm bulge straining against his boxer briefs.

I didn't dare move. Not until I figured out if he was awake. His chin rested on top of my head. My cheek pressed against his pec. I had no memory of removing the pillow wall, no recollection of snuggling up next to him like we went to bed like this every night.

Slowly, I lifted my head and gently backed away. My tank had slid up, exposing my right breast. I tugged it back down again even as I missed the warmth of his skin. What the hell had I done last night? Those drinks had been potent, but there was no way they'd been strong enough to wipe my memory.

“Good morning.” He scrubbed a palm over his beard as I scooted over to the empty side of the bed.

“I didn't realize you were awake.” Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god. Did he know my bare boob had been smashed into his chest?

“You looked so peaceful. I didn't want to disturb you.” He propped himself up on one elbow. “Sorry about the pillows. I'm not sure what happened.”

“Where's Growler?” I lifted the covers, looking for the little guy. He usually slept right under my chin. The walls of my chest squeezed tight. What if I'd squished him when I rolled into Hendrix?

“He's right here.” Hendrix glanced down at his hip. My traitorous dog laid on his back, little legs splayed in the air, right next to Hendrix's side.

I was so relieved to see him that I crawled back across the bed and leaned over the muscled man next to me to reach my dog.

“You've gotta stop touching me, Daisy.” Hendrix got up from the bed and immediately headed toward the bathroom.

The bulge. I'd rubbed my knee all over the bulge in his boxer briefs. I closed my eyes for a long blink, wishing I could start the day over.

He came out of the bathroom fully dressed. “I'm going to run down to get coffee before I come back up and shower. You want me to take the beast outside to do his business?”

At the word “outside,” Growler hopped off the bed and ran over to Hendrix. I stayed on the bed, the covers pulled up to my chin. “Thank you, that would be great.”

“Be back in a few.” He clipped the leash onto my dog’s collar and the two of them disappeared through the doorway.

I flung the covers off, committed to being fully dressed by the time they returned. Locating the bra I’d discarded last night, I grabbed a pair of jeans, and a loose shirt then went into the bathroom to change.

Hendrix returned with two cups of coffee and a bag full of something that instantly made my stomach grumble.

“Brought you a kolache from the bakery down the street.” He set the bag down on the desk and handed me a steaming cup.

“Thank you. Did Growler do his business?” I patted the bed. Hendrix unclipped the leash and set my dog down next to me.

“Yeah. Two doodles and a nice, long whizz. I’m going to go wash my hands real quick before I dig into one of those buns.” He disappeared into the bathroom while I got up to see what exactly he’d brought back in that bag.

My mouth watered. The spicy scent of sausage mixed with the sweet smell of fresh baked bread. I usually didn’t eat breakfast and when I did, I steered clear of carbs. I’d already ruined my diet with the burger from last night. May as well enjoy myself over the weekend as part of my farewell to fun private pity party.

I pulled one of the kolaches out of the bag. The ends of the sausage inside stuck out from both sides of the fluffy roll. I could already taste it and it wasn’t anywhere near my mouth yet. Growler hopped down off the bed and barked at my feet.

“Let me try it first before I decide if you can have any or not.” I tried not to give him too much people food, but it was hard to deny him when he looked up at me with those chocolatey brown puppy dog eyes.

“How is it?” Hendrix came out of the bathroom just as I stuffed half a kolache into my mouth.

“Mmm.” I gave him a thumbs up since I could talk around the big bite of sausage and bun.

His mouth curled up on one side. “That’s what I thought. There’s something about this place.”

“The sausage is soooooo good.” I tore a small piece of bun off and tossed it to Growler. “And these buns—they’re light and fluffy and delicious.”

His smile turned from sweet to naughty. “Who would’ve thought slipping a sausage into some buns would be so enjoyable.”

I coughed, almost choking on the bite in my mouth. The heat between us hadn’t dissipated. Spending the night with him next to me—sharing a bed and breathing the same air—had only added to the attraction. But now he was turning up the flirt factor. Thank goodness we wouldn’t have to spend another night together. Resisting him might be too hard.

“Sorry. I’m a sucker for sausage jokes. Probably comes from growing up in a house full of brothers.” He shook his head as he popped another kolache in his mouth.

“How many brothers do you have?” He hadn’t shared much about himself, and I was curious about his past.

“Too many to name. Dozens. We’re foster brothers all raised by an angel. How about you? Any siblings?”

“No, just me. I wish I had a brother or sister. Maybe then I wouldn’t feel solely responsible for making my parents happy.” I bit down on my lip, not used to saying anything even remotely negative about my parents. If he didn’t already assume I was a spoiled only child, I’d just given him no reason not to.

“That must be rough.” His eyes softened at the edges. “Sounds like they’re not so happy with you coming to Dallas this weekend?”

That was an understatement. “They haven’t been happy with anything I’ve been doing lately. The more they push, the more I want to push back. They have certain expectations.”

“Expectations like what?”

“Like I should be married by now and popping out grandbabies. They even talked me into working at my dad’s law firm so they could keep closer tabs on me. I wanted to start my own business, but they wouldn’t hear of it.” Talking to him was too easy. I hadn’t been able to unload on anyone else without feeling incredibly guilty.

“What kind of business?”

“It’s silly.”

He reached out and took my hand. “Tell me.”

The gentle encouragement in his tone had me spilling my dreams. I told him about the pet store I wanted to open—one that offered over-the-top accessories for pampered pooches and probably kitty cats too.

“And they didn’t want you to come to the concert?”

I shook my head. “They don’t get it. Their idea of the perfect musical performance is flying to New York to see the Philharmonic. I’d rather rock out to the music I grew up on. Bands like Soul Obsession. The music takes me back to a time when things weren’t so complicated, you know?”

Nodding, he pulled another kolache out of the bag. “Yeah. My dad used to be in a band. At least that’s what my foster mom told me. They played classic rock covers. The Who, The Rolling Stones, some Zeppelin and other stuff like that. It’s how I got my name. Jimi Hendrix was one of his favorites.”

“I don’t think I’ve ever heard a Jimi Hendrix song.” We were from two completely different worlds. It was obvious right down to the music we’d grown up on.

“We’ll have to change that ASAP.” He held out the kolache to me. “Last one. You want it?”

“No thank you. I’m meeting up with a few of my girlfriends for brunch. I don’t want to ruin my appetite any more than I have already.”

He opened his mouth to bite into the pastry then shot me a quick glance. “Are you taking Growler with you?”

“I was planning on it.” My stomach twisted with worry. “Do you think he won’t be allowed inside?”

“Didn’t matter at that dive bar last night, but why don’t you let me take him to work with me today?” Hendrix tore off another bite of bun and held it out to Growler who cautiously nibbled at it.

“Do you really want to puppy sit again?” Hendrix didn’t look like the kind of guy who’d offer to watch a stranger’s puppy dog while she brunched with her girlfriends. He also didn’t look like a man who was used to keeping to his side of the bed or picking up coffee and pastries for a woman he’d just met. I hadn’t quite figured him out yet, but the more time we spent together, the more I wanted to know.

He picked up Growler and cradled the little dog in his arms. “I think he’s growing on me.”

Seeing him standing there, muscles bulging under his tight tee while he held my dog, made me think of all those super sexy firemen and puppy calendars I used to ogle over when I was younger.

“What do you think, Daisy? Can I borrow the little guy for the day?”

“If you’re sure you don’t mind.”

“Why would I mind? Besides, that will give me a reason to see you again.”

My heart lodged in my throat. I didn’t want to break the magic of the moment by saying something that would ruin it. So instead, I rummaged through my suitcase and grabbed the items I needed to get cleaned up.

“I’m going to jump into the shower, unless you need it first?”

“Go ahead. I’ll get cleaned up when I get back from checking the set up.”

Nodding, I turned around and sought refuge in the bathroom before I said or did something I’d regret.

HENDRIX

I was in deep. I suspected it the second I set eyes on the curvy blonde, but now that I'd spent time with her and gotten to know her a little bit better, I knew for sure. She was everything I could ever want in a woman: smart, sexy, funny, kind, gorgeous, curvy, and sweeter than Mama Mae's homemade pecan pie.

The problem was, I wasn't looking for a woman. Even if I was, Daisy was out of my league. In the past I'd been more than willing when a high-class dame like her wanted to go slumming for a night or two, but I'd gone into those situations with my eyes—and my pants—wide open. Daisy wasn't like that.

She claimed to be just as unlucky as me, but she didn't act like she'd been cursed. I'd spent my whole life feeling like I was balancing a heavy weight on my shoulders. Every time I tried to toss it off, it seemed like the weight increased. Based on what she'd shared, Daisy seemed to be on the receiving end of the same kind of bad luck, but she shrugged it off instead of letting it bury her alive.

When I was with her, I forgot about everything else. She made me want to shake off the shackles of my past and live in the moment. If only we weren't from two different worlds. The divide between us seemed too wide to breach, not to mention the almost fifteen-year age gap. I'd almost choked when she told me how old she was.

“You ready for tonight?” Xander’s question pulled me out of my head. It was probably for the best. Nothing good ever came from me dwelling on shit.

“Yeah. How’s it look outside?”

Xander was in charge of the band’s security. When I’d first joined the tour, I wondered what a bunch of washed-up boy band has-beens would need with a major security detail. Over the past several months, as we traveled from city to city, I began to understand just how deep and how wide the Soul Obsession fandom had become.

Xander shook his head. “This might be the rowdiest bunch we’ve seen so far. Makes tailgating at a Cowboys’ game look like a tea party. Fans have been whooping it up on the street out front since last night.”

“Damn. Maybe I should have learned how to sing and dance instead of going straight into the service after high school,” I joked.

“I can’t really picture you moonwalking across a stage to the beat of a tune like ‘Heartstrings.’” His lips twisted into a grin.

The first couple of times we met, I wasn’t sure he was even capable of smiling. Since he’d been spending so much time with his girl, Chastity, the grins had become a hell of a lot more frequent. He was quite a bit older than her, too. Maybe a big age gap wasn’t such an issue.

The thought flew out of my head as soon as it entered. Unlike Daisy, his girl probably didn’t have parents who were up her ass about making sure she married the right guy. Whoever the “right guy” was, he definitely didn’t have anything in common with me.

“Be careful out there.” I wrapped up my check of the front of the stage. The guys had a close call in Denver when one of the roadies hadn’t gone back to double check the set up, and I’d be damned if that happened again now that I was in charge.

“You, too.” Xander turned to head backstage when Growler let out a low snarl from the front of my shirt. “What

the fuck? Did you just growl at me?”

I'd ripped up a hoodie so I could tie the sleeves around my waist and carry the little pisser in the front pocket. He'd been behaving most of the afternoon but must not have liked Xander's voice.

“It's this dog.” I reached into the pocket and pulled out the fur-rat. His ears flattened and he bared his tiny teeth.

“Where the hell did you get a dog? And why do you have a dog with a pink bow in its hair?”

Those were two very valid questions, and I wondered how much to share. “It started yesterday...” I gave him the short version of how I'd met Daisy and Growler but chose to leave out the part about her getting cut off by her parents and waking up in my arms.

“She's one of Chastity's friends. I've been hearing all about the fan club they belonged to and how much they loved the guys in the band. I'm pretty sure all of them had life-size posters plastered to their bedroom walls when they were younger.” Xander gave me a sympathetic grin. “As far as I'm concerned, I didn't see a thing.”

“Thanks, man.” I waited until he disappeared backstage before tucking Growler back into my pocket. Xander made a good point. Daisy and her friends had been crushing on these teenage heartthrobs and waiting for them to get back together again for ten years. There was no way I could compete with that. It wasn't even worth trying.

The best I could do would be to take care of her dog until she came back, then help her move her things to one of her friend's rooms. She'd be out of my life just as quickly as she'd entered. Instead of feeling better about that, the hollowness in my gut expanded.

“Come on, Growler. Let's see if you can find a patch of grass out back to do your doodle so I can clear my head and get back to work.” I needed some fresh air. Hoping a quick walk outside would clear my head, I grabbed his leash and made a beeline for the back door.

DAISY

Lunch with my besties had been an absolute blast. It had been way too long since we'd been together. I'd forgotten how much fun it could be to spend time with people I actually cared about. I didn't have to be careful around them or think through every sentence in my head before I uttered it out loud. They loved me for who I was, not who my parents were or what I could do for them.

They also didn't look at me like I'd sprouted an extra head when I told them about my dream to open a posh pet store. I'd been having so much fun dressing Growler up in different outfits that I'd looked into starting my own business. There were plenty of doggy bakeries and puppy daycares in the Houston area, but I'd had trouble finding fun accessories. If I felt like I had a say in my future, I'd want to start a retail location where dog owners could shop for their furry friends and a portion of each sale would go to a non-profit, no-kill shelter.

When I'd told my parents about my idea, my father completely forbid it. He said no daughter of his would be photographed by the media picking up dog shit. My mother handled her response with a little more finesse. She'd always told me my job was to do good in the world, but gently suggested something not dealing with animals would be a better fit. She seriously thought all I needed was to meet a man. That once I got married and started having kids, I'd be happy being a stay-at-home mother just like she'd been. And her mother before her, and her mother before her.

They didn't understand, but my friends did. Talking about it this afternoon made me wish I felt like I had a say in my own future. Without my parents' support, I'd never be able to pull off opening my own business. I'd always thought they had my best interests at heart but turns out that only mattered when my interests aligned with theirs. I'd been naive and trusting my whole life and only had myself to blame. They controlled the purse strings which meant I was stuck. I might be able to run away for one last weekend with my friends, but if I didn't get with their program and show up at that country club on Sunday morning, I could kiss my future goodbye.

With the concert starting in just a few hours, we wrapped up lunch and got ready to head back to the venue. All I wanted to do was give my furbaby a hug and start getting ready for the concert. Knowing I'd be meeting the band after the show had butterflies zooming through my belly at Mach speed. I couldn't remember the last time I'd been so excited.

"Who are you most looking forward to meeting tonight?" my friend Luna asked. She was the one I was closest to since she lived near Austin, and we got together from time to time over the years.

"Gosh, I don't know. I've crushed hard on every single one of them over the years. Maybe Mason? He's the only one who hasn't been claimed by one of our friends yet, right?"

Luna's pretty nose scrunched up like she'd just smelled something horrible.

"Oh, that's right. You met him backstage at the Austin concert, didn't you?" She'd mentioned her run-in with the drummer right after it happened, but we hadn't had a chance to dissect it yet. "Maybe he was just nervous. He's always been the quiet one."

She waved a hand in the air. "Yeah, whatever."

"I bet you'd forgive him if he tossed you a drumstick tonight." I'd been lucky enough to catch a guitar pick that Jax threw out into the crowd at one of their concerts I went to as a teenager, but a drumstick would have been much better.

“We’ll see.”

I was about to slide out of the booth when I realized I hadn’t checked in with Hendrix in over an hour.

Me: Brunch is over. I can come get Growler so you can work.

Hendrix: Wrapped up early. We’re back at the hotel.

Me: Perfect. I’ll head that way. How was he?

Hendrix: No trouble at all. What did the gals think about your business idea?

Me: They loved it!

Hendrix: I won’t say I told you so, but...

I laughed out loud as I read his text. Then quickly typed in my response.

Me: I’ll say it... you told me so and you were right.

Hendrix: There’s always a first time. :) Been thinking about you. Can’t wait to hear all about it.

Even though there was no way my pet store would ever become reality, thinking about him thinking about me put a huge smile on my face.

“Who’s responsible for that?” Luna asked.

“What?” I looked around, assuming she’d seen something while I had my nose buried in my phone.

“For putting that giddy look on your face.” Luna gave me a wide smile. “Have you got a guy in your life you haven’t told us about yet?”

“Of course not. You know I’m no good at keeping secrets. If there was a guy in my life, you’d know about it.” There was no denying Hendrix was a guy. I’d felt the proof of that against my leg when I woke up this morning. And, technically, he was in my life... at least since last night. But he wasn’t really a “guy in my life.” That label came with expectations... expectations neither one of us were in a position to entertain.

“If you say so...” Luna arched a brow.

“I do say so.” There was no guy and there wouldn’t be unless I agreed to start dating the kind of men who had my parents’ stamp of approval... men like the junior partner my parents were expecting me to meet on Sunday. “Hey, I’m going to head back to my hotel and get ready. I’ll meet up with you in a few hours, okay?”

I hugged each one of my besties before leaving the restaurant and heading back to the hotel where Hendrix and Growler waited.

The elevator was broken, so I took the stairs all the way up to the ninth floor. When I finally reached the room, I was out of breath and fumbled with the keycard before I finally got the green light to appear.

Eager to see Growler, I flung open the door. “How’s my favorite boy?”

Hendrix stood just inside the room with his back to me. He was naked. That’s right... N.A.K.E.D. The shock of seeing his bare ass—a very, very, very fine bare ass—completely paralyzed me. I couldn’t move. I couldn’t look away. I couldn’t even blink.

“Jesus, Daisy. I didn’t know you took a key.”

Don’t turn around, I begged. Whatever you do, please don’t turn around.

He turned around.

My gaze met his. Heat rushed over my chest like a fast-moving flow of lava, then moved up my neck and onto my cheeks.

He grabbed something off the bed and held it over his crotch, but it was too late. The image had been seared into my memory.

“Sorry, sweetheart. That wasn’t supposed to happen.”

I wasn’t sure where to start. His entire body was covered in tattoos. I’d seen the images on his chest, abs, and arms. That much ink would give my mother heart palpitations for days and send my father into an apoplectic fit. My instincts urged me to pretend like I hadn’t seen a thing and carry on like nothing had happened.

I opened my mouth, ready to make small talk, but immediately closed it again. I’d been looking for a change, something to jerk me straight out of my comfort zone and remind me what it felt like to live again. My chance meeting with Hendrix was the catalyst. It had to be. And I could choose to embrace it and create a memory that I’d be able to look back on and enjoy for the rest of my life or ignore the feelings stacking up inside me and play it safe.

“Daisy? You okay?” His dark brown eyes filled with apprehension. He took a step to the side while he held my gaze. “I’m just going to grab some shorts real quick.”

“Don’t.”

He squinted across the few feet that separated us. “Don’t what?”

I worried at my bottom lip with my teeth. This was it. My moment had come. It was time to find out if I could be spontaneous.

“Don’t put anything on.” I took a cautious step toward him, afraid I was going to do something that would prove I was way out of my comfort zone.

The surprise in his eyes gave way to an intense heat. “You don’t have to do this, sweetheart.”

“Do what?”

“I don’t know what you feel like you owe me, but we’re even.” He shook his head and reached for his shorts.

“Oh my god. You don’t want me,” I whispered. Shame flooded through me. I’d misread his morning wood for attraction. I was so stupid.

“What?” Within seconds he stood in front of me, his hands cupping my cheeks and gently forcing me to meet his gaze. “Why the hell would you ever think that?”

I glanced toward the ceiling. “It’s okay. I’m not very good at this.”

“Sweetheart, I’ve been hard for you since the second I laid eyes on you. You see this?” He reached down to wrap his hand around his shaft.

My gaze followed. The ink covering his chest and torso continued down his stomach. Holy big banana. My eyes widened at the sight of his thick, rigid cock, then almost bugged out of my head at the piercing near the top.

“If this isn’t proof of how much I want you, then—”

I cut off his words when my mouth captured his. Liquid fire flowed through my veins. His rough palms skimmed over my shoulders. One hand cupped the back of my neck, and he gently gripped my throat. Then he pulled me closer, sealing our lips together. Devouring my mouth with his.

A deep ache pulsed between my thighs. I’d never felt desire like this. Knowing this was the only time we’d have together intensified everything. My senses struggled to process every illicit sensation and catalog them for later: the scent of his cologne, the rough pads of his fingertips grazing my skin, and the sound of the low moans rumbling through his chest.

I’m not sure how we got there, but the backs of my legs hit the side of the bed. Without breaking our kiss, Hendrix swept me off my feet and set me down in the middle of the pile of sheets. He climbed on top of me, propping himself up on an elbow while he worked a hand under my shirt and urged it up over my breasts.

Eager to feel his skin on mine, I undid the button of my jeans and pushed them past my hips. He took over, kissing his way down my collarbone, past the shirt bunched up around my

neck, and pausing to delve his tongue into the deep cleft between my cleavage.

My nipples immediately tightened with anticipation. I couldn't wait to lose my bra and give him unfettered access to every part of me.

“What the hell is that?” Hendrix looked up at me when he reached my navel. The sides of his mouth curved up in amusement.

I hadn't planned on anyone seeing my underwear today. If I'd known I was going to be rocked by the roadie, I would have worn my matching, lacy La Perla set instead of the comfy cotton undies with dog paws and “I like it ruff” printed all over them.

“You're not supposed to see those. Just ignore them.” I reached down to push my pants and underwear off my legs.

“No way. I had no idea you'd like things rough.” He traced the outline of one of the paws with his pointer finger.

My skin tingled under his touch. I wasn't sure I could handle his version of rough. I was starting to think I might not be able to handle him at all based on the thick steel pipe resting against my thigh.

“I'm thinking we ought to work our way up to rough. Is that okay with you?” He arched a brow.

My mouth went drier than a cracked riverbed during a Texas drought. Pinned in place by the force of his gaze, all I could do was nod and silently beg him to go easy on me.

He traced another dog paw, this one lower and closer to the apex of my thighs. My core quivered. Then he traced another, using his tongue instead. I couldn't tell what was making my panties wetter... the desire pulsing through me or his mouth moving over my mound. He hadn't even touched me down there yet, and I was on the verge of coming just from sheer anticipation.

“Your undies are soaked through.”

The way his hot breath brushed over my skin only made me wetter. I didn't have a ton of experience with men beyond a few fumbling boyfriends, and absolutely no experience with an older man like Hendrix. My body was his to do with as he pleased. I only hoped I survived him.

HENDRIX

I was a sorry sack of shit for taking advantage of Daisy. She was everything I wasn't...young, trusting, and naive. And I was the bastard who couldn't keep his dick in his pants. The second she touched me, I came undone. I didn't deserve her, but I wanted her with an intensity that scared the shit out of me.

I'd never been a man who needed anything. I'd stumbled through life, bogged down by so much baggage that it was hard to keep going sometimes, but I did it alone. The way she looked up at me, those big blue eyes so full of trust—I couldn't deny her a goddamn thing, and the truth of it was, I didn't want to.

I could smell her desire through the thin cotton panties covering her sweet, sweet pussy. My mouth watered, desperate to taste her. That juicy cunt belonged to me, and only me. And I was going to claim it.

Sliding the thin scrap of fabric to the side, I took a moment to worship the sight of her slick folds. Fuck, she was perfect. Her pink petals glistened with need. I lowered my head and licked at her slit.

She gripped the sheet, fisting it in her hands. My palm splayed over her belly, pinning her to the bed and preventing her hips from bucking. No way would I let her take her sweet sugar away from me until I'd gotten my fill.

I explored her with my tongue. The walls of her pussy spasmed around me. My girl was more than ready, but I

wanted to take my time. Though every cell in my body screamed that she was mine, we weren't meant to have forever. I'd make damn sure she'd never forget me.

Her fingers delved into my hair, and she tightened her grip. Every move she made turned me on even more. When I'd finally tasted every bit of her juicy pussy, I suckled her clit and slid a finger inside.

"Ohhhhhhhhh." She moaned, so soft and shy.

"Say my name, baby doll. I want to hear my name on your lips when you come." I cupped her ass with my palm and squeezed while I doubled down.

"Hendrix," she whispered.

"What do you want, sweetheart?" Pulling back, I glanced up at her. Breasts heaving out of her bra, lips full and swollen from our kisses, she was the most gorgeous fucking thing I'd ever seen.

"You. I want you." Her nails scraped over my shoulders as she tried to drag me up her body.

"You want me to do what?"

"Keep going. Please, don't stop." She bit down on her lip, driving me insane.

My cock pulsed, but I wasn't about to blow my load. Not yet. Not until she came on my tongue.

"Keep doing what?" I wanted to hear her say it. Wanted to hear filthy words coming out of her perfect mouth.

"What you're doing."

"You know what I'm doing, baby? I'm eating your perfect pussy. Tell me that's what you want, and I'll make you come so hard you won't be able to see straight."

"I want that. Need you to." Her brows furrowed and she tried to grind against me.

God, she was so beautiful. "Not yet, baby doll. Tell me what you need."

“I need you...please, Hendrix.” She slid her hand past her pelvis like she was tired of waiting and ready to get herself off all on her own.

I wrapped my fingers around her wrist and brought her hand up to my mouth. She was a needy little thing, and I couldn't wait to give her what she wanted.

“One more time, beautiful. All you need to do is tell me what you want.” I reached up and slid my hand under her bra. Cupping her full breast, I grazed my thumb over her nipple. I was going to enjoy fucking her tits later, but first, my baby doll needed to come.

“Please. Eat my pussy. I need it. I need you.” She fell back against the pillow and pushed her hips against my palm. Her frustration would only add to the intensity of her release.

Eager to give her exactly what she craved, I bent down and devoured her. Her legs shook as the walls of her pussy pulsed around my tongue. Then she shattered into pieces, her low moans filling the room.

“That's it, baby.” I gently eased her down. “You look so fucking beautiful when you come.”

She gave me a shy smile. A smudge of pink stained her cheeks. “I'm so embarrassed.”

I crawled up her body until I could kiss her lips. Then I rolled onto my back and pulled her on top of me. “You've got nothing to be embarrassed about. I need to know what you like so I can make you feel good.”

She nestled her head under my chin while she gently raked her nails over my chest. “I liked it all.”

“That's good, sweetheart. But I'm not nearly done with you yet.” If I didn't get inside her soon, my cock might actually explode. I rolled both of us over and kissed her nice and slow while the wet tip of my cock nudged against her entrance.

“We don't have to use a condom if you don't want to. I'm on the pill, and I haven't been with anyone in a really long time.”

Jesus, this woman was going to break me. I'd never had sex without a condom. That was one thing my foster brothers drilled into my head. They'd always talked about how the fastest way to get trapped was to knock someone up. I doubted Daisy was trying to tie me down, but I wasn't taking any chances.

"It's okay. I've got one." I ripped open the wrapper and sheathed my cock. Then I eased into her, trying to hold back.

Her nails dug into my back, and she lifted her hips to take me. Damn, I'd been so focused on getting inside her, I hadn't even seen her tits yet. I slipped a hand behind her and unhooked her bra. There wasn't enough time left in the world for me to do all the things I wanted to with Daisy. Bending my head, I took one of her big, round nipples into my mouth.

She gasped and clenched around my cock. My girl might look sweet and tame, but I had a feeling she would turn into a wildcat under the sheets. Needing to watch her come undone again, I rolled over and sat up, pulling her onto my lap in the process. She wrapped her legs around my waist and her arms around my neck.

From this angle I could easily switch my attention between her tits and her lips. Both seemed just as eager for my mouth.

Daisy lifted her hips up and down, sliding my cock in and out of her tight heat. With her tits in my face, my hands on her hips, and her riding me like a fucking bareback rodeo queen, my balls tightened. I wouldn't let myself go until she came. I needed to see the look in her eyes as she tumbled over the edge almost as much as I needed my own release.

"That's it, sweetheart. Take what you need, baby."

Her hips moved faster as her breath sawed in and out of her lungs. A low, keening moan started in the back of her throat.

"Come for me, Daisy. Be a good girl and come on my cock." Like a man possessed, I lifted my hips, thrusting into her as she rode me.

She moaned, low and long. Then another voice joined her. The fucking dog. He stood on the floor next to the bed, howling along as our bodies slapped together.

“I’m sorry.” Daisy said, breathless.

“It’s okay, baby. Just focus.” I thrust my tongue into her mouth to turn her attention back to what was going on between us.

Her hands fisted my hair. Her hips stilled. Her pussy clenched around me.

The fucking dog continued to howl.

I shut him out. All that mattered was how it felt to be balls-deep inside her. As the last spasms wracked her body, I finally gave in. A tidal wave of pleasure swept over me. Weightless and unaware of anything except the intense pleasure coursing through every nerve in my body, I rode that fucking wave until every bit of my release had been wrung out of me.

Then I fell back onto the bed, holding Daisy against my chest.

“You okay, sweetheart?” I brushed her wild hair away from her face.

She looked up at me with a satisfied grin and nodded.

“I didn’t hurt you, did I?” Cupping her cheeks with my palms, I placed a gentle kiss on her forehead. This time we had together was a gift. I knew I didn’t deserve it, but I’d be forever grateful that we’d shared this precious time together.

“I’m not sure I’ll be able to walk later, but I think it was worth it.” She held my gaze for a fraction of a second, then quickly looked away.

“I’d be happy to carry you,” I teased.

“Oh, I’m too heavy for that.” A quick look passed through her eyes.

“You don’t think I’m strong enough to carry you a few blocks?” I flexed my biceps. “Baby, you don’t weigh more than a feather.”

“Yeah, right.” She snort-laughed. Fucking adorable. I wondered if she’d ever done that while having dinner at a fancy restaurant like they had over at The Magnum.

“I can’t have you go around thinking I’m weak. Come here.” I got up from the bed and tossed her over my shoulder.

“Hendrix, stop. You’re going to hurt yourself.”

“The only thing I’m going to do is get you all cleaned up so you’re ready for your big night.” I carried her into the bathroom and turned on the shower. The small tub was barely big enough for one of us, but I was determined to soap up every inch of her soft skin. I’d been so desperate to get inside her that I hadn’t taken my time exploring every curve.

“What am I going to do with you?” She slid down my body, her arms going around my neck.

My cock was already half hard again from the friction of feeling her breasts and belly pressed against me.

“I’ve got a few ideas, sweetheart.”

She giggled as I tugged her into the shower. Before she left to go to that concert, she was going to know what it felt like to be worshipped by a real man.

DAISY

*H*endrix seemed to take it as a personal challenge to make sure I wouldn't be able to walk to the concert. By the time he left for the venue, I wasn't sure I'd be able to walk the few steps to the bathroom much less make it to the arena.

When I stumbled into the lobby wearing ballet flats instead of the heeled boots I'd planned on wearing, the man behind the check-in desk told me Hendrix had arranged for a driver to take me to the concert. I thanked him, then slipped inside the back of a stretch limo and pulled out my phone.

Me: Thank you for the ride, though it's totally unnecessary.

Hendrix: I would have come back to get you myself, but it's been nuts around here.

Me: Everything okay?

Hendrix: Jax's guitar strap broke. Nobody can find the extras.

Me: Oh no! He can play without it, right?

Three dots flickered on my screen, then stopped. My pulse jumped. Knowing Shelby, she had a whole case of them

packed away on a tour bus somewhere and would know exactly where to find them.

The limo pulled to a stop in the loading dock area. Hendrix stood at the top of the steps. As soon as the driver got out of the limo to open my door, Hendrix headed toward me. It had only been a couple of hours since I'd seen him, but my fingers ached to wrap around his. The hold he had on me was intense.

“Hey, baby doll. You're stunning.” He greeted me with a searing kiss... the kind that made me wish we were heading back to the hotel room instead of about to head into an arena packed full of screaming fans.

I followed him into the backstage area. He tugged me down a long, dimly lit hall and into a room full of bright lights and people. I blinked against the overhead lights. Then I blinked again. My gaze darted from one member of Soul Obsession to the next. They were all there: Jax, Asher, Mason, Crue, and Jameson.

“You might want to close your mouth, sweetheart. Your jaw's practically sitting on the ground,” Hendrix whispered.

Too stunned to speak, I slammed my mouth shut and nodded.

Shelby rushed into the room, one hand resting on her baby bump, and let out a defeated breath. “I can't find the extra straps. You're going to have to play without one, Jax.”

Jax's jaw tightened. I could only imagine the stress he was under.

“Wait. I have an idea.” I pulled open the big bag where I'd hidden Growler. There was no way I could leave him at the hotel. I rummaged around for a dog leash or two—I always brought extras with me when we went anywhere. “Does anyone have a needle and thread? I think I can sew a couple of these together and they might work for a guitar strap.”

“Yes!” Shelby raced out of the room and came back a few seconds later with a sewing kit in her hand. “You're a lifesaver, Daisy.”

“I just need a few minutes.” I handed my bag over to Hendrix and sat down at a large round table with the sewing kit and a few of my handmade leashes. When I was finished, I held up the strap I’d pieced together. Rows of rhinestones sparkled in the light.

“He’s going to blind the crowd with that thing around his neck,” Mason said.

“You’re just jealous she didn’t bedazzle your drumsticks.” Hendrix smirked as he handed the strap to Jax.

“We’re out of time. Unless you want to wear the security guard’s belt instead, I think you ought to try it.” Shelby shrugged.

Jax clipped the strap onto his guitar and offered me a wide smile. “What did you say your name was?”

“Her name is Daisy!” Dani gave me a huge hug. “Thanks, girl. You literally saved the day.”

I couldn’t believe I was standing behind the stage with the members of the band. Couldn’t believe I’d just created a custom guitar strap for Jax Porter, or that he was married to one of my groupie besties.

“Your opening act is wrapping up. It’s time for you to get out there.” Shelby tapped the mic set she had on. “We’re on the way.”

The surge of adrenaline I’d just experienced had my hands shaking as I took the bag back from Hendrix. “I can’t believe I’m here.”

“You just saved the concert, Daisy. You still think you don’t have what it takes to run your own pet store empire?” He shook his head while a huge smile stretched across his lips.

“I’m sure they would have come up with something.” I scooped Growler out of the bag. “I wish I’d thought to make a set of earmuffs for him. His poor little ears are going to explode.”

“I’ve got you covered, sweetheart.” Hendrix reached into his pocket and pulled out a small set of padded earmuffs.

“Where did you get those?”

“I cut ‘em down from one of my sets.” He slipped them on over Growler’s head. “They’re a little big, but I think they’ll work. Come on, you can watch from backstage tonight. With me.”

He held out his hand, and I took it. I couldn’t believe this was my life, at least for one more night. Tomorrow, reality would crash in on me, but I’d wring as much fun as I could out of the next few hours before I had to face the future.

I’d seen the band perform live before, but nothing compared to watching them from backstage. I was close enough to see the sweat drip down Mason’s forehead as he banged out a solo on drums. Close enough to catch the wink Jax dished up to my girl Dani as he belted out the lyrics to one of their new songs. Close enough to feel the energy between Asher, Crue, and Jameson as they commanded the stage.

“You enjoying yourself, sweetheart?” Hendrix stood behind me, his hands on my hips.

I moved to the beat of the music with my backside pressed to his front. “Yes, though not as much as I was earlier.”

He spun me around and narrowed his eyes. “I bet meeting the band for the first time was a once in a lifetime experience.”

“It was, but that’s not what I meant.” I blinked up at him, waiting for him to catch on to what I was referring to. When he didn’t immediately smile, I rolled my eyes. “I meant at the hotel. You and me. Remember?”

His arms wrapped around me, and he leaned down low to nuzzle my ear. “It’s not something I’ll ever forget.”

“Me neither.”

“Stay with me tonight, Daisy. I have to break down the stage, but it’ll only take a few hours. You can go out with your friends and the band, and I can meet you back at our room.”

Our room. I liked the sound of that, and there wasn’t anything I wanted more than to forget about the life I had to go back to and keep pretending there was a chance at a future

between me and Hendrix. He might look rough on the outside, but he'd bared his tender heart. The man was a marshmallow wrapped up inside a thick outer layer of grumpiness.

"What do you say, baby doll?" His beard brushed against my cheek.

I didn't trust myself to speak without telling him everything. So, I took his hand and led him back to a dark corner hidden by a stack of travel cases and a thick black drape.

The music blared and the bass thumped through my veins. While the songs I knew by heart played to a sell-out crowd, I got down on my knees and unzipped Hendrix's jeans. By the dim light coming in through a slit in the curtain, I freed his cock from his boxer briefs.

I wanted to feel him inside me one more time. Wanted to show up to that brunch tomorrow knowing some part of him was still with me. Tentatively, I ran my finger down his length.

He shoved his hands into my hair. "Oh, fuck, Daisy."

With one hand gripping him at the base, I rimmed the head of his cock with my tongue. The silver balls near his tip clicked against my teeth. Then I opened my mouth and took every inch he had to offer. He pumped into my mouth, hissing as I took him deeper. I gagged as he hit the back of my throat.

"Take it, baby. Take it all." He urged me on, and I opened wider.

Tears stung the backs of my eyelids. Not because I didn't love what I was doing, but because I did. I couldn't imagine ever being with someone else. Not after Hendrix.

"Come here, sweetheart." He pulled me up to my feet. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing. I just want to make you feel good." I moved to crouch down again, but he held me up.

"I want both of us to feel good." His hand slid under the hem of my skirt, and he edged it up over my hips. "Let me make love to you, Daisy."

Nodding, I wrapped my arms around his neck, trusting him to give me exactly what I needed. He slipped my lacy panties down until I could step out of them. Then he lifted me up and pressed my back against the wall. He entered me in one long thrust.

“Yes. That’s what I need, Hendrix. I need you.” I clasped my ankles behind his back.

“I’ll always give you what you need, baby doll.”

I smashed my lips against his. It was too hard to hear him make promises he’d never be able to keep. While the music got louder, working toward the climax of the song, Hendrix sent me flying. I held onto him as my orgasm built. As the bass thrummed through me, I let go.

Hendrix drove into me, sending me impossibly higher. I clung to him, wishing there was some way for us to be together. Wishing for the impossible.

When we’d both come, he used my panties to clean me up. I didn’t care about that. Thrilled to have a part of him still inside me, I tugged down my dress and we moved back to the side of the stage.

The concert ended way too soon. Hendrix had to get started tearing down the stage so they could get everything loaded onto the trucks to head to the final stop in L.A.

I tried to hold myself together as he kissed me goodnight and made me promise I’d have my friends drop me off at the hotel right after our late dinner.

“I’ll be a few hours, but I’ll work a hell of a lot faster knowing you’re waiting for me back at the room.” His thumb traced my bottom lip.

I’d give anything for more time together. I even worked through what might happen if I didn’t show up at brunch. My parents would probably disown me. I could handle that if I knew things with Hendrix were real. He thought I was capable, but deep inside I was afraid. If I left the only life I’d ever known and found out he only thought of our weekend

together as a fling... that would be worse than letting my parents remain in control.

“Thank you.” I flung my arms around his neck and whispered in his ear. “I had an amazing time.”

He shook his head. “You’re the one I need to thank. You brought the sunshine back into my life, baby. And the amazing time isn’t over. Don’t wait up. I’ll wake you when I get back to the hotel.”

Nodding, I released my grip.

“Take care of your mama, little man.” He reached into the bag and ruffled the hair behind Growler’s ears. Then he kissed me one more time. “See you soon, sweetheart.”

“See you soon.” It was easier to let him go like that. With my heart breaking into a million pieces, I watched him walk away.

HENDRIX

*I*t was almost four by the time I got back to the hotel. The last text I'd received from Daisy was hours ago. I'd been worried about her getting back to the hotel, but she said she'd decided not to go out with the band and head back early. She was probably all curled up with her furrat by her side. I couldn't wait to wake her up and beg her to stay with me for the rest of the tour. I'd tried talking myself out of it while we broke down the stage. There was no use. She owned me, body, heart, and soul.

I opened the door slowly, not wanting to wake her until I'd showered off the sweat of my hard work. The lamps on the bedside tables were on. Instead of Daisy curled up under the covers in those silky pajamas, the bed was empty. I spun around. Her suitcase was gone. There was no sign that she'd ever even been in the room.

My gut clenched. Something was wrong. I jerked my phone out of my pocket, but my fingers fumbled on the screen. Dammit. I finally got the screen unlocked and was about to call her when a piece of paper sitting on my pillow caught my eye.

Dear Hendrix,

Thank you for taking me in this weekend and showing me such a good time. You'll never know how much our time together

meant to me. I wish it didn't have to come to an end. I'll always cherish this weekend and think of you whenever I hear Soul Obsession or Jimi Hendrix songs from now on.

To the memories,

XO,

Daisy

What the actual fuck? Her note didn't give me any reason she had to leave. I was missing something—something big. We'd shared more than a weekend fling. Her name was branded on my heart. In less than forty-eight hours I'd fallen for her. She couldn't just walk away. Not like this. Not without letting me tell her how I felt about her.

I dialed her number and waited with my heart in my throat while it rang. When I got voicemail, I hung up and tried again. This time it went straight to her message. Desperate to know where she went, I fired off a text to Jax. If anyone knew where she was, his new wife or one her friends would.

I paced the short length of my room while I waited for a response. He couldn't be asleep yet. After a big show like the one they'd just delivered, the guys would be up for hours while the adrenaline worked its way out of their systems.

Finally, he replied. Something about Daisy having to get back to meet her parents for brunch. I didn't know what the fuck he was talking about, so I called him instead.

He answered with, "It's four o'clock in the fucking morning."

I cut right to the chase. "Why brunch?"

"I don't know." There was mumbling in the background. "Dani says Daisy's parents are making her meet some guy they want her to marry."

Rage made my blood boil. She hadn't mentioned anything about that to me. "When and where?"

More mumbling, then, "Their country club. Dani says they're meeting at nine at Brookhaven. Right outside Houston."

"I know where it is. Thanks, man. I owe you one."

"Good luck."

It was already almost five. That gave me less than four hours to get to Houston and find Daisy. She couldn't go to brunch. I needed to tell her that she belonged with me.

First, I needed a car.

Hoping I had a shot at getting to her before she made a big mistake, I picked up the phone and dialed one of my foster brothers who lived in Dallas. He owed me one, and it was time to call in a favor.

DAISY

Walking into the club felt like walking into my own funeral. I was dead inside. Leaving Hendrix had gutted me. Not even Growler could cheer me up. For a little while on the drive home, I'd tried to convince myself I could be the woman Hendrix thought I could be. His faith in me had given me wings, but I was still too scared to try to fly.

He'd tried calling, but I hadn't answered. I told myself a clean break would be best. When my parents cut off my credit card, I realized just how much I depended on them. The only way to get out from under their complete control would be to get my own life.

Since they currently managed all aspects of mine, the only choice I had was to walk away with nothing or seriously consider marrying the man they wanted to push on me. If I agreed, it might buy me some time to come up with another solution.

I saw them before they noticed me. My parents had their backs to me and were sitting across the table from a man with short brown hair. That was the only thing about him that registered because everything else about him was so irrelevant. He was probably looking for a quick path to partner and figured marrying the boss's daughter would put him on the inside track.

My stomach pitched and rolled. This wasn't what I wanted. I wanted to be with a man who lit me up inside. A

man who believed in me and pushed me to be the best that I could be. A man like Hendrix.

Tears stung the backs of my eyelids as I thought about the inked bad boy with a heart of gold who I'd left behind. I could still feel his lips pressing against mine, his calloused fingers gliding over my skin, his thick cock sending me over the edge.

My thighs shook as I forced myself to take a step forward. Then a hand grabbed my arm. I spun around and faced the man I hadn't been able to shake out of my heart.

"Hendrix! What are you doing here?" My palms immediately went to his cheeks. I had to feel him to make sure he was real and not just a figment of my imagination.

"Marry me, Daisy." His eyes were bloodshot like he'd been up all night. He wasn't making any sense.

"What are you doing here?" I pulled him back to the foyer before we caused a scene in the main dining room. I'd never hear the end of it if my parents or their friends caught me talking to him. He still had on the t-shirt and jeans he'd worn last night. The tattoos I'd run my tongue over less than twenty-four hours ago covered his arms.

"I know you're meeting a guy your parents want you to marry. I don't run in the country club crowd, and I don't wear a suit to work every day. My family's made up of a bunch of guys who never even knew their parents. The only thing I can promise you is that I'll make you smile every day. I'd offer you my heart, too, but you've already got that, baby doll." His eyes sparkled as he got down on one knee. "I love you, Daisy. Will you marry me? Not because you have to, but because you want to."

My knees threatened to buckle. I reached out to steady myself against the wall. "What are you doing? You can't be serious."

"I'm dead serious. I can't promise we'll be rich, but I promise you'll be happy. You and the fur-rat. Finish the tour with me. Then we'll buy a few acres, and I'll build you the store you want to set up. We can do it together. What do you

say?" He held out the silver skull ring he'd been wearing on his right hand. "I didn't have time to stop and pick out a ring on the drive down. Think this will do for now?"

"This doesn't make sense."

He nodded in agreement. "The only thing crazier would be letting you walk out of my life."

"Yes." I couldn't fight it. The pull between us was too strong. We might not have known each other long, but we belonged together. I could feel it deep down in my soul. "I love you, too."

He got to his feet and slid the antiqued silver ring on my finger. "You won't regret this, sweetheart. I promise you that."

"I'll never regret saying yes to you." How could I when he was the only man who'd ever built me up instead of talking me down?

His lips crashed down on mine, and I clung to him. I couldn't believe I'd just agreed to marry an almost-stranger. We barely knew each other, though I felt like I knew him in all the ways that mattered.

"Where's Growler?" he mumbled against my lips.

"I had to leave him at home."

"Your home is with me now," Hendrix said. "And so is his. Let's go get the little fur-rat, shall we?"

I let him lead me toward the door, then stopped. "Give me a second? I need to go tell my parents I won't be meeting them for brunch."

"You want me to come with you, baby doll?" Hendrix squeezed my hand, offering a silent show of support.

"No. I have a feeling they won't really be a big part of our lives after this." There was no way I'd subject him to the cold shoulder my parents were sure to give him. "I'll be right back."

With Hendrix watching from the doorway, I headed toward the table where my parents waited. It didn't take long for me

to tell them I wouldn't be joining them for brunch. They were too worried about making a scene to say anything in front of their friends at the club, but the look in my father's eyes promised there would be hell to pay later.

Lucky for me, later would never come. I'd be on my way out of town with my fiancé and immune to any ultimatums he thought he could issue.

A few minutes later, I linked my arm with the man I loved, and we walked out of the club where I'd spent too many Sunday mornings to count.

"I hope you have a car," I said. "I'm pretty sure mine is going to get repossessed by my dad's company soon."

A vintage Ford truck idled at the curb. It looked as out of place as a pig in a thoroughbred race. "Your chariot awaits."

"Where did you get this?" I let him help me into the cab and settled on the wide bench seat.

"Belongs to one of my brothers. He lives outside of Dallas and let me borrow it when I called him this morning."

"I can't wait to meet your family. I've always wanted a brother or sister. Being an only child can be so lonely."

"Careful what you wish for. I've got dozens of brothers and a foster mother who's sweeter than the strawberries she picks right off the vines. They're all going to love you."

"I hope so. I just left my family, my job, and my apartment for you." The seriousness of my decision threatened to drag me down.

Hendrix wrapped an arm around my shoulder and pulled me into the center of the wide bench, right next to him. "Baby, you and me are just meant to be. Tell me you didn't feel it the second we saw each other."

I couldn't. He was right. Our love didn't make sense, but often the best things in life didn't.

"Oh my gosh. I'm going to get to close out the tour in L.A. with you, aren't I? That means I have time to teach you all the

lyrics to all the songs so you can sing them with me during the concert, right?"

Hendrix tightened his grip on my shoulders and laughed. "You let me teach you all the lyrics to my Jimi Hendrix collection, and you've got yourself a deal."

"Let's kiss on it."

He pulled the truck over to the side of the road and cupped the back of my head with his huge hand. "Baby, I thought you'd never ask."

EPILOGUE

HENDRIX

I thought love would make me weak, but instead it made me stronger. Having Daisy in my life made me wake up each day with a purpose. It was impossible to be anything but happy with her by my side. I'd been worried about the age gap, but she made me feel young. That's how I felt as I stood next to her at the grand opening of Pampered Pooches and Pets. My hand rested on her growing belly while our friends and family filled the retail space.

"You did it, sweetheart." I leaned down and pressed a kiss to the spot behind her ear that drove her wild.

"We did it." She turned and smiled up at me. "And if you keep that up, you're going to have to close down the party early and take me home."

I chuckled. She was due in less than two months. The last trimester of her pregnancy had her hormones spiking and she couldn't seem to get enough time with me under the covers... or in the storage room... or in the front seat of the truck. That one was getting challenging since she wasn't nearly as flexible as she'd been before I knocked her up.

"Do we need to look for something in the back room together?" I slipped my hand down to cup her tight round ass.

"Don't tempt me. If Mama Mae wasn't due to show up any minute, I'd already have your pants around your ankles and be riding your cock into oblivion."

“Such a dirty mouth on you, baby doll.” And I loved every fucking word. I’d been right about Daisy being a wildcat in bed. Once we figured out what she liked, she was insatiable. I considered our sex life to be my cardio training.

“You know what I can do with this mouth. You’d better keep your hands to yourself until your foster mother gets here, or I won’t be using it on you anytime soon.” Her eyes flashed with frustration.

She was gorgeous all the time, but especially when she was all fired up. I backed away, palms in the air. “I’m going to go make sure we don’t need any more sweet tea.”

Her shoulders slumped. “I’m sorry. I don’t mean to snap at you. I’m just so uncomfortable right now.”

“I know what will make you feel better.”

“What’s that?”

“How about once everyone leaves, I run a nice warm bath for both of us. I can put on a little Jimi and rub your shoulders while we soak in the tub?” Once I’d played all my favorite classic rock albums for her, she’d fallen in love with Jimi Hendrix almost as deeply as I had.

She shifted her weight and relaxed against me. “That sounds wonderful.”

“Consider it done.” I moved my hands to her shoulders and dug my thumbs into the knots around her neck. Thanks to Jax mentioning her name on social media as the creator of his custom guitar strap, her business had taken off before she even had a name for it. Orders for custom dog leashes had been piling up for the past nine months and she’d scrambled to pull together a team and get things moving.

I couldn’t be prouder of her. She’d single-handedly built her business from the ground up. Mostly while pregnant since once I’d been inside without wearing a condom, I vowed there’d never again be anything between us.

Mama Mae showed up with a few of my brothers and their families in tow. She and Daisy had taken to each other like two

peas in a pod. We had more love in our life than I'd ever imagined possible.

A few guys from Soul Obsession even stopped by with their wives and girlfriends. I hadn't become a superfan, but I'd always be grateful to them for the role they'd played in me finding my other half. Seeing Daisy surrounded by her friends and the family we'd created for ourselves filled my heart.

I'd told her once I was the unluckiest guy she'd ever meet. That curse had been lifted the moment I touched her. She was my lucky charm, and I'd do anything to prove to her she'd made the right choice when she chose me.

By the time everyone left, my wife could barely keep her eyes open. I picked her up and carried her out to the truck.

"Maybe we ought to skip the bath tonight, and I can tuck you in as soon as we get home," I offered.

"Don't you dare. I've been looking forward to alone time with you all day." She lifted her head and kissed along my jaw.

"What my baby doll wants, my baby doll gets." With her buckled in, I rounded the truck and got behind the wheel, eager to get her home and out of all those clothes.

"I love you, Hendrix." She reached out and squeezed my hand. "You're the one responsible for making my dreams come true. If I hadn't met you, I never would have had the confidence to go into business."

"And if I hadn't met you, I never would have found out what it feels like to really love and be loved." I wasn't usually such a sap but seeing all our hard work culminate in the grand opening today had made me a little sentimental.

"I guess it's a good thing we found each other then."

"A damn good thing," I agreed.

"Will you please take me home now and show me how much you love me?" Her eyes sparkled with mischief.

"It would be my pleasure, wife." Truer words had never been spoken. She was my everything... my sun, my moon, my stars, and my life. And we were only getting started.

Need more Hendrix and Daisy? Get a bonus scene [here](https://dl.bookfunnel.com/qf3gv0lqb1):
<https://dl.bookfunnel.com/qf3gv0lqb1>

Want to meet Hendrix's foster brothers? You can find them in the One Night series. Check out Grant: One Night with a Billionaire, the first book [here](#)!

Read the next book in the Galentines Groupies series [here](#):
Boy Band Baby Bump by Fern
Fraser: <https://geni.us/BoyBandBaby>.

Turn the page to find out more about the Galentine's Groupies series!

GALENTINES GROUPIES SERIES

When former boy band heartthrobs, Soul Obsession, announce their long-awaited reunion tour, a group of friends seize the chance for an epic girls' getaway following the tour from city to city.

Backstage passes help them rediscover their sisterhood...until sparks fly between the gal pals and the guys in the band. Suddenly, this reunion tour becomes a harmony of the heart, where new romance blossoms. Soul Obsession's farewell tour is about to become the love note of the year.

Eight of your favorite instalove authors are taking you on a rom-com adventure to remember this Galentine's Day. Grab your girlfriends, get your tickets, and prepare to swoon!

Burning for the Bodyguard by Violet Rae:

<https://geni.us/bftb>

Access All Areas by Cassie Mint:

<https://books2read.com/accessallareas>

Bad Boy's Convenient Wife by Mayra Statham:

<https://mybook.to/BadBoysConvenientWife>

Hitched to the Heartthrob by Nichole Rose:

<https://mybook.to/HitchedBoyBand>

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Boy Band Baby Bump by Fern Fraser:

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Rescuing the Superstar by Loni Ree:

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Trick or Tequila** - Halloween Steam Series

Single Dad Dilemma - Starlight Bay Series

* Features one of Mama Mae's boys as the hero

** Ties to one of Mama Mae's boys

ABOUT EVE LONDON

When Eve London was a girl, she wanted to be a trapeze artist. Instead, she grew up to be like most women—a juggler—trying to keep bunches of balls in the air.

Now she's a USA Today Bestselling Author who spends her days writing about the kind of men she likes – sexy, shameless, and just a little bit sarcastic.

www.EveLondonAuthor.com

