# ESSA KAN Ε

# THE PERFECT GIFT

JESSA KANE

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## CONTENTS

Chapter 1

Chapter 2

Chapter 3

Chapter 4

Chapter 5

Chapter 6

<u>Epilogue</u>

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### Nova

y favorite song comes on the ancient kitchen radio and I crank the volume, knowing full well that I'm tempting the wrath of my sisters. It's Sunday morning and the breakfast rush is in full swing, our tiny island restaurant packed with hungry tourists and locals. I'm in the kitchen, waiting for our cook to finish plating the order for table nine, giving me approximately thirty seconds of free time before I have to carry out the plates.

Ignoring the stern, yet amused, look from the cook, I throw my hands up over my head and weave my hips in a figure eight to the beat. There's a mop leaning against the wall and I whirl it into a dance, pretending it's a handsome boy who finds me dazzling. A memory flits through my mind of my mother humming along to this song while driving her beat-up old station wagon and my steps slow.

The vision weaves my happiness through with melancholy, but I force my smile to stay in place, even as I replace the mop against the wall. It might just be me and my two older sisters now running the restaurant our parents opened as newlyweds, but I have to be grateful for what I've got. Being sad never solved anything, right?

"Order up!" shouts the cook.

1

"Looks incredible, Marcel." I pick up the plates, pirouette toward the door and blow him a kiss. "Just like everything else you make."

His blush sends me into the bustling dining room with a giggle.

I set down the plates in front of two sunburned college kids, hoping I can get back to the kitchen before the song ends —Sundays should be for dancing!—but I'm brought up short when I see my sisters talking to some men at the hostess station.

There are two of them. They give off an air of importance, like a lot of the businessmen who come to our exclusive island on vacation. Tommy Bahama shirts, loafers, expensive sunglasses. They all look the same. But these two seem to be discussing something important with my sisters. Something a lot more important than breakfast.

On cue, both of my sisters turn and pin me with a look.

Then they trade a sly glance with each other.

A sense of foreboding settles in my belly when they point me out to the men.

One of them lets out a low whistle, shaking his hand like he's been burned and the other nods enthusiastically. What is happening here?

My feet are frozen in cement as my sisters approach me with a sense of urgency. Purpose. When they reach my sides, each of them takes an elbow and hustle me into the kitchen, shoving me toward the small alcove where we store supplies.

"Order up!" calls Marcel, eyeing my sisters suspiciously. Normally they never enter the kitchen unless it's to yell about the food taking too long.

"The food can wait," says my oldest sister, Raquel.

"Yes," Constance pulls the rubber band out of my long, blonde hair and fluffs it with a discerning eye. "We have far more important things to discuss."

"Like what?" I whisper, getting the urge to run.

"Did you see the men we were speaking with?" Raquel asks.

"The businessmen?"

"*Yes*, the *businessmen*, Nova." Constance exaggerates the words, as if I'm a simpleton. "They're looking for an escort."

I gasp when Constance unties my apron and tosses it aside, then begins hiking up my skirt to an indecent length. "Wwhat's an escort?"

My sisters turn wide eyes on each other and laugh gleefully.

*Oh goodness*. There's a terrible pressure in my belly. My sisters have always been best friends...with each other. I tend to keep to myself, but not by choice. When I was a child, they told me I could bring our parents back from the dead if I plucked a flower from the highest cliff on the island. Only when a stiff wind almost knocked me off did I realize they were lying. As more time passed, their confusing resentment toward me only grew. I'm not sure what I did to make them hate me, but I've learned to do my job and make myself scarce.

Truth be told, they scare me a little.

Now, Constance glances over her shoulder to make sure the cook isn't within earshot. "Ah, little Nova. An escort is a woman paid by a man to..." She nudges Raquel with an elbow. "How would you phrase it, sis?"

"He pays her to have sex. With him." She pouts dramatically. "Do you know what sex is, little Nova?"

"Yes," I breathe, my knees starting to tremble. "I...I think so. Mostly. You didn't tell them..." I swallow hard. "You didn't tell them *I* would be their escort, did you?"

"*What?*" Constance slaps a hand to her chest. "Of course we didn't!"

My relief almost sinks me to the ground.

"We told them you would be an escort for their *friend*."

An invisible hand squeezes my throat. "I don't want to. Please tell them I—"

"You *will* do it," Raquel interrupts me, suddenly serious. "Look, they want to surprise their billionaire buddy with an escort. He's coming to the island next week on a vacation and you know where he's staying? The mansion on the cliff. You know the one that costs more than the whole rest of the island combined?"

"Yes, I know it," I manage.

"He bought it free and clear," Raquel continues. "Just so he could come stay *for a week*. Do you have any idea what this dude's bank account must look like? It's overflowing."

"And we're going to get our share of it," Constance adds, giving me a once-over. "You're going to do it for us, rather."

They want me to have sex with a stranger? I've never even kissed a boy. Never accepted any of the date requests from customers or even watched an R-rated movie. The fear of the unknown is bad enough, but being used by my sisters, no matter how many times it has happened before, is excruciating.

"Please, don't make me do this," I say, trying to back away, but coming up short when my back hits the kitchen wall. "They can't be offering so much money that it's worth taking this kind of risk. What i-if he's *mean*?"

Constance mimics me with an eye roll. "What if he's mean? Grow up, Nova."

"And yeah," Raquel hisses. "The kind of money they're offering for a week of your time is definitely worth the risk."

"A *week*?" I lift my chin as much as my limited courage will allow. "M-maybe one of you should do it."

Raquel's upper lip curls. "Don't act like you don't know what you look like, little sister. Those businessmen barely gave us a glance. When you walked out, they were practically foaming at the mouth." "They said it was going to be hard not taking you for themselves."

Is one of the reasons my sisters hate me because of how I look?

That possibility occurs to me for the first time in my life. Of the three of us, I'm the one who bears the strongest resemblance to our mother. *She* was an incredible beauty, but I always considered myself a flawed version of the original. After all, I can't sing like her. I'm six inches shorter. I'm clumsy as sin, where she was graceful. Still, the venom my sisters are spitting at me makes me think I'm right.

It's been partly about how I look all along.

I know the rest of their reasoning all too well.

More than anything, the realization they begrudge my resemblance to our mother makes me sad. Of course, they wish they looked like her. It's unfair that I'm the only one when we all loved her equally.

"I don't know what to say..." I murmur softly. "I know we could use the money, but—"

"You think?" Constance sneers. "That storm a few months ago almost put us out of business. We're barely making ends meet."

"Do you really want the restaurant to close, Nova?" Constance asks, getting in my face. "Are you going to let Mom and Dad's legacy vanish, just like that?"

"No," I whisper, horrified. "I don't want that. But-"

"But nothing." Raquel pokes me in the shoulder hard and I struggle not to wince. "You listen to me, little Nova. *We* do all the hard work around here. You dance around all day and look pretty. You sneak off to go play in the ocean while we figure out how to cover the bills. You owe us. You owe Mom and Dad."

Are they right?

I'm definitely a daydreamer, but have I been letting them pick up all the slack?

Will I let my parents down if I don't help make this money?

Even if it'll come at the cost of my virginity?

"And don't forget..." Constance raises an eyebrow. "Mom and Dad were on their way to pick you up from dance class when the accident happened. Otherwise they'd still be here."

A sob escapes my mouth, heat searing the backs of my eyelids. They are right. I'm responsible for my parents being on the road in the rain that horrible evening. I *do* owe their legacy this sacrifice. I owe it to my sisters too for taking away their parents. "H-how much did they offer?"

"A lot," Raquel says, trading a covert look with Constance. "But that's just the initial payout. We have to take advantage of this. Of *him*. We won't get another chance like this again."

I shake my head. "I don't understand."

"You tell that billionaire you're on the pill. Understand, Nova?"

My brow knits. "Like birth control? But...I'm not taking any."

Constance's face splits with a grin. "We know. But he's going to get one look at you and take any excuse to hit it raw. Nine months later? Ding dong. Hello, Mister Billionaire. I'm having your baby and if you want me to stay quiet, I'll take a nice, fat check, please."

Understanding dawns. "You want me to get pregnant on purpose?"

"You don't think this kind of shit happens all the time? You won't be the first gold digger to take advantage of one of these rich assholes." Raquel jabs the air between us with her fingers. "This is our chance to be comfortable. For life. To keep this place running the way Mom and Dad intended. Are you going to rob us of that chance?"

My breath catches. "No."

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Lincoln

'm extremely annoyed. I have no time for an island vacation. There is work to do back in New York.

There is work to do back in New York. There is *always* work. Do my business partners honestly expect me to lounge around and drink mojitos for a week when I could spend that time conquering the world?

The limousine driver materializes outside my door and opens it, stepping back, chest puffed up. Careful to avoid brushing against the man, I slide a folded hundred-dollar bill into his hand. "Thank you, sir," he says, bounding off to retrieve my single piece of luggage from the trunk. Only slightly curious about my accommodations, I turn to survey the property I was advised to buy for my brief time on this godforsaken island.

My personal real estate agent handled the sale, but if I recall his excited chatter over the phone, the property includes fourteen bedrooms, thirteen full baths, a movie theater, tennis courts, indoor pool, an outdoor pool and a helipad.

Not bad, I suppose.

When I'm done with this hellish week in paradise, I'll offer it to my overseas investors as a vacation getaway or simply sell it. Doesn't matter to me either way.

2

Nothing matters to you but money.

Was it always like that?

I ignore the sharp jab in my throat and stride toward the house, intending to unpack my laptop as soon as I'm inside. During the flight, I was emailed about an opportunity to invest in a new water purification technology out of Germany and the deal should be done by now. Already I'm behind and I've only been on "vacation" for less than five minutes.

Throwing open the door of the house, a series of tasteful lighting warms to a glow, an ocean breeze rifling from the other side of the expansive mansion space to ruffle my hair. A sunset fills every window, giving the air a pinkish-orange tinge. Ahead in the high-ceilinged living room, long white curtains waft up and down, a fire crackles in the marble fireplace.

Just like my penthouse back in Manhattan, it's quiet.

Empty.

Exactly how I like it.

Again, there is a twitch of discomfort in my throat, but I clear it and hang up my overcoat on the convenient rack. Behind me, the limousine driver sets down my suitcase and closes the door without a sound. When I would have kept walking, I'm brought up short by a note on the entry table. My name is written in script on the front, so I pick it up and read the contents, my irritation already flaming higher when I see it's from my business partners.

Last week, they came into my office—mid-conference call with Japan—and demanded I take some time off. *You're working too hard. You're making us look bad*, they said.

I let them think their cajoling is what convinced me.

I might have even convinced myself.

But the truth is, my birthday was last week. I'm thirty-four.

The same age at which my father died.

Just like him, I have only my money to keep me warm.

But *unlike* him, I am not neglecting a family.

My professional drive harms no one. That is the difference between me and him.

So why is it getting harder and harder to tell us apart?

Shaking off my troubling thoughts, I scan the contents of the note.

Dear Linc,

It only took ten years, but we finally got you to take a vacation. After all the money you've made us, we wanted to make it a memorable one.

What do you buy for the man who has everything? After a lot of thought, we think we found the perfect gift. She's legal, clean, on the pill—and she's yours for the week. Enjoy.

"WHAT THE FUCK?" I mutter, positive they're joking.

My business partners might be morally corrupt bastards it's what makes them such good hedge fund operators—but they know I don't participate in their kind of extracurricular activities. I keep to myself. Women are nothing but needy distractions and I *resent* distractions. They've known this about me for years. There is no way they would procure me a woman as a gift. Unless they think a vacation will loosen me up into behaving differently. Wanting things I don't normally want. If so, they're dead wrong.

A muffled knock comes from the kitchen followed by some indiscernible muttering.

Feminine muttering.

Jesus Christ, they really did purchase me a woman.

Now I have to waste precious minutes getting rid of her.

I toss away the note and drag a hand down my face, moving briskly in the direction of the kitchen. I open the door, the command to *please leave* already poised on the tip of my tongue—

There's a little blonde fairy, half turned away, talking to herself.

Hand gestures and all.

She's tied in a big pink bow that covers her small breasts and she's wearing nothing else but a pink thong and high heels. I'm shocked as hell when my cock fills with blood and swells against the front of my slacks. I have no choice but to reach down and adjust the growing length. It must be her ass. It's almost indescribably hot. I've never seen a bottom quite so... disrespectful. Her cheeks are so high and tight, they're talking back to me. Even sassing me.

### Have you lost your mind?

"Ta-da!" she half-whispers to herself, throwing her arms out wide and almost knocking herself over. "I'm your present and *oh boy*, I'm so good at sex. Oooh yeah. You better watch out." She slaps her hands over her eyes. "Oh goodness. You sound ridiculous."

Is this girl...rehearsing what she's going to say to me?

I realize my mouth is arranging itself in a smile and quickly stamp it out.

This has already taken up too much of my time.

Even if I find her extremely sexy, I know damn well I won't sleep with her.

Sex requires human touch. Human touch burns me like fire and I have no desire to fix myself. For a while in my early twenties, I tried to undo the belief that pleasure equaled weakness, but it didn't work and I haven't had the desire to try again in over a decade. Forgoing human touch keeps me alone and alone is where I love to be.

Surprised by my hesitation to get rid of the girl, I force myself to rap a fist on the door.

The fairy whirls around to face me with a gasp—and falls squarely on her tight butt.

My life flashes in front of my eyes in a frenetic slide show. When it stops, there is nothing but the fairy. My heart pounds like a fist on a drum. And I can't do anything but stare.

Her face.

It's innocence.

It's angelic purity and yet my cock hardens further, eager to defile.

Blonde hair falls around in her comically stunned face, wide green eyes blinking up at me, her puffy mouth parted in surprise. My body aches for release simply by looking at her from the neck up, but below that...fucking Christ. Her ass was only the beginning. The outlines of her stiff nipples are visible through the soft material of the pink bow. With her leaning back on her hands, knees raised, I can see the mound of her pussy and I stifle the urge to get on top of her and hump that little thing until my balls are empty.

"A-are you Mister Lincoln?"

My loins twist like a fucking pretzel at the full, husky sound of her voice saying my name. "Lincoln is my first name," I rasp.

"Oh. Umm..."

She turns over and awkwardly gets to her feet, the high heels clearly two sizes too big. Despite her whispered claims to be *good at sex*, I've never been more convinced in my life that someone is a virgin. That only makes me burn hotter, makes my dick harder, even though I know unwrapping this gift is impossible. *I hate to be touched*.

Finally, the fairy gets her balance and flings out her hands. "Ta-da! I'm your—"

"I heard."

"Oh." Her face goes pink, arms drifting down to her sides. "Did I mess up already?" Why is my heart flopping around like a fish? "No. No, you did fine, but..." I clear my throat hard and step aside. "You may..."

I can't bring myself to say "leave."

Just say it.

"You want me to go to the bedroom, right?" There is a brave set to her shoulders as she sails past me. "I hope you don't mind, I already had a tiny peek at the master. Everyone is so jealous that I get to see the inside of this wonderful place. It has been towering over the beach for so long and no one has ever been invited."

I follow her out of the kitchen and toward a staircase. "Who is everyone?"

She stops and turns with her hand on the rail. "Sorry?"

There is a rather obnoxious need to know who this girl associates with, how often and where. "You said 'everyone is jealous.' Who is 'everyone'?"

"Oh!" She counts off on her fingers. "My sisters, some of our regular customers, Marcel the cook—"

"You work in a restaurant."

"Yes." She starts up the stairs, her peachy little ass on display, the pink strip of her thong separating cheeks that lift, fall, lift, making the tie around my neck feel like it's strangling me. "That's where your friends found me."

It hits me hard how fucking debased this situation is. My partners went into this girl's place of work and paid her to service me for a week, even though she's young as hell and clearly innocent. I'm not a man who does things like this. I'm not turned on by breaking the rules or flexing my power. This is wrong and yet, I follow her up the stairs as if in a trance.

The fairy stops at the top step and flits to the window overlooking the ocean, sighing with hearts in her eyes. "Isn't my island beautiful?"

"Yes," I say, even though I can't tear my eyes off her long enough to look. "What is your name, girl?" A dimple pops in her cheek. "Nova."

Those two syllables whisper through me like a cool breeze. "Are you here of your own free will, Nova?"

Am I looking too closely or does a hint of the sparkle leave her eyes? "Yes." She ducks her head and glides past me, the pink ribbon fluttering out behind her, stopping when she reaches a doorway, her supple, young body outlined in gentle light. She pinches one end of the pink ribbon between her fingers and draws it slowly through its loop, the sound of rasping silk making my cock throb uncontrollably. Finally, the ribbon flutters to the floor, baring her hot, perky little tits and I have to remind myself to breathe. "I'm here of my own free will, Lincoln But I'm really here to bend to *your* will. Aren't I?" she says huskily, trailing a finger down the doorjamb. "Wonder how you'll do it?"

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Nova

turn and sway into the bedroom, my hands flailing as soon as I'm out of Lincoln's sight. Oh my goodness, what made me think I could be convincing as a seductress? Especially after I fell on my butt downstairs in front of him? What a *dork*. If I haven't already blown this whole plan, I will be shocked. He hasn't even touched me. He actually just seems *confused* by me.

Why did he have to be so handsome?

Ever since I was hired last week, my sisters made me watch endless hours of James Bond movies, forcing me to study the way Bond Girls move, speak, seduce. If Lincoln looked like one of his business partners, I might be more in control of the situation. Might be able to concentrate and keep my rapid-fire pulse under control. But the fact is, Lincoln *is* James Bond. Cool, inscrutable, masculine, suave, handsome. Did I mention that?

There isn't a dark hair or a thread out of place, even though he's just flown in from New York. His crisp white shirt and dark navy tie are perfectly pressed. His amber eyes are sharp and arresting. Is it any wonder I'm dancing nervously around the bedroom right now, my game plan having totally leaked out of my ear the moment he made his presence known in the kitchen? Get yourself under control.

Remember, your parents are counting on you.

Your sisters are counting on you.

In a week, Lincoln will have gone back to New York and if I don't make something useful come from this experience, I'll let everyone down.

"I can't let that happen," I whisper.

"What was that?" Lincoln says, appearing in the doorway, his hands fisted at his sides, those corded forearms flexed.

"Nothing," I breathe, wondering why my nipples keep puckering in such a painful way. "I just, um..." Turning in a circle, I search the room for my backpack. "I brought some tools."

A single one of his eyebrows jumps. "Tools."

"Yes, all kinds," I say enthusiastically, retrieving my threadbare, red backpack from the floor and setting it on the massive king-sized bed. I'm excruciatingly aware that I'm standing in front of a man in nothing but thong underpants and high heels, but I need to make it seem like this is the usual for me. I unzip the backpack and remove a black bar with a leather loop attached to either end, borrowed from Raquel. "Well, looky here. We have this," I say, swallowing hard and wishing I'd studied the contents of my backpack before opening it. Why oh why did I let my sisters pack for me? "This is for, um..."

"Do you know what it's for, Nova?"

"Yes, of course." My face is on fire. "It's for exercise. Doing sit ups, maybe?"

Out of the corner of my eye, I think I see his lips twitch. "What else have you got in your bag of tricks?"

I drop the bar like it's on fire and go digging through my bag, pulling out a red ball with a thick string attached. "Oh, uh..."

"Maybe this one is for playing catch?"

Is that amusement in his tone? I can't tell. But if I keep pulling unfamiliar objects out of this bag, he's definitely going to peg me for an inexperienced virgin. Who wants one of *those*? I've been hired to rock his world, not disappoint him with my lack of skill.

"Maybe we don't need any of these things?" I say, turning and lounging back on the bed, relieved when his eyes blaze over my naked body, focusing in on the juncture of my thighs. "Maybe you could just..."

"Just what, Nova?" Never taking his hungry gaze off me, he slowly loosens his tie. "Take out this cock you've made so hard and pound it into my little virgin sacrifice?"

"I'm not a virgin," I lie in a rush.

His tie is off now and he trails the silky end of it down my belly and over my mound, tickling me in places I didn't know I could feel ticklish. "You're as innocent as the day you were born, little fairy."

Failure settles heavily on my shoulders. I've screwed up and let everyone down. And it only took me fifteen minutes. "Does that mean you don't want me?"

His gaze flies to mine, then cuts away, lines forming on his forehead. "I don't want or need *anyone*. I despise being touched."

Shock replaces my sense of failure.

I should be distressed. Disappointed. After all, there is no way I can get pregnant without him touching me. Thus, my method of saving the restaurant and making my family proud is ruined. But there is something in his tone that cuts through all those worries. Absorbs me. Straightens my spine, makes me look deeper at this man who—until now—has given off such an air of invincibility. "Not even hugs?"

"Especially not hugs," he scoffs, still not looking at me. "What use are those?"

"To make someone feel safe and wanted."

Lincoln shakes his head, laughing without humor, but the sound cuts off abruptly. "Who gives you hugs, little fairy?"

"Nobody. Not anymore." My chest twists. "It doesn't mean I don't want them."

My words seem to hit him like a missile strike. Why? He remains very still for long moments before pacing away, an agitated hand in his hair. "Well you won't be getting them from me."

And that bothers him. It's plain to see. There's something fierce, almost protective, inside me that wants to look deeper, to find out what makes him dislike being touched. Would my delving bother him, though? It's been so long since I had anyone to talk to. Maybe I'll do it wrong. Maybe I don't know how to be a friend, especially to a man as obviously tortured as this one. "Do you want me to leave?" I whisper.

*"No."* 

Some of my tension ebbs, though I don't know why. There's something inside calling on me to remain. "If you don't like to be touched, why did your friends hire me?"

"They don't know." He turns with his arms crossed. "They know nothing about me, clearly, or they wouldn't have sent me to an island for a week to relax."

He says that last word as if it tastes like week-old trout.

"You don't like relaxing, either?" I giggle. "What do you like?"

"Being productive. Working. Making deals."

I flop backwards on the bed. "I'm tired just thinking about it."

The softness of the bedspread on my bare back is so nice, I close my eyes and luxuriate in the sensation, rubbing myself on it like a kitten. When I lift my lids again, there is Lincoln, staring down at me. I angle my head and consider him, noticing his strained jaw and the bulge at the front of his slacks. I know what that means, because my sisters told me

several times throughout the course of the week. It means he's horny, girl, and you've done your job.

Lincoln is aroused, but doesn't want my touch.

I don't know how to make him happy. And...I want to, I realize.

Something inside me says he hasn't been happy in a very long time.

"You're fucking exquisite," he says hoarsely, raking a hand over his open mouth. "I've never seen anything or anyone that comes close. I'll give you that."

"Thank you," I whisper, not knowing what else to say. "Lincoln?"

His throat muscles shift. "Yes?"

"I can't satisfy you physically, but what if I could help you relax in other ways?"

His skepticism is obvious. "Oh yeah? How?"

I shrug a shoulder. "This is my island. I could show you places so beautiful, you won't be able to catch your breath."

"I can't catch my breath right now," he says in a raw voice, seeming to surprise himself. That slip-up annoys him and his demeanor changes, going from exposed to commanding. "You're mine for the week, Nova. I'll be deciding what we do." He hooks a finger in the waistband of my panties, somehow avoiding a brush with my skin, and before I can ask his intentions, the only remaining clothing on my body is stripped away. "Right now, I want to watch you come."

In an instant, my heart rate is sprinting a thousand miles an hour, the fear of the unknown bearing down on me once again. "M-me? But..."

Lincoln holds my panties to his nose and inhales deeply, a groan rippling in his chest. "But what?"

"I don't know how," I admit, heat clinging to my neck.

Disbelief rearranges his features, struck through with anger. "I'll going to kill my business partners. Sending you to

a stranger for your first fuck. Your first *orgasm*. I'm sure they offered you so much money, you had no choice but to come here, didn't they?"

My nod is almost imperceptible. It's all I can manage. Lincoln is mad...on my behalf? When was the last time I had someone all to myself on my side?

Lincoln curses, his face intense while he chews something over. "I'd like to be the one who gives you your first orgasm, Nova. I want to watch it make your eyes blind. I want to watch your hips shake, hear you whine like a baby. I want to *smell* it. But I won't do it unless you ask me. Unless you say, 'please show me what an orgasm feels like, Lincoln.""

The tight buds of my nipples are making me restless. I yearn to press the palms of my hands over them to squeeze, but I don't know if that would be odd. "How are you going to...do that...without touching me?"

"Skillfully." His chest heaves as he waits for me to respond, as if his very sanity is riding on my answer. "Say the words if you want to feel good, little fairy."

Do I want this?

To agree to something I've never experienced, no idea how it'll end?

My body aches in places it never has before. My nipples throb in time with a newfound pulse between my legs and...I need something. An end to this anticipation, this stir of confusing desires. And if he won't even be touching me, how scary could it be? Before I can question myself, I close my eyes and blurt the words. "Please show me what an orgasm feels like, Lincoln."

His growl is predatory. Triumphant. "Stand up. Go wait by the couch."

There's a couch?

Since we walked into this room, I've been unaware of everything but Lincoln. His consuming energy, his gorgeous face and tall, muscled frame. Even the tic in his jaw makes my tummy clench. Every single time. "Nova," he prompts, beginning to search through my backpack. "Do as you're told."

"Yes, sir," I murmur, rising naked from the bed to go stand by the couch. It's positioned in front of the window, the glitter of my town spread out below. If anyone looks up here, they might even be able to make out our silhouettes through the gauzy white curtains. My naked body on display for this man, nothing but high heels of which to boast.

Should that excite me so much?

It *does*. To such a degree that I whimper while watching Lincoln approach in the window, the folds of my sex growing heavy and damp. Is that normal?

"Bend over and grip the arm of the couch," he instructs. "Legs spread."

Oh this is bad, isn't it? Inappropriate in the extreme. And still I eagerly do as I'm told, enjoying the role as his plaything. Enjoying the act whether it's wrong or right. As soon as I'm bent forward and my ankles are hip-width apart, I hear a humming sound. What is that?

A smooth object brushes my inner thigh—and it's vibrating.

"*Ohhh*," I exclaim, tilting my hips up. The light judder sends a flock of pulsations up, up and my core clenches tightly, dropping my mouth open on a sob. "What is that?"

"It's a vibrator," Lincoln answers thickly, slowly dragging the object up my thigh. When it's nearly at my sex, I bite down on my bottom lip and dig my fingertips into the arm of the couch. If this vibrator feels so good on my thigh, what is it going to feel like *there*? "I'm going to use it on your pussy now."

I nod vigorously, afraid to let go of my held breath—

The buzz finds me, pressing firmly to some glorious spot, a place that swells, seems to bloom like rose petals and everything inside me rejoices, expands. Stars burst in front of my eyes. "*Lincoln*." "You've already drenched the goddamn thing." Lincoln grinds the vibration over that incredibly sensitive spot and I cry out. "Were you made for fucking, little girl?"

"I...I don't know!"

"Christ, yes you were. You should see this little cunt pulsate."

All of a sudden, the buzz is gone. The friction is gone. I whine Lincoln's name, my thighs continuing to shake violently, my body begging for something. *Anything*. "P-please can I have it back?"

Lincoln appears to my left, towering above me, his eyes bright with what instinct tells me is arousal. There's a sheen of sweat on his upper lip, his chest rifling up and down. In his hand, he holds a clear, curved wand. That is what's making me feel like this?

Or is it Lincoln?

Because I can't imagine exposing myself like this to anyone else. The very idea of it would have terrified me. But right now, I feel nothing but...celebrated. Just looking into his amber eyes is keeping me right on the edge of that release I could feel approaching. Even without the wand, I'm poised there on the precipice.

"Goddamn," he grits out, his eyes running over my face, my body. "You can't be real."

I can't form words. I can only pant shamelessly as Lincoln presses a button on the vibrator, increasing the noise. Coming so close, so close we're only a breath away from our first touch, Lincoln slides the vibrator between my legs, wedging the quivering ridge between my thighs. "Ride it. Look at me while you slide your hot, little pussy up and down, up and down. But if you let it inside you, I'll take it away. Do you understand?"

"Yes," I sob. "Yes."

I'm a slave to sensation, rubbing my slippery flesh on the vibrator. In my periphery, I can see myself rubbing my sex on the arm of the couch, faster, faster, my thighs hugging it on either side. It's indecent. It has to be. But I can't do anything but buck my hips and absorb the intense tremors from the wand while Lincoln stares right into my soul, hoarse sounds falling from his mouth.

"It feels s-so good when I press down here," I say, leaning forward and holding, my teeth chattering. "Wh-why, Lincoln?"

"That's your clit, Nova. Grind into it." I gasp, the room spinning around me. "Those eyes are losing focus, little girl. You're almost there. *Show it to me*—"

"Lincoln."

My scream of his name burns up my throat. There's a mighty squeeze inside me, contracting, relenting, contracting —and then it bursts, drowning my senses in a pleasure so intense, I can't believe it has existed all this time. Tears stream down my cheeks, whimpers catching in my throat as my sex pulses, pulses, *constricts*, shooting bliss down to my toes.

"Wow," I breathe, a drowsy smile spreading on my face, just for Lincoln.

The last thing I remember before falling sideways onto the couch in a state of utter euphoria—and passing clean out—is Lincoln watching my smile bloom in awe.

Right before I drift off, I remember my job here is to get pregnant.

With Lincoln's issues touching people, that definitely won't happen, but showing him my island and teaching him how to relax will be even better.

And that's exactly what I plan to do.

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### Lincoln

hen I wake up the next morning, I'm positive there's been a mistake. My ruthless business practices have surely earned me a

place in hell, but I've been sent to heaven instead. There's no other explanation for the angel beaming down at me, sunlight refracted around her in rainbow beams.

Nova stands on my bed in nothing but a flimsy white bikini top and a scarf wrapped around her hips, whirling in merry circles, her blonde hair floating around her in a cloud.

I'm instantly hard as a rock.

"I'm taking you on an adventure, Lincoln."

Last night comes back to me in vivid images. Nova on the verge of tears because no one hugs her anymore, forcing me to acknowledge my heart isn't dead after all. How could it be when her confession made it weigh a thousand pounds?

All the money in the world and I couldn't give her that.

It shouldn't bother me so much that I can't hug this fairy, make her feel safe and wanted. The fact that it bothers me to the extreme is alarming, to say the least. Since when do I give a shit about anyone's wants or needs? I see the world in black and white. Good investments and bad. There is no room for

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this beautiful ray of sunshine giggling and dancing around on my bed, joyful simply to be awake.

Another moving image from last night consumes my mind, making precome leak out onto my thigh and I stifle a groan. Nova fucking the arm of the couch, her sweet ass cheeks flexing, hips writhing, back arched, tits bouncing, head thrown back. There are men in my position who pay millions of dollars seeking sexual thrills like the one she offered last night, but those men are never fulfilled. Never satisfied.

Nova is the epitome of what those men hunt for, desperate for fulfilment. Some proof that pure innocence still exists in this world. I've got her here, all to myself.

And I'm too fucking damaged to possess her the way she deserves.

The way any man would do in my position.

My fist curls in the bedclothes, twisting with enough force to rip the seams. The idea of another man even looking at Nova enrages me. What sense does that make when I know she can't be mine? Not completely.

I don't have time for this.

I am not built for this.

Romance and me? I scoff out loud. What a ridiculous notion.

"I have work to do, Nova," I growl, climbing out of bed and performing my usual routine of putting on my watch, making sure it matches to the second with my phone. There are seventy-six emails, all demanding my attention and I plan to give it to them. Not her.

So why can't I bring myself to press the button to open my messages?

Instead, my gaze is trained on the mirror behind my bed. Her angelic image fills it and my heart knocks against my ribcage, wishing I was free to pin her down beneath me and spend the morning fucking her brains out. Feeding her, bathing her, letting her doze. Then starting the process all over again. My dick is thick and heavy in my briefs, eager to be seated in her virgin pussy, but my stubborn mind deters me from acting on those urges.

"Oh," she says, shoulders slumping a little, before she brightens again. "Can I help?"

I turn with a raised eyebrow. "Help me work?"

Too late, I realize she can now see my raging hard-on. Her lips part, those incredible green eyes popping wide. She crosses her arms over her tits, but not before I watch her nipples go erect. "Um…yes. Yes, I can help you work. I'm an excellent negotiator, you know."

Amusement teases up the corner of my lips. "Are you?"

She drops into a cross-legged position in the center of the bed, looking kind of smug over capturing my attention. Little does she know the effort was unnecessary. I can't get my fucking eyes off her. "Mmhmm. It's how I get out of working my shifts at the restaurant."

I'm shocked to realize a full two minutes has passed without me thinking of the emails on my phone. Normally I would already have ten of them answered. "Explain."

"I will." She plops sideways, snuggling her cheek into the comforter and the scarf rides up around her hips, leaving her sexy, little buns awash in sunlight. "Like I told you last night, I know the most beautiful parts of the island. That's because I like to sneak off and go visit them when I should be working."

"Rather irresponsible of you, little fairy."

"I like when you call me that," she whispers, blushing.

My pulse thickens, everywhere, beating all over my body. "Why?"

"Because a nickname means we're friends." She turns over on her back, showing off her pussy, barely hidden by a white bikini bottom, her tits spilling out of the top—and her innocent expression tells me she's completely unaware of her innate sensuality. "Are we friends, Lincoln?" A bead of sweat rolls down my spine. "What we did last night wasn't exactly friend-like."

Her blush intensifies. "Maybe we're special friends."

"Yes," I say, my voice jagged. "Special friends." The grateful smile she gives me is almost my undoing. "You still haven't explained why you're an excellent negotiator," I say briskly, worried if we keep talking about the benefits of our friendship, I'm going to climb on top of her and attempt to discover more of them. That cannot happen, though. My affliction could lead to me hurting her feelings and I think—no, I know—that might kill me.

"Oh yes," Nova says, seeming to finally realize the scarf is hiked up and hurriedly tugging it down. "The places on the island where I go have the best coconuts. You can't get them anywhere else. I use them to barter for time off."

### "Clever."

"Yes," she sighs, her smile dimming. "But I won't be doing that anymore. I should have been pulling my weight more at the restaurant." Her little chin firms. "I'm going to work harder like you, Lincoln."

"No," I say abruptly, an odd pressure hitting me in the chest. "You will not work harder. You'll stay exactly the same."

She pushes her wealth of blonde hair out of her face and climbs off the bed. "No, my sisters do a lot of work and I'm just...a silly dreamer. It's not fair to them. Sneaking off just to see pretty places is a waste of time."

"It is not a waste—" I curse under my breath, confused by this urgency to validate Nova. Make her understand what an incredible gift she is that certainly does *not* need changing. "Give me ten minutes and I'll let you show me these places. All right?"

Her hands clasp together under her chin, hopefulness swimming in her eyes. "Really?"

"Yes," I mutter, alarmed to find myself smiling.

She bounds toward me, obviously intending to throw herself into my arms—and something shatters inside me when she skids to a halt. "Oh, I'm—I forgot. I'm sorry."

"It's okay," I say gruffly. "I'll...meet your downstairs."

I watch her leave the room with what feels, rather suspiciously, like longing.

What the hell am I going to do about this girl?

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FIVE MORNINGS A WEEK, I wake up extra early and spend two hours in the gym running and lifting weights, yet I still can barely keep up with Nova. And she's barefoot.

First, we walked along a path overlooking the rocky coastline, fragrant air blowing her hair in eight directions, her smile beaming at me amidst the blonde strands. Now I follow her closely in a hike up the side of the mountain on the south end of the island, wondering what the hell I'm going to do if she slips. Catch her, of course. No question. If she got hurt, I think I would rip the sky down the middle.

The possibility of catching her, however, is unnerving when I haven't touched another human being in well over a decade, but there's also a confusing part of me...hoping she slips.

So I can put my arms around her.

She'd be worth every ounce of discomfort. The pleasure of her might even outweigh it.

"We're almost there," she calls back to me cheerfully and I realize my eyes have been glued to her ass for a good twenty minutes. The white bikini bottom is wedged between her golden, sun-kissed cheeks and they lift and fall maddeningly, making my hands itch to squeeze them, separate them, get my tongue in between those taut mounds to learn the taste of her virgin asshole. "Just a little farther..." I reach down and adjust my engorged erection just as we crest the rise...

And I'm speechless.

We look down over the edge of a cliff. Beneath us, a rainbow cuts through rolling mist to reveal a waterfall plunging down a good two hundred feet into a cerulean lagoon. Besides the roar of falling water, there are faint sounds of monkeys playing in the trees around us. I've traveled all over the globe on business trips, seen landmarks and cities and the odd beach. But none of it compares to this. None of it compares to this paradise of having this angel perched on the cliff beside me, her lower lip caught between her teeth, obviously worried I won't be impressed.

"You were right, little fairy," I say gruffly. "It's beautiful."

Her body drains of tension. "Worth the trip?"

"Worth a hundred trips."

Moisture swims into her eyes and she exhales a delighted laugh.

*Oh fuck.* I'm in love with her.

No, I fell in love with her last night in the kitchen when she fell on her ass.

Either my ribcage is shrinking or my heart is growing and I'm not certain I like it.

What I should do is return to the house, pack my shit and get the hell back to New York where I belong. Try and put the fairy out of my head. But it would be a useless endeavor. She's already so deep under my skin, I can't think straight.

What am I going to do? Bring her home with me?

Keep this wild, barefoot angel caged in an apartment when she needs freedom?

I can't even stand to be touched. This vibrant girl deserves better than that, yet the idea of another man giving it to her blinds me with rage.

"Nova—"

"I'm going to get us some coconuts!"

In a split second, she's dashed out of my sight. I turn just in time to watch the fairy take a flying leap onto the trunk of a palm tree, her thighs inching higher, higher. Feeling like I'm under hypnosis, I follow in her wake, standing at the base of the tree, my cock nearly bursting at the sight of her lithe thighs wrapped around the tree, her butt pumping and flexing as she climbs. Her arms pull her up, dragging that pussy roughly over the trunk and when she grunts from exertion, I finally, finally give in and fist my cock through my shorts.

I don't even like my own touch and it burns me now. Sometimes, my body judges I need relief and I wake up covered in my own spend, but I rarely take the time to masturbate. Physical needs are a weakness. Just like hugs or kissing. Aren't they? That's what I was told growing up, but I'm not so sure anymore. Hugging Nova last night would have made her feel better, made her happy and how can there be anything wrong with that?

Breathing in and out, I try to withstand the burn of my own touch long enough to give myself some relief. But it's no use. Self-disgust clogs my throat and I drop my hand away with a curse. Though I still *cannot* take my eyes off Nova. She tosses two coconuts to the ground and starts her descent, her mouthwatering backside getting closer, the sound of her thighs chafing the trunk filling my ears. I try to step back when she reaches the ground, but I can't. I'm frozen in place, hunger wracking me in a way I've never experienced. Never knew was possible.

My body surges forward and I pin her to the tree.

"Put your hands on the trunk and leave them there," I growl near her ear.

Goosebumps lift on her neck, her breath coming in short spurts, but she does what she's told. "Lincoln?"

"Up on your toes." I hook my fingers in the sides of her bikini bottoms, letting them slither down to her knees, marveling over the fact that when my skin brushes hers, I feel nothing but...arousal. Hunger. Heat. "Get that tight, young ass up into my lap."

"Lincoln, y-you're touching me," she whimpers. "You're so warm and *strong*."

More than life itself, I want to put my arms around her, but I refuse to fuck up the progress I've made. Because she's right, I am touching her and I never thought I'd touch another human being again. I never *wanted* to. *Go slow. Don't be greedy.* It is so tempting to take out my cock and press it deep inside her pussy, to fuck her, maul her neck, massage her tits, but if that rush of self-disgust forces me to stop, I'll hate myself more than ever. I'm walking a tightrope here and need this done right. For Nova.

"If you like to dance so much, little fairy, dance around in my lap," I grit out, rolling my hips upward, lifting her body off the ground and back down, up and down, up and down. "I want to feel your tiny pink asshole through my shorts."

She moans, her fingertips digging into the tree trunk. "Yes, Lincoln, sir."

Her smooth, tan back arches and she cinches her hips back, perching on my aching rod, working her lower body in light circles. My ragged groan fills the clearing, my eyes riveted by the sight of her sun-kissed buns pumping up and back, soaking the front of my shorts with precome. "That's a good girl. Fuck me like a dirty little stripper," I rasp. "You made it so hard, now make the pain stop. Don't stop until you've made me all better."

Her hips move faster, her breath going more and more shallow. "H-how will I know when that happens?"

"I'm going to drain my balls right between your busy little ass cheeks," I say raggedly, reaching up with both hands and ripping off two strips of bark. "Grind harder. Daddy needs it so bad. Daddy's needed your ass to play with his big dick for so long."

"*Lincoln!*" Nova jerks against me, her breath stuttering, her backside shaking in my lap. "*Oh!* Oh my goodness."

When I realize what's happening, I'm nearly crushed by the weight of my lust. "You like when I call myself your Daddy, Nova?"

"Y-yes." Her hips are moving so fast now, they're blurring and I'm seconds from a mind-blowing peak. I'm extra desperate for release now that I can feel her come seeping through my shorts. Knowing exactly how it got there. What exactly makes her hot. I'm not even sure where the word came from, only that it felt right. It was right because *she* needed it. "I want you to come so bad, Daddy," she whines. "I want you to come so bad."

Baring my teeth, I drop my knees and thrust up hard between her cheeks, only a thin layer of nylon separating my dick from her asshole. I feel the sweet virgin ring of it. Feel the hot clench as she bears down and comes again. And my balls erupt, shooting a scalding geyser of come from the slit of my shaft. I lean back and bounce my little angel in my lap, the press of her supple ass wringing rope after rope of come from my cock. My strangled shouts of her name echo through the forest, joining with her excited whimpers, until I'm finally, fully drained, and we're both upright again, panting, sweating, Nova's hands slipping from the tree to dangle limply at her sides.

My arms ache to wrap around her, but habit keeps them immobile. Still I inhale deeply of her scent, thankful to my maker for the miracle of her butt nestled into my lap without my system rebelling. The miracle of what we just did. What I was able to do after a decade of spurning human touch.

It's her. She's the miracle. My fucking miracle.

I open my mouth to tell Nova I'm never letting her go. That she's coming back to New York with me and that's final. That I'll do whatever it takes to make myself whole so I can love her better. I'm about to say all of that, but she turns her head and gifts me with the grace of her smile—and then, she spins around with a giggle, swipes the coconuts up off the ground and dances to the edge of the cliff.

And dives off.

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Nova

he cool water of the lagoon swallows me up, bubbles spinning madly around me beneath the surface. Before I kick to the top, I do a little dance and squeal, hugging the coconuts to my chest. I wish I could go back in time and tell past Nova not to be scared of Lincoln. Not to spend a week worrying what kind of man he'll be or if he'll hurt me.

Lincoln is the...oh, he's everything.

He reminds me of the coconuts in my hands. Hard on the outside, but sweet on the inside—even if he doesn't know it yet. But *I* see how he looks at me. He might be a stoic man, but I've been given the gift of seeing beneath his surface.

Plus, I don't think he realizes he was speaking out loud when he called me his miracle, back at the top of the cliff.

You like when I call myself your Daddy, Nova?

Even in the midst of the cool water, heat slithers up the insides of my thighs. I'm surprised by the desire that was lurking inside of me, but I'm not scared of it. I'm not scared of anything when it comes to Lincoln...except one thing.

I'm supposed to be duping him into getting me pregnant.

I'm supposed to be securing the future of my family with a payoff from a billionaire.

How could I ever have agreed to such a thing?

What will I do now that I've fallen for the man behind the serious veneer?

My instinct tells me I should come clean, but Lincoln isn't a man that trusts easily. If I tell him about the plan hatched by my sisters, a plan *I* agreed to, he'll hate me no doubt. But he's given me no indication that he plans to stay on the island beyond a week. The man is a certified workaholic and he's going to return to New York at some point, while I remain here. With my sisters. If I let them down, they will make my life a living hell.

Conflict is winding its way into my gut when I hear a loud splash, a few feet away.

I open my eyes under water and see Lincoln encapsulated in a cloud of bubbles.

Shirtless.

My womanhood squeezes tight like a fist and I almost drop the coconuts.

This is the first time I've seen him without a shirt and oh my goodness, he's built like some ancient warrior. If I used his abdomen as a slide, it would be like riding a roller coaster. That's how defined those muscles are—and his arms. Lord, I think he could tip a phone book in half without a single grunt.

I was already on cloud nine over Lincoln letting himself touch me, for trusting me to be the one he overcomes his affliction for, but knowing this is the man who I brought to a climax with my butt? I think my temperature could heat this whole lagoon.

Lincoln and I lock eyes underwater.

His fury would have made me catch my breath if I had any left. But I'm running short of oxygen, so I kick to the surface. I'm only a few feet from shore, so I throw the coconuts onto the grassy embankment and wait for Lincoln to surface.

A second later, he does, a couple of feet away, his broad shoulders cresting the top of the blue-green water, moisture dripping from the ends of his hair. Jaw clenched.

He's extremely angry at me, that's easy to see, but I'm too spellbound to care.

"You look so handsome," I blurt. "With the waterfall behind you and—"

"You *jumped*, Nova," he shouts, plowing a hand through his soaked hair. "You will *never* do that again. You didn't even warn me."

"The happiness made me do it."

Lincoln opens his mouth to shout more, but he stops short, brow furrowing. "Happiness."

"Yes."

His voice is much more silent when he says, "I...made you that way?"

"Uh-huh." My smile is so wide, it's starting to hurt my face. "And you jumped, too. You touched me and you jumped off a cliff. You're learning how to let go and relax, Lincoln."

The man is looking at me like I'm crazy. "There was nothing relaxing about watching you jump off that edge."

"If I promise to warn you next time-"

"Next time?"

"Will you tell me why you don't like being touched?"

Lincoln tenses, his gaze growing far-off for a moment, before it returns to me. "I'd like you on the shore, please," he says gruffly. "Where it's safe."

"Okay," I whisper, swimming past him to the embankment. I feel his eyes on my back, my bottom, my thighs as I climb out. Though I pick up the coconuts with the intention of cracking them open for our breakfast, I can't help but watch Lincoln lift himself out of the water, his thick triceps flexing, water sluicing through the dark pelt of hair on his chest.

Daddy.

The act of thinking that one single word makes my clit throb.

I'm so over-the-top breathless, I turn away so I don't embarrass myself. Kneeling down, I lift the first coconut over my head and smash it down on a rock, creating an opening on the rough, brown side. Sensing Lincoln approach at my side, I hand him the cracked nut with an encouraging smile. "Drink."

He raises a skeptical eyebrow. "You first."

"Very well," I say primly, cracking my own coconut. Then I tilt it a few inches above my mouth and let the sweet nectar dribble onto my tongue. There's so much of it, I can't swallow fast enough and it drips down my chin, onto my breasts. If I was alone, as usual, there would be nothing odd about the act of drinking the coconut juice, but with Lincoln watching me, his chest moving in quick heaves, I feel like I'm giving a naughty performance. My body reacts to how much he's enjoying it, my back arching, my tongue licking to collect excess drops.

"Goddammit, Nova," he grates. "I better be awake. You better not be a fucking dream."

What does he mean? "I'm not a dream. I'm real." Standing above me as he is, the sun outlines his head, making him look like a shadowed god, especially with his amber eyes shooting sparks at me. "You seem like a dream to me, too," I whisper.

He barks a laugh. "I'm more like a nightmare."

Something twists in my tummy. "Why do you think that?"

Lincoln sits down beside me on the grass, his coconut still untouched in his hand. Mere centimeters separate us and I ache to lay my head down in his lap or cuddle beneath his arm. But I know I can't take a mile, just because he's given me an inch. "I wasn't allowed any sort of affection growing up. Ever. My father saw it as a weakness and only the strongest survived. He browbeat any kind of need for…human touch out of me." Lincoln's eyes sweep over me, then away. "At least, I thought so." Forehead knit thoughtfully, he twists the coconut side to side on his muscular thigh. "I can't even shake hands at a meeting without feeling as though I'm giving in to pathetic, human feebleness. But you, Nova...that burn of self-loathing isn't there when I touch you. Why is that?"

"I don't know," I whisper, my heart stuck in my throat. "But I'm so glad for it."

The intensity rolls off Lincoln, locking me in its grip. "Everything you're thinking is on your face, Nova, at all times. You're honest and good. Even now, you're looking at me like I'm your hero and...what if that's true?" His voice drops to a threadbare whisper. "How can needing your touch...or needing to touch you...make me weak when your happiness, your pleasure, makes me feel so fucking strong?"

I turn and kneel beside Lincoln, hot pressure building behind my eyelids. The rippling line of tension in his shoulders and jaw tells me how difficult it was to make that confession—and he made it to *me*. I'll treasure his honesty and seal it inside me, guard it forever. "Lincoln, I don't have a lot of life experience, but before...when we were touching, putting my faith in you made me feel like I could do anything. Like I had power and confidence. Maybe trusting another person with your body is the bravest thing of all. Not a weakness."

His head whips in my direction, hope writing itself slowly on his features.

Hope and stark, masculine need.

"You're mine, Nova," he growls, "And that's the end of it."

"I'm not arguing," I breathe, lust fanning to life in my tummy.

He palms the coconut in one hand, turning onto his knees and coming close, close, looming over me, until I have no choice but to lay down on the grass, not a stitch of clothing to cover me except the sodden scarf around my waist and a flimsy bikini top. "I don't mean you're mine for the fucking week. I mean *always*." He turns over the coconut and warm, sticky moisture spills down onto my belly, trickling lower and creating a river of wetness that travels through the folds of my bare sex. "Open your legs for me, sweet little girl, and show me what I own by rights from now through eternity."

A whimper sneaks past my lips, fires lighting all along my nerve endings as I follow his command, dropping my knees open and letting him inspect the flesh between, which he does with possessive eyes.

"That's one pretty, little, never-been-fucked pussy, Nova." Lincoln tosses aside the coconut. "Have you been keeping it innocent for Daddy?"

"Yes," I sob, my nipples burning they ache so bad, my hips restless on the soft grass. "Oh, Lincoln, *please*."

What am I even asking for? I find out when Lincoln drops down onto his stomach, his hard mouth positioned between my thighs, his breath coasting over the excess coconut juice that glistens on my sex. "Once I get a hit of this tight, young thing, I'm going to be on you day and night like a beast, Nova. If I fuck you now, I'm not sure we'll ever make it home, so right now, I'm only going to eat your cunt, little fairy." He wiggles his tongue against the split of my womanhood until it parts, groaning loudly as he sips at me. "And once your throat is loose and relaxed from screaming, I'm going to introduce it to my cock."

Lust hits me so hard beneath my belly button, my thighs fly together involuntarily, but Lincoln presses them wider with a growl, his tongue swiping a path through my folds. My back arches off the embankment on a choppy moan, visions of Lincoln putting his male part *in my mouth* filling my mind. "I-I didn't know...is that a thing people do?"

He turns his head, laughing darkly against the inside of my thigh. "It's a thing Daddy is going to need from you. Often." His lips twist on top of my clit, sending a cascade of excruciating heat through my lower body. "Is it my fault your lips are so sweet and swollen? Do you honestly think I could keep from fucking them?"

"N-no, Lincoln," I manage, my thoughts barely coherent.

They scatter even further when he drapes my legs over his impossibly strong shoulders, folds me in half and bears down on my clit with rough drags of his tongue.

My scream shatters the serenity of the lagoon.

I can't move, he's holding me so securely. All I can do is dig my fingertips into his hair and face the onslaught of bliss. His tongue never ceases, never slows, rubbing me there in aggressive circles, his animal grunts increasing my pleasure with their vibrations.

"Oh my goodness," I wail, throwing my head back, trying to be a good girl and give Lincoln what I sense he needs by letting him spreading my thighs as wide as they'll go. "Oh, I think...I think I'm going to..."

Just as the crackles begin in my ears and my femininity clenches hotly, Lincoln drills his tongue high and tight into my sex and this time, my scream is likely heard in New York City. My hips buck off the earth, my heels grinding into the taut muscles of Lincoln's back. A bolt inside me loosens and euphoria implodes deep in my core, sending me into a shaking fit.

I'm crying and whining and chanting Lincoln's name as he prowls up my body, his fingers shaking as they untie his shorts. I'm only given a brief, life-altering glimpse of his thick, heavy shaft before he's pushing it between my lips. "Fuck me, your come tastes like hot sugar, baby." He pries my jaw wider, settling his thighs on either side of my head. "Come on, little girl. Get that mouth open. Give me what I need."

Salt and man and flesh greet my taste buds, the substantial weight of his erection anchoring me physically, emotionally, his hips beginning to work in insistent strokes. With choked groans of my name, he plunges his pulsing rod halfway into my mouth, cramming me to capacity, then easing it out, in, out, in, out, in.

"*Ahhhhhh*." He fists my hair in his right hand, holding me still for his thrusts and my eyes tear with pride over the visible pleasure I'm giving him. "Yeah, you're giving me that virgin mouth, aren't you, little girl? Confused or not, you just know you like it. You know you were meant to swallow that big cock."

# Swallow.

My mind registers what Lincoln wants and my body reacts, desperate to give it to him. Up until now, he's only reached the start of my throat, but I relax that soft tunnel now and let his thick head breach that resistance. There's an urge to choke when his thickness fills my throat, but I forget the discomfort when Lincoln hits his peak, his ancient warrior body flexing in the sunlight and shuddering. His hips whip up and back in jagged movements, his fist tightening in my hair as salt floods my throat.

"Christ. Christ. Suck Daddy down. *Oh sweet Jesus*. Yes." His hips undulate madly, his heavy balls pressing to the underside of my chin, his shaft fully seated inside my mouth and throat now, jerking as it spurts hot liquid onto my glands. "Perfect little girl. You're a perfect little girl for Daddy. *Fuuuuuck*."

I breathe through my nose for long moments, drowsy in my enjoyment of experiencing Lincoln's orgasm along with him, until finally he drops down beside me, his chiseled chest sweating and heaving. I struggle to catch my breath as well, but I'm barely given the chance before he pulls me up against him—

And I get my first hug since I was a child.

A sob explodes from me and I embrace Lincoln back, wrapping my legs around his hips as much as possible and clinging, my mind and body carried away on the rush of both intimacies. Sex and affection. The former of which I've needed since meeting this man, the latter of which I've been starved for forever. And I never want either pleasure from anyone else but this man. Not ever.

"I love you, Lincoln," I say, letting his chest hair absorb my tears.

He pulls back enough to make blistering eye contact, intense wonder etched into the face that has become beloved

to me overnight. "I love you, too, Nova."

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LINCOLN CARRIES me the entire way home, cradling me to his chest like a long-lost treasure.

I don't even care that I'm almost completely naked, because I'm wrapped up in the man and his love and there's nothing I need more than that.

Based on the shape of the coastline, I can tell we're almost at the house on the cliff and I can't wait to get inside. Home. To be with Lincoln again in ways I don't know exist yet.

"I'll set up an office here. We'll split our time between the island and New York." His sure, determined voice, the way he makes plans that include me, makes me want his mouth between my legs again. Makes me feel safe and wanted. "But promise me not to walk through Manhattan barefoot, Nova," he says, a smile playing around his mouth.

I giggle into his chest. "I won't. As long as you promise to go barefoot on the island."

"You're determined to make a relaxed man out of me, aren't you?" Without warning, he tosses me up over his shoulder, leaving me dangling face down and laughing into the ocean breeze. "Well I have news for you, Nova, you make me the furthest thing from relaxed."

"What do I make you?" I ask, pouting at the ground.

He grips my backside with a growl, giving it a sound slap. "Horny as a motherfucker."

"Oh," I whisper, smiling shyly. "Lincoln, can you...? After we...after we, um..."

"After we what, little fairy?" He reels me back in over his shoulder, drawing me down the front of his body and settling my legs around his waist. "What's on your mind?"

I close my eyes and blurt the question in my head. "I was wondering if you would hug me again after we make love?" Regret collides with shock in his expression. "Ah, Nova, my angel," he says thickly. "I'll hug you any time you want."

"Really?"

He pulls my head into the crook of his neck and bands his strong arms around me, the sheer force of his protection and love making me moan, my eyes filling with tears. "You're my miracle. Do you understand that? I've been walking around like an empty shell and then you come out of the sky, like sunshine after a never-ending storm. You fill me up. Repair me by simply existing. I'm sorry you went a single second without what you needed from me. You'll get anything you want or need for the rest of your life. It'll be my privilege to give it to you."

I wrap my arms around his neck, laying kisses on the strong column. "Lincoln," I murmur, rubbing the tips of my breasts in his chest hair. "Lincoln."

"My Nova," he rasps, dropping his hands to massage the cheeks of my bottom. His touch is arousing, but his amber eyes are concerned. "How did you go so long without love when you have two sisters? What happened to your parents?"

I cling to him tighter, burying my face in his throat. "They passed away in a car crash. I was little and they were coming to pick me up from dance class. My sisters...they have every right to h-hate me—"

"*What*?" His body stiffens against mine. "Nova, no. That is bullshit. Have they really made you believe an accident was your fault?"

Emotion is clogged so tight in my throat, all I can do is lift my shoulders and drop them.

"You are not to blame. You were an innocent child." We're storming toward the house now, Lincoln's feet leaving the grassy hillside and eating up the stone path. "I'll never forgive myself for not getting here sooner. You've *needed* me, goddammit."

"You've needed me, too," I whisper.

"More than you'll *ever* know." We enter the house through the glass side door and Lincoln settles me on the dining room table, his hips pressing in tight to the apex of my thighs, leaving no doubt of his arousal. "I'll hold you until the end of time if that's what you need. I'll keep my arms around you at all times. I'll—"

A cell phone, fax machine and computer all begin dinging at the same moment.

Lincoln drops his forehead onto my shoulder and I laugh. "I'm all sticky from the coconut juice. Go take care of your work and I'll meet you—"

"In *our* bed, Nova," he says, kissing my forehead. "I'm going to cancel all my calls and put an out of office reply on my email. Then I'm going to drown in you and not come up for air until I'm good and goddamn ready."

"It's a plan," I whisper, my heart fluttering in my throat. Lincoln seems torn over leaving me, so I do him the favor of hopping off the table, giving him a nudge toward the office. "Take your time. I'll be waiting when you're done."

"I must be the luckiest bastard alive," he mutters, backing away from me with heat in his eyes, my nakedness reflecting back at me. "I won't be long, little girl."

I practically float up the stairs to the bedroom, pirouetting on one toe at the entrance to the bathroom, pondering a soak in the bathtub. But when I see my face staring back at me in the mirror over the sink, I remember. I remember what my plan was in coming here. Dread spikes in my belly as I retreat back into the bedroom, going to my backpack and untucking the cell phone from its front pocket. There are forty text messages from my sisters.

### *Did you do it yet?*

Don't you dare come back here until you're knocked up. Remember Mom and Dad. Remember what you did. You owe We need that money. You're going to get it for us or else.

THE TEXT MESSAGES go on and on until I'm sick to my stomach. And not out of guilt toward my family. No, I'm ill because I agreed to this scheme. I let my sisters convince me I'm a bad person. That I am truly at fault for something out of my control. I came here and I...

I deceived the man I love.

The man who loves me.

Although, can he really love me if he doesn't know I'm a liar? The kind of person who would agree to getting pregnant on purpose? Lincoln trusted me with his secrets, he let me heal him and that trust would be fractured if he knew I'd come here to con him.

There's only one thing to do. I have to tell my sisters the scheme is off.

Only then will I be able to return to Lincoln with a pure heart and conscience.

Only then will I deserve this love he's bestowed on me.

The restaurant is only a quick jog once I get down to the beach. If I hurry, I can be back before Lincoln even knows I'm gone. With a weight pressing down on my chest, I dress in the thin, blue shift dress and panties I packed. Then I slip to the balcony and climb down soundlessly to the beach below, turning and casting a longing glance back at the house.

I'll return soon, my love.

Little do I know what awaits me...

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## Lincoln

fter sending a quick message to my assistant back in New York, telling him to cancel everything on my schedule, I strip off my shorts on the way up to the bedroom. My cock is full and dripping, bobbing against my stomach as I walk. I'm so eager to claim Nova, I don't think I'm going to last ten seconds inside of her before I flood that little womb. I can already feel her thighs hugging my hips, can already feel the taste of her screams on my tongue.

I haven't even kissed her mouth yet.

What the hell is wrong with me?

I've been celibate for so long, I've forgotten the order to things. To intimacy. Christ, I never knew in the first place, did I? No. And I'm damned glad for it. I'll never touch another woman as long as I live. Can't even fucking imagine it. There's her and only her. Forever.

"Nova," I rasp, rounding the corner into the bedroom. Ready to pounce.

She's not in bed, which awakens some hunting instinct inside me. She wants me to track her down and drag her to bed? I'm more than happy to oblige. Noticing the open bathroom door, I head in that direction, but something on the bed grabs my attention before I get too far.

A cell phone.

I didn't even realize Nova had one. My wild island girl seems more interested in climbing trees than keeping up with social media. I know I shouldn't look at the contents of her phone, but there's a need inside me to know every detail of her life. I want to look at every picture in her camera roll, memorize every contact and program my number as all five of her favorites. I'm the only person she needs to call from here on out, because I will take care of every little wish that enters her head.

Unable to resist, I pick up the phone, finding the screen lit up with a series of text messages. They're from two different numbers, Raquel and Constance. Are those her sisters?

Scanning the messages, a pit opens in my stomach.

Am I reading these right?

Don't come back until you're knocked up.

*Remember Mom and Dad. Remember what you did. You owe us.* 

We need that money. You're going to get it for us or else.

Come back here with nothing to show for it and we'll make sure you really fall off the cliff this time.

What the fuck?

Are Nova's sisters forcing her to get pregnant with my child so she can blackmail me? So she can muscle money out of me?

My lips peel back from my teeth. God help me, I've never hated a woman, but I hate Nova's sisters for what they've put her through. What they are still putting her through. My poor angel is probably tortured over this. Why didn't she just tell me? I would have put a stop to her worrying—

For the first time, I notice the balcony door is open and alarm swamps my gut.

"Nova!"

I stomp out onto the balcony, the cell phone smashed to pieces in my fist.

She left me. She's gone. She's gone.

How is this happening? I only found her.

*Calm down. Reason this out.* Wasn't it only half an hour ago she smiled up at me with love in her eyes? I won't question that love. I've never felt anything so deep or authentic in my life. So where could she have gone?

The answer hits me hard. I might have known this girl only a short time, but I know her heart. I know *her* and she's gone home. She's left to do what she believes is the right thing, but based on the threatening tone of the text messages, I don't know if she realizes the danger she's in.

Fear wraps around my lungs, freezing my breath to ice. I push through my near-paralysis and stumble back into the bedroom, rifling through my luggage and throwing on the first pair of pants and T-shirt I find, running out of the house at full speed. Phone in hand, I dial my business partner, cursing at him for not answering until the fourth ring.

"Lincoln! How's the vacation? More importantly, how's the little blonde—"

"Where did you find her?"

His startled laughter makes my skin crawl and I vow to buy him out of the company at first opportunity, so I never have to deal with him again. "She's that good, huh?"

"Listen to me, vermin. Tell me where you found her. The name of the restaurant. She's gone and I have to find her *now*."

A chair creaks in the background. "Can't remember the name. Something cantina. It shouldn't be hard to find, though, it's the only place on the damn island."

I hang up, my heart in my throat, and I start running.

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Nova

IT'S STILL ONLY late morning when I walk into the restaurant.

As soon as I set foot in the door, Raquel fists a hunk of my hair, using it to yank me up onto my toes. "Why didn't you answer any of our text messages?"

Pain rips through my scalp and I bite down on my bottom lip to keep from crying out. "I forgot to look. I was busy."

Constance hisses in my face, alcohol heavy on her breath. "You better have been busy getting pregnant, or so help me God."

I lift my chin. "No, I wasn't. And I won't do it."

Raquel slaps me across the mouth, scrambling my brain waves and momentarily tripling my vision. "I *knew* you would do this. Little miss noble. Little miss pure of heart," she spits. "You think you're so much better than the rest of us, don't you?"

"No," I wheeze, going up on my toes to ease the sting in my scalp. "Please. He's a good man. He doesn't deserve to be taken advantage of."

Constance stomps on my foot and I suck in a breath, pain shooting up my leg. "If you don't do this, you are *useless* to us. You understand me?"

"She's right. Might as well send you down the cliff." Raquel's eyes are harder than I've ever seen them and I realize, I've underestimated her hatred of me. Maybe her hatred, period. Why did I leave the safety of Lincoln's house? He never would have let anything happen to me.

"We can make it look like an accident," Constance murmurs, her pupils sharpening.

"Please, don't," I whisper. "I'm sorry for whatever I've done to make you hate me. But I'm begging you, please. Don't take me from Lincoln. I love him."

"No one is taking you from me, Nova," comes Lincoln's hard-edged growl from just inside the door. "Ever."

My sisters jump away from me like they've been scorched.

I don't think, I just do what my heart commands me to do. I run and throw myself into Lincoln's waiting arms, peace, gratitude and love filling me like rays of light.

Raquel laughs nervously. "I'm not sure what you overheard, but this is just a sisterly squabble."

"Totally," Constance adds, her gulp audible. "Every family has them."

He presses a hard kiss to my temple, his hands busy stroking my back. "Not like that they don't." I can hear his heart thundering against my ear, his big body vibrating with anger. "You're right to lie, though, Raquel and Constance. A man with a bank account like mine is capable of a lot of things. It's never wise to make an enemy out of him."

I glance back over my shoulder in time to watch the color drain from their faces.

"Y-you would kill us?" Raquel stammers.

Lincoln's smile is ice cold. "If I did, I wouldn't put my plans in a text message," he drawls. "That kind of thing could be turned over to the police so easily. And money could persuade them to dole out a harsh penalty." He lifts me off the ground, holding me tight to his body and I follow instinct, circling his waist with my legs. "Anything to keep my future wife safe."

Constance sputters. "Future wife?"

"That's right." Lincoln's mouth moves through my hair, his vengeful eyes trained on my sisters. "Your plan was to send Nova to me...so I could get her pregnant. I'm assuming you lied to my associates about her being on the pill?"

A beat of silence passes. "Yes," Constance mutters.

"I'm sorry, Lincoln," I whisper unevenly into his neck.

"Shhh, little fairy," he says against my ear. "You have nothing to be sorry about." The hand rubbing my back drops lower, his warm palm sliding up beneath my dress to palm my bottom. He kneads it lovingly, right there in front of my sisters, his erection swelling against my sex, forcing a breathless whimper past my lips. "Did you really think you'd send me this angel and I wouldn't want to keep her?"

I cling to his shoulders, excitement buzzing in my blood when Lincoln unzips his pants. What is he going to do? Anticipation saturates my folds with moisture. Yes, I'm aware both of my sisters are standing a few feet away and they can see everything, but with my face buried in Lincoln's neck, I'm almost overwhelmingly aware of him. His expensive scent mixed with morning paradise. The dips and valleys of his muscular chest, the skill and confidence of his hands as he tugs the crotch of my panties to one side.

The thick head of his shaft prods my opening and he grunts, powering a couple of inches inside me. With me balanced on the tip of his pulsing erection, he hooks his forearms beneath my knees and slowly lowers me down to the root, my eager squirms and sobs only making him harder, more determined.

When I'm totally impaled, I'm surprised to experience only the barest hint of pain. I'm so wet and he's so right inside me, love and sensation and pleasure crowd everything else out.

"How is my girl?" he breathes against my temple, his middle finger tucking into my back entrance and jiggling. "You as fucking perfect as you feel?"

"I'm so good, Daddy." I rub my breasts against his chest and flex my inner walls, working a growl from his throat. "I feel like yours. That's how I feel."

"They wanted you to get pregnant, little girl," he groans in my ear, cursing me for being too tight, rolling his hips in a sensually devastating way, starting a tremble in my legs. "We don't want to disappoint, do we? Work that ripe, young pussy up and down. Give them what they want."

Holding on to his shoulders, I lean back and pump my hips eagerly, sobbing brokenly when his abundant thickness hits a deep, illicit part of me and exhilaration clamors through my body, head to toe, my clit swelling and tingling with delight. The sound of feet shifting on the floorboards behind me is just background noise. There's only him. *Lincoln*. "I'm putting my seed in her. Any claim you have to her is long gone." His big hand slaps my right ass cheek hard, grips and shakes it. "All of this is mine now. Every inch."

The bite of his spanking wakes up darker, more desperate needs inside me and I ride him for broke, hips pistoning, the instinct to satisfy us both driving me. "I'm going to c-c-come."

"Fuck, Nova. Me too." He clasps my buttocks in possessive hands and bounces me up and down in a blur, jostling my breasts inside my dress, ripping the reason from my mind. That hard, hot part of him plunges so deep, over and over again, I swear my femininity rearranges so I'm custom built just for one man. "Instead of putting a baby in this stomach and walking away, like they hoped," he grits against my temple, "I'm going to spend my life spoiling you rotten. Dripping my beautiful wife in diamonds. Aren't I, little girl?"

"Yes," I push through chattering teeth, my climax pitching me overboard.

"Take my seed," he says through clenched teeth, his shaft jerking inside me, flooding me with incredible heat. And still he thrusts up into me, ramming his erection upwards into my spasming flesh, again and again, the sound of slapping flesh filling the restaurant. "Get good and pregnant. That was *my* plan all along, too."

A few moments later, after Lincoln has zipped himself back into his pants, he carries me from the restaurant, back toward the house on the cliff—and we never look back.

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## **EPILOGUE**

### Lincoln

#### Five years later

stand on the cliff of the lagoon, looking down at my beautiful family as they swim, barely able to withstand the pressure inside my chest.

As always, my gaze is drawn to my incredible wife.

Her mouth is spread in a bright smile as she tosses our youngest son up into the air, catching him in her arms right before he hits the water. Our daughter giggles and splashes nearby, her blonde hair in disarray. She's a wild island girl at heart, just like her mother.

I long to dive from the cliff and come up behind my wife, wrap her in my arms—something I never thought possible once upon a time—but I savor these moments of watching them unaware. Letting my love for them permeate my bones and ground me in place.

Nova has been my life since the night we met.

She has evolved into my obsession. My every waking thought. My beginning and end.

We started off splitting time between the island and New York, but I couldn't bear having her away from this place. She belongs in the sunshine, her toes in the sand, a thong bikini tucked between her delicious ass. A growl works its way up my throat.

I'm going to devour that sweet backside at the earliest opportunity.

My cock thickens in my shorts. I'm going to need her sooner rather than later, which is always the case. It's why I can never concentrate on work. I'm insatiable when it comes to my wife. Not only her body, either. But her love, her laughter, her touch, her affection, the way she can soothe me like nothing else. Her heart is the purest thing on this earth and she proved it five years ago. As I carried her home on the beach from the restaurant where I took her virginity—in admittedly unconventional fashion—she asked me to keep the doors of her parents' restaurant open, to preserve their legacy.

After everything her sisters did, my wife's incredible heart forgave them.

I added a second story to the restaurant, complete with rooftop seating, modernized the kitchen equipment and flew in a world-class chef. Anything she asks me for I will lay at her feet—with upgrades. And I wish like hell she would ask me for things more often. But no, my angel is content as long as she has sunshine and coconuts.

And my cock.

Yes, she definitely needs that to be fulfilled.

Just this morning, I woke up to her choking on my morning wood, her fingers stroking her clit through her wet panties, her tight tush up in the air. *Fuck*, that little whining sound she makes has been ringing in my head ever since. I created a fiend five years ago and there is no happier man than myself on this planet. That is a fact.

With that in mind, I pick out a safe distance in the water below and jump, my wife's delighted laughter greeting me as I hit the water. She throws herself into my arms as soon as I surface, her legs cinching around my hips. As always now, I lay into her with a ravenous kiss, making up for the full twenty-four hours I went without kissing her when we met. My tongue plows into her mouth and she opens for it, her wet, pliant lips pillowing against mine.

"Hey there," she whispers, when I go for her neck, biting it with a growl.

My children squeal, splashing us, amused but not surprised by the physical display.

No, they're well aware of my need to touch Mommy. Constantly. They're also aware that sometimes I need to fly her to New York for a week. They might not realize Daddy needs seven days of uninterrupted fucking, but that's why we have three nannies, isn't it?

"I sensed you watching," she whispers against my mouth.

"Did you?" Beneath the water, my palms glide up her thighs and squeeze her hips. "Could you sense that I was unable to concentrate on work because I never stop thinking about being balls deep in my wife?"

Her lips tilt flirtatiously. "I did sense that." She trails a finger down my bare chest. "You need me so bad, don't you, Daddy?"

"Always," I rasp, my dick rising to meet her tight, little pussy. "Do it."

Nova doesn't even have to ask what I mean, she simply puts two fingers between her lips and blows, bringing two nannies into view. They scoop our children up and ferry them away with promises of ice cream at the beach—and I can barely wait until they're out of view before throwing my wife over my shoulder and wading through the water toward shore.

As soon as we're on land, I position her on hands and knees, legs spread wide. She pouts at me like a naughty girl over her shoulder, tilting her beautiful butt up toward the sunshine and giving me no choice but to rip the thong down her legs, leaving it bunched around her knees. My cock is already spurting in my shorts and I barely get it out in time to thrust into her too-tight cunt, falling on her like a beast and pumping for everything I'm worth. "You rule my world, Nova," I growl into her neck. "And I rule yours. Say it."

"You rule my world, Daddy," she whimpers, her pussy flexing, pushing me to the edge. "My husband, my hero, my Lincoln. I love you."

I see her as she was that first night, practicing what she would say to me, her body wrapped in a bow, and my heart strings yank tight. "I love you, too, Nova. With no end."

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