



BUMP
IN THE

Night

LAUREN MILSON

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BUMP IN THE NIGHT

Twenty years old. Overprotected. Forbidden from going out on my favorite night of the year.

Enter - my dad's two big, hot cop friends. John and Elliot. The two men I've always wanted, ached for, craved. They'll jailbreak me. They'll protect me. They'll keep me safe from the things that go bump in the night.

I know plenty of hot cops, but none of them hold a candle to John and Elliot.

Fiercely protective, crazily beautiful, and the sole objects of all my dirty, wild, forbidden dreams.

Elliot is tricky - frustrating, mysterious, a white-hot tease who makes me ache and whimper.

And John is *all* treat - yummy and delicious and sweet enough to give you a sugar high.

On Halloween night, my dad sends them to the house to check in on me. After what happened to my mom, he isn't taking any chances.

But once they confirm I'm safe at home, I decide I'm not spending another night locked up by myself.

Time to Rapunzel this sh*t.

I know John and Elliot will keep me safe in their arms if anything happens to me.

But I never expected *this*.

One brush with danger and they tell me I'm *theirs*.

They go into crazy-obsessed mode and tell me I'm not allowed out of their sight.

And now? Well...once they tell me I belong to them, that's when the danger...and the fun...really begins.

*Hello there! "Bump in the Night" is a super-steamy over-the-top treat with two possessive older cops and one younger woman who might not be experienced but knows *exactly* what she wants. Lots of hot mfm (no mm for this one!) fun and thrills to keep you warm on a dark and stormy night.*

This book is part of the "Night" series but each is a stand-alone and they can be read in any order.

Enjoy!

xx, Lauren

PUMPKIN

Now, remember Pumpkin - don't answer the door for anyone besides John and Elliot."

My dad presses a kiss to my forehead before taking a quick look at himself in my mirror. He adjusts his tie and tips his chin up.

"You look great, Dad," I say, curling my legs up under me. I raise an eyebrow at him. "Are you sure I can't come?"

Dad flashes me a sympathetic smile through the mirror. He's in his full police uniform, and I have to say he looks great in it. He almost never wears it anymore - not now that he's been promoted to Captain. Seeing him in it reminds me of the old days, when he and my mom would rush around me in the morning, getting ready while I finished up my homework.

"You wouldn't like it, anyway. It's all old people. Offer John and Elliot some coffee and crumb cake. We have a fresh one in the pantry from the place on Manhattan Avenue."

He's so right - I wouldn't like it. I'd rather stay here and wait for John and Elliot, even if I'm only going to see them for a few minutes. I'll try to offer them some coffee and crumb cake if I can make myself form intelligible words around the two of them.

It's my favorite night of the year, but I'm stuck at home. At least I'll be able to see my two favorite guys. Scratch that. *Men*. John and Elliot put the guys I go to college with to shame. In fact, they put all the other men on their force to shame. I know a lot of sexy cops, but none of them are quite

like John and Elliot. None of them do things to me like John and Elliot. None of them make me feel sexy the way my two men in blue do.

I wish I could go out, but since I can't, I'll make the best of it anyway – and scare myself into nail-biting terror in the safety of my own home. It's one of my favorite things to do, no matter what night of the year it is; but tonight – Halloween – has always been special to me.

I take a deep breath and glance at my dresser, where I keep my most-beloved jewelry. Next to my jewelry tray I have a fat stack of VHS tapes, and in preparation for tonight, I dragged my old TV-VCR combo up from the basement. I had to sweep a few cobwebs off it, but I know it still works. They made those things hardy enough to survive a nuclear blast.

I look over my shoulder to see my dad leave my room. He gives me a loving smile and a nod. He knows what this day – what this night – means to me. When he's gone, and I turn back to my dresser, I catch a glimpse of my stepmom in the reflection. She storms in wearing her idea of a sexy cop costume – a tiny, stretchy black skirt up to *here*, paired with a button-down that's un-buttoned down to *there*, and a pair of plastic handcuffs that she twirls on her finger as she barges into my room.

There's no harm in feeling yourself and wanting to experiment with different looks – tonight of all nights, especially – but there's a certain ultra-annoying, lip-pursing, eye-rolling quality to a woman like Cynthia.

“Oh, Pumpkin,” she says, examining herself in my mirror – where, just moments ago, my dad had been making sure he looked his best. I don't know what she's doing right now – taunting me? Showing off? Either way, she's sticking her ass out and fixing her lipstick and making me want to gag.

“I'm so sorry your dad isn't letting you come with us, but you wouldn't like it. There's nothing there for you. You probably have your heart set on something with people your own age. I know you're a girl who likes to get into trouble.”

She flashes me a gross smile. Cynthia has me all wrong, but I usually don't argue with her anymore. When I give an inch to get her off my back, she takes a mile and drags me along with her. But tonight, I'm not going to let her spoil my time. I'll give her what she wants and fight fire with fire. Maybe throw a little bit of gasoline on there, too.

"You're right, Cynthia," I sigh through a hidden grin. "My stack of tapes here is all just a ruse. My crack dealer is around the corner, just waiting for you and Dad to leave. And, after that? Well, I've got a gang of great, big motorcycle men coming over to take turns on me while the others watch. It's even going on the Internet. Maybe they'll even take me two or three at a time. Maybe more, but I don't know if I have enough h..."

Cynthia gasps and recoils, cutting me off. Part of me thinks there's part of her that actually believes my crazy lies. I hear the word *slut* start on her lips, but then she stops. She believes the spirit of my lie, if not the letter.

I turn away from her and roll my eyes.

My dad is a good man on a policeman's salary and a lot of money in the bank. My mom inherited our multi-million-dollar brownstone from her parents. She came from money. My dad is working-class Brooklyn through and through, and even though my mom's family was skeptical at first, they warmed to my dad. How couldn't they? He's fiercely loyal and maybe a little bit too principled. That same principled nature, I think, is what made his propose to Cynthia once he'd seen they'd fallen into a relationship.

When Cynthia is done primping in my mirror, I watch as she sashays over to my dresser and bumps me out of the way with one deliberately placed shoulder. Her eyes scan over my jewelry and I see her gaze land on my diamond earrings. They were my mom's favorite.

"Oh," Cynthia says as her fingers curl around the two studs, "these are gorgeous. I've always admired them so much. Let me borrow them for tonight, please?"

I watch with a heavy heart as she puts them on and models them for herself in the mirror. I try to fix my expression so she can't see the effect she has on me.

"They were my mom's," I say, "I wouldn't want them to get lost by accident."

"I won't lose them, Pumpkin," my stepmom says as she stands up and puts a kiss on my head. I rub the spot where her lips were. "Since you can't wear them tonight, there's no reason to keep them locked up. These need to be shown off!"

I don't try to argue.

"Have a nice time at the party," I say as she scampers out of my room. I hear the front door slam a few moments later.

Actually, I *was* going to wear them tonight. I'd planned on wearing them for my horror movie marathon. Pop a bowl of popcorn, turn off all the lights, and safely traumatize myself in a controlled environment.

I walk over to my window and breathe in the cool fall breeze. It smells like apple, spices and crisp autumn leaves. I feel nostalgic, and as much as I try to force away the bitter part, it edges in on the sweetness. As I'm about to flip through my stack of tapes and decide on which movie to start with, I hear the doorbell ring.

John and Elliot are here.

I've wanted them for the longest time. Dreamed of them. Thought of them. Longed for them. Ever since the first time I met them. They've lodged themselves in my mind, in my imagination, my heart, and they haven't left.

And I know they've been watching me. They monitor the security system my dad has set up in our home. It sends a shiver up my spine knowing that they can call up that footage whenever they want. That they get an alert whenever there's movement of someone coming in or going out. Even though it's just footage of the common areas of the house, it's thrilling to know that they can see me whenever they wish.

And if something were to happen?

I know John and Elliot would take care of me no matter what.

I know they care about me, but not in the way I care about them. Hell, maybe in some way they even love me.

But *definitely* not in the way I love them.

My belly flips and I grab my robe, wrapping it tightly around my curves as I race downstairs with springs beneath my feet.

JOHN

I have half a mind to ask if she needs us to stay with her tonight,” I say as Elliot rings the doorbell. We take a small step backward in unison, as if the person on the other side of the door is going to be so bright and beautiful that we’ll get knocked on our asses if we aren’t careful.

“No,” Elliot says to me. “We can’t stay here with her tonight.”

“You know you exaggerate sometimes? What do you think is going to happen?”

He lets out one of his rare chuckles.

I glance up at the security camera trained on the front stoop. There’s another one inside the entrance to the house, and another at the entrance to the small courtyard out back, and still another pointed toward the backdoor of the brownstone. If it were up to her dad, Pumpkin would be *Home Alone*-ing the shit out of this place with paint cans, nails – the works.

My cock begins to stiffen the moment she opens the door.

“Hello, boys,” she says warmly, giving us a little wave. “Make yourselves at home.”

Elliot glances over at me.

I return the look.

I *know*, man.

“Hey, Pumpkin,” I say, stepping inside as she holds the door open for us. I bend down to give her a kiss on the cheek and put my hand on the small of her back. She softens under my touch and I linger a beat longer than I have to. She looks up into my eyes and smiles. When I see that smile on the security cameras, I feel like a dirty old man. When I see the smile right in front of me, in the flesh, I want to pull her toward my body and cover her lips with mine. I want to know if she tastes as good as she smells.

I step inside and make my way into the living room. The only Halloween decor is upstairs – a string of orange and purple lights hung in Pumpkin’s window. Her father and stepmother are at a police fundraiser tonight, but I don’t think Cynthia likes the holidays very much.

Behind me, I hear Elliot give Pumpkin a stern hello and a squeeze on the shoulder. That’s his *modus operandi*. I choke back a laugh to myself. I’ve told him time and time again that he needs to stop being so fucking weird around her – and he’s told me that *I’m* the weird one for wanting to openly show her affection. I don’t think I’m doing anything wrong by simply offering a friendly hug and a kiss on the cheek – at least not outwardly. Of course, if anyone knew what was going on inside our heads – most of all her father – he’d be throwing both of us right into solitary.

And that stuff going on inside our heads? It all started in an instant.

The moment Elliot and I saw Pumpkin, we knew she was everything we wanted – everything we needed. From across the room, she’d shot an arrow right through us and ended us right then, right there.

It was Thanksgiving afternoon two years ago, at one of the food pantries that gives out free meals to the needy on Thanksgiving. They offer hot meals and canned goods to folks in need all year round, but most people only have time to volunteer a few times a year – if that. Not Pumpkin. She’s there with her dad every week.

The moment my eyes first laid on hers, my breath was taken away.

Age: Nineteen. Nickname: Pumpkin. It had said so right there on her name tag. Pretty and petite, with long blonde hair, bright blue eyes, a tiny waist, and thick hips leading down to the most round, perfect ass I'd ever seen in all my thirty-six years on this earth. My tongue was instantly like lead when our eyes met, while my cock had felt like steel.

I'd placed my hand on my chest to make sure my heart was still there, to make sure she hadn't stolen it by some form of magic or witchcraft.

I'd wanted to run over to her – to take her face in my hands and crush my lips to hers. Bring her home with me. Sink my raw and dripping cock right into her perfect, tight, thick young body. For a moment, I hadn't known if I was supposed to be in line to eat or in line to serve. I was... Well, I was fucking confused. Nothing around me made sense. How could I feel this way in an instant? For a woman I hadn't even spoken to yet?

But the confusion had been squashed by certainty from some deep, unknown well.

Mine.

“Don't try it,” Elliot had barked to me, tearing me out of my trance. He knew what I was thinking. “Captain's daughter.”

I'd felt my world tumble like a house of cards, but it hadn't shaken my need – my obsession. No, that was firm, with a solid foundation. Now, the cards just happened to be in shambles around my feet.

I'd looked over at Elliot and I'd known what the look on his face had meant. It meant he'd fallen as hard as I had. Something had climbed out of us, grabbed her, and pulled her inside. An equal force took hold inside the both of us, shook us up, and then pulled out our hearts and laid them at her feet. It all happened fast. So fast that despite feeling it, it was as though she'd always been part of me – part of *us*. It was in the

tick of Elliot's jaw, in the intensity behind his eyes. It was inside my lungs, in the air I breathed.

She was *ours*.

"Have you met her before?" I'd asked him that night.

I'd known the answer before he told me. The shift in energy around us had been sudden and new. If he'd met her before, I'd have already known.

"No," he'd said. "Don't have to. I know it's her."

Then, I'd investigated the situation more carefully. She'd been standing next to the Captain. His hand was on her shoulder. Of course – I hadn't even seen him standing there before. That's how bright and beautiful she was. She'd blocked out everything else in the room.

After that day, our desire had grown into obsession – but what do you do about an obsession you can't feed? When it's your job to stay close to her? Keep your eyes on her?

Now Elliot and I are her protectors. We have a direct link to all these security cameras, and we monitor the comings and goings at her home. While there are no threats, after Pumpkin's mom was taken from them too soon, her dad is understandably overprotective. If there were actual, actionable threats, he'd probably just move them the hell across the country – or even the globe.

I've met some stupid criminals in my life, but I don't know any who are stupid enough to threaten our boss's family.

Officially, Pumpkin is our top priority. Unofficially, she's the sole object of our obsession.

"Can I offer you guys anything? I think we have some crumb cake in here."

I turn around and watch Pumpkin make her way into the kitchen as Elliot sits down next to me. Pumpkin's robe flows behind her – like she's a princess stuck in this castle. I watch Elliot as his fingernails dig into his knees. Shit, sometimes I think he has it even worse than I do.

“I’ll have some crumb cake,” I call after Pumpkin. Taking a deep breath, I get up and walk to the mantle over the fireplace. This is a pretty sweet house – the product of Pumpkin’s mom being from old money. I look at the photo of Pumpkin and her mom and dad. Her mom was a good cop. One of the best.

“What do you two have planned for the night?” Pumpkin says with a smile as she comes back to the living room. She puts down a tray holding Brooklyn’s best crumb cake and three cups of black coffee. She starts cutting the cake, and when she sucks a bit of crumb off her thumb, I have to bite down on a groan as I return to my seat next to Elliot.

“Neighborhood patrol,” Elliot says distractedly. “Are you sure you want coffee at this hour? It’s late. You should be getting some rest.”

I look over at him. He looks like he’s about to pop a vein in his neck.

“Oh, it’s fine,” Pumpkin says as she plops down across from us on the couch. “I want to be up late. I have a fun night planned for myself.”

Next to me, Elliot white-knuckles one of the dessert forks like a barbarian and spears it into his crumb cake. I know what he’s thinking. Any mention of Pumpkin being up late sends those rabid, crazy thoughts right into our skulls.

“As long you’re okay,” I offer.

She huffs. “Don’t worry. Despite what my stepmother thinks of me, all I’m doing tonight is watching scary movies.”

I play it cool as I push my hair away from my forehead. I remind myself to look at her eyes, instead of everywhere else. There, that’s better. I feel like a drooling animal. *She’s so damn beautiful.*

“Favorite horror movie killer?” I ask her.

“Great question,” she says. “Jason all the way. I think it’s unfair that he feels he has to wear the mask. Just because he’s ugly underneath it, you know? He’s this brute – but he’s a victim of circumstance.”

“You’re too kind,” Elliot chimes in. “He also kills innocent camp counselors who are just trying to get through the summer in one piece.”

“Listen, I’ve been one of those camp counselors,” Pumpkin chuckles. “I will tell you – it is not easy dealing with kids.”

A crimson blush sweeps over her cheeks. We all know what those camp counselors were really up to, and the idea of Pumpkin having sex with some awkward, fuckhead eighteen-year-old is making me angry. Time to change the subject.

“It’s especially difficult dealing with kids on Halloween,” I say. “You’ve got your shaving cream, your silly string – and then, of course, you have the crazy old ladies giving out apples with razor blades in them.”

“That’s an urban legend,” Pumpkin smiles meekly, “but try telling that to my dad.”

She’s probably aching for a bit more freedom. She’s allowed to go to bars with her friends – but only if she checks in with one of us, or her father, pretty much constantly. Then, she has college classes she attends three days a week. On the other days, she’s either here, or at one of the libraries, or a coffee shop.

“What would you do if you weren’t stuck home tonight?” I ask her.

“I was actually invited to a party,” she says, her eyes lighting up, “but I figured I’d be better off just staying home. My dad is... Well, you know – my dad. I know he’d prefer I stay in. So, I’ve got my tapes and my popcorn, and what more do I need? To be groped at some stupid party?”

Pumpkin bites her lip and slips her gaze from Elliot, to me, and then back to Elliot.

We agree with her.

“Thank you for the cake,” Elliot says as he stands up. Pumpkin looks disappointed. “If you need anything, we’re just a phone call away.”

He pulls out his card and hands it to her as if she doesn't already know his number. She looks down at it and then holds it close to her chest, before smiling up at us as we walk over to the front door. I know her dad has access to the security footage, but I want me and Elliot to get a little closer to her – just to see if she feels even a thousandth of what we feel for her.

But it won't happen. Can't happen. Her father trusted us to take care of her – and what are we going to do? Come into the man's house to defile her in every possible way we can think of?

“Thanks for coming over,” Pumpkin says, standing on her tiptoes to throw her arms around both of us.

She pushes us together and we both wrap our arms around her. It isn't the least bit awkward. Well, maybe it is a little – because I have to angle myself away from her to keep her from feeling how hard I am. Because of what I really want to do to her.

But I know that with Pumpkin in the arms of me and Elliot, everything is good.

“I always look forward to your visits,” she murmurs.

“Now, make sure you remember that John and I took real good care of you,” Elliot says, pointing his finger at her. She wraps her fingers around his and swats his hand down.

“Go,” she says, pushing us toward the door. “You're on duty. I don't want to get you into trouble.”

Our true duty is to her – and she's already gotten us into trouble.

ELLIOT

The crunching of leaves underfoot has always been one of my favorite little pleasures of the season. I don't know why I like it. I take in a big breath of the crisp fall air. Anything to distract myself from Pumpkin. Anything to keep her close to my mind, too.

Simply put, the situation with Pumpkin is a problem I love to have. I haven't had many of those in my life. Growing up, the problems my mom and I had were more serious – and just plain bad. I had an alcoholic father and a mom who didn't want to leave him. She did leave, eventually – but it was a long time coming. I didn't get the best education because we didn't live in a great neighborhood, so despite always being told that I was bright, I was also told it was a shame I'd never be able to get out of my shitty neighborhood.

Well, that problem's gone – and now, my biggest problem is my obsession with the most incredible fucking woman I've ever met. The fact that John and I both want her isn't a problem – it's a complication. A complication I think I'm actually pretty damn lucky to have. I know that individually we could each give Pumpkin the world. Together, though? We could give her the moon *and* the stars.

When we get to the sidewalk, John shoves his hands into his pockets and stares up at Pumpkin's bedroom window. I hit his shoulder with the back of my hand and he smiles at me, rubbing his shoulder as if I really hurt him.

“Keep your eyes to yourself, Romeo,” I say.

John and I have been friends for what feels like forever. After high school, he decided not to go to college - not because he didn't have the grades, but because his grandmother became ill and she'd needed help maintaining the building she owned on the narrow Brooklyn street where he'd grown up.

My mother and I had moved into the ground floor, one-bedroom unit. We'd had no money and few prospects, but John's grandmother was so damn caring and kind that she'd let us move in anyway, even without a security deposit or one month's rent in advance. She'd just trusted me when I'd said I would make it right. She lived off of the meager rent her tenants paid and the small social security checks she received. She was probably crazy to trust me, but I'm glad she did.

I'm a year older than John, but we couldn't have been more different. He'd grown up the middle son of a nuclear family, with a cop for a dad and a school secretary for a mom. They were perfect.

I'd grown up with a mother who was a devout Catholic and a father who was a devotee of the bottle. When she was at home - worried sick and watching talk shows all night, wishing her husband would come home - my old man was out drinking and getting into bar fights.

One night, he'd come home more belligerent than usual. I'd grown used to the fights between my parents - or, more accurately, the verbal beatings my father would give my mother. I'd told her I'd support her no matter what her decision was - whether to stay with her sorry excuse for a husband or leave. I suspected in the back of my mind that my mother would never want a divorce.

But that changed the first time my mother's cheek caught the back of his hand.

I'd seen red. My body had filled with anger and rage at witnessing that. I'd muscled my old man out onto the concrete by the collar of his shirt and pushed his cheek into the pavement. I'd told him to stay there, count to ten, and then leave. He was able to get a swing in, but it turned out that

double vision gives you bad aim. When he'd fallen to the ground, I'd calmly gone back inside, shoved my mother's makeup into an overnight bag while she packed her clothes, and we'd never seen him again.

We'd ended up renting from John's grandmother. I worked construction jobs, tended bar – anything I could to make rent, which I always paid on time.

My father never did grant my mother that divorce.

John's grandmother, turns out, got well again. The tumor they'd found was successfully targeted by radiation and chemotherapy, and she'd pushed John to find something he really wanted to do.

He didn't have to look very far. He'd always known what he wanted to do. He'd always wanted to be a cop, just like his father was. He'd brought the idea to me because he thought I might be interested, too. I was very interested. We both enrolled in community college to meet the educational requirements, completed the other steps we needed to, and finally became cops.

We've been part of a special investigation for months, tracking the movement of a drug ring that's being taken down from the inside.

John and I aren't just best friends who share everything. We also lean on each other. We rely on each other.

We've always shared everything – and then, when we met Pumpkin, she became the most important thing in the world to us. Both of us.

And I don't know how long we can keep pretending she isn't already ours.

PUMPKIN

I always get all achy around John and Elliot. John, with his playful little touches, and Elliot with his stern, demanding words. Elliot, though, is the one who surprises me the most. Sometimes he can get into these moods in which it feels like he's practically begging me to throw myself at him. The way he'd told me that he and John had taken 'real good care' of me? I'm still feeling those words knocking around in my belly. They nearly knocked the wind out of me.

My feelings for them *almost* feel odd – but they definitely feel right. I know, I know – I should slow my roll. Crawl before you ball and all that. At twenty, I've barely even kissed a guy before, and after I met John and Elliot, every other man in the world just kind of lost color for me. John and Elliot make my world feel vibrant, warm. They make me feel nervous in a good way. They make me feel more like the person I really am – *and* more like the person I really want to be, all at the same time.

When I close the door behind them, I run upstairs with the same spring in my step that I had when I ran down to greet them. This time, though, I'm not preparing to let them in. I'm preparing to let myself out.

I run over to my window and catch them talking on the sidewalk. I can't stay cooped up in my room all night. Oh, I know what happens when I see them and then I'm left alone for any length of time. This time it's all night – and masturbating just once isn't something I'm capable of. Twice

won't make me happy, either. My little whimpers and moans will be the outcome of frustration and longing, not pleasure and satisfaction.

I can go get a drink, if I can find a place that'll serve me. The bars in Brooklyn used to be more lenient, but they've really tightened up in the past few years – not that I've ever actually drunk at any of them. Or, I could go for a walk. I could go sit in a diner. Whatever I decide on, I can do this.

Operation: jailbreak.

I dart over to my closet and pull my shoebox of Halloween accessories off a high shelf. I blow the dust off the cover and peek inside. With only time for something quick, I grab a black lace mask. I change into jeans before throwing on my Chucks, and then grab my black raincoat from my closet. Looking down at the sidewalk, I see John and Elliot crossing the street and walking away from the house.

I gulp. Just the view of them walking away from my house has my heart full of ache by proxy, and my insides are tensing up and wet for them.

My heart is dizzy as I shove my raincoat into my backpack. Halloween is the night to be someone else, and damnit — I *am* going to be someone else tonight.

I look in the mirror and wrap the lace mask over my face – as if I'm a ninja, ready to go into hyper-mode. A warrior ready for battle. A burglar in the night.

If I had the skills of a hacker, I could disarm the security cameras – but unfortunately, I have no such skills whatsoever. With the skills of a gymnast, I could leap from the window in the room my dad shares with Cynthia and land in a tree in the backyard – set far away enough from the house to go undetected by the security cameras. After that, I could pommel my way across the big oaks.

But I don't have the skills of a gymnast. I'd opted for clarinet instead.

Hopping out my window isn't what I really want – but I can't have what I really want, so second best will have to do.

Rapunzel would be letting her hair out the window for her prince to climb up. A princess would be tearing curtains off the windows and tying bedsheets together to climb down herself. But this is Brooklyn, so I can make like an urban rock climber and scale down the lattice on the side of the brownstone. If I fall, the hedge below will cushion me. Right?

I can do this. I can do this.

I tear open my lace curtains and throw up the glass window and the fly screen with two quick blows. I toss my backpack to the ground below and then turn around so my back is to the window. With blind faith, I slip the toe of my sneaker onto one of the gaps in the lattice. I slide my other leg over the windowsill and keep my fingers digging into the ledge. I let out a deep breath. I can do this!

I slide my toe out of the gap and bend my other knee, giving my leg some room to find the next space. I grope around in the dark with my toe, the only light a dim streetlamp a few houses down and the string of Halloween lights I have strung up in my window. They're the only Halloween decor Cynthia would allow.

Relief washes through me when my toe finds a home – but then, just as suddenly, panic lurches through my chest as my toe slips on some damp moss. With my heart plugged in my throat, I try to swallow around the lump. I can't. As calmly as I can, I try to pull myself up, but I'm only holding on with one shaky leg and the tips of my fingers.

Panic floods me. I can't hold on any longer, and I know I'm about to become airborne as soon as my fingers are no longer strong enough to hold on. I'm two stories up. I pray to Saint Christopher. He's the only patron saint I can think of right now. I beg him to protect me in my travels, but I'm probably praying to the wrong saint. Who is the patron saint of plain, old stupidity?

But just as my heart flies into my throat – and I *should* be hitting concrete – I'm suddenly weightless, floating forever on a cloud. *Oh*, I know this feeling. I peel my eyes open slowly and suck my bottom lip between my teeth. I want something in

my mouth right now, for coziness and comfort. I feel small – and I’m being wrapped up in warmth.

When the veil of my eyelids slip open, Elliot is there, looking down at me. He’s holding me in his arms like I’m a little lamb. I exhale and the shiver in my lungs is apparent to both of us. Elliot sweeps his thumb along my hairline and then caresses my jaw with his fingers. A flock of white doves flies out of a cage inside me as his hand lands at the front of my throat.

“What are you doing?” he asks roughly. For such a sweet touch, he certainly sounds brutal in comparison. I love that about him.

“I just wanted to go to the party,” I reply. Tears sting the corners of my eyes. God, do I have PMS or something? I don’t cry. I’m not a crier. This is not me – but, then again, I *did* want to be someone else for the night.

And as much as I adore being in Elliot’s arms, it’s bittersweet because I know the guys are going to send me marching right back into the house.

“Hey, it’s okay,” John says from behind Elliot. My gaze lands on him – hands on hips, impish grin, gait steady as he starts over to us, arms moving like he’s solely in charge of the earth’s gravitational pull. Elliot puts me down and John continues his condolences. “Where were you headed, Pumpkin? We’ll take you anywhere you want to go.”

My cheeks burn with an instant grin and I feel my pupils dilate. This is what it must feel like to be on drugs.

“No,” Elliot barks at John. Then he turns to me. “No, I’m sorry.”

And then, just as quickly, the balloon floating inside me pops.

“We’ll keep her with us, it’s no big deal. Then we’ll get her home in one piece,” John says gently. “We’ll take care of you. It’s a compromise, right? You get to go out, but we get to be your bodyguards. I know it’s probably not what you had in mind, having the two of us watching you like a couple of

hawks, but just say the word and I'll make the call to your dad."

"Okay!" I reply, without giving it a single thought. Watching me like a couple of hawks? This is better than what I had in mind.

Elliot tears his gaze from mine. It's only when he looks away that I realize I was staring up at him.

Elliot and his chiseled features, dark hair, and dark eyes. He's stern and strict, but sometimes his words are so damn sweet. Mostly, they're hard as ice – but I know, under the ice, he's a big softy. When the ice melts, it's just a puddle. Only, I don't know if I've cracked him just yet.

"No," he says, putting a hand out to John. "No. He wants her at home tonight." He casts his long, intense gaze on me. I'm melting inside and I look up at him, hanging on for whatever his next words will be. He narrows his eyes and then his expression softens. His jaw unclenches, brows unknit, and his chest deflates.

He tells John to make the call.

"Now let's go get you a costume," John says with a mischievous lilt, throwing his big arm around my shoulders and taking out his phone. My heart is skipping inside my chest as my dad answers and gives John the okay for them to bring me to the party. I know he trusts them implicitly, and who better to look after me tonight?

Elliot grabs my fallen backpack and brings up the rear. I can hear him muttering something behind us, and I put my hand flat on John's chest as I beam up at him.

Yesss!

ELLIOT

I'm watching John and Pumpkin peruse the seasonal aisle in the drug store for the last remnants of costumes that have been picked over, but not purchased.

"I've never been to a real college party before!" Pumpkin says, holding up a pair of cat ears. She puts them on and models them for us with a little meow and a few air-scratches.

"No," I say. "I don't like those."

They're too suggestive. Her purring and meowing like a helpless little kitten is... It's not something I can have anyone else see. Anyone besides me and John, that is. If it were up to me, I'd have her never take the fucking things off. I want Pumpkin crawling toward me and John on her hands and knees – in just the ears and a little kitty-cat collar with a heart-shaped, diamond-encrusted tag with John and my names on it.

Property. Of.

"You're right," she replies as she puts them back, "not sexy enough."

I catch a groan in my mouth and swallow it.

"How about this?" I spot a big swatch of white cloth hanging lop-sided from an old metal hanger. I play off my eagerness to keep her covered as an eagerness for her to have an authentic, legit costume. I don't even know if this is supposed to be a costume. Is it a beach cover-up? Doesn't matter what it is.

“A ghost. You’re gonna go old school on this one, trust me – this is the look you want.”

I pluck the hanger from the display and hold it up to her.

“Fantastic,” John says, grabbing it from me and pressing it to Pumpkin’s curves. “Why not pair it with a scary mask while you’re at it?”

I don’t like when he gets sarcastic with me, especially not on matters that concern our Pumpkin.

“That sounds like a fine idea to me,” I say, with my eyes trained on his, reaching out with my fist to grab the nearest mask. I hold it up to cover her face and she rotates an impatient toe out to begin tapping it.

“Do I get a say?” she says, poking her head out from around the mask. It’s a mask of a recent political figure. A chill goes through my bones. Nice and scary. Perfect. Keep everyone the hell away from her.

“Look,” Pumpkin continues, diving into the bottom of the ghost-cloak and shimmying her body into it, “no need for a mask. This is a complete look.”

She fixes the hood of frayed fabric and lace around her face. I don’t like this either. Her big blue eyes are shining and her thick, kissable and – as much as I try not to think about it every damn second – *fuckable* puffy pink lips are fully on display, even though her body is a shapeless lump. The cascade of blonde hair spilling out around her shoulders is like an angel’s. The garment comes just to her knees and is frayed at the hem. On a taller woman, it would be shorter. She’ll want to remove her jeans – I know it, and I hope I don’t catch anyone looking at her legs. There’s just no damn hiding what this girl’s got.

“Fine,” I say through gritted teeth. John laughs and tugs the cloth over her shoulders to help her out of it.

“I still want the cat ears instead,” she says, plucking them from the shelf and smiling at me. “They’re *purr*-fect.”

When she walks past me, I breathe her in. Fresh lemon and vanilla. She makes imperfection seem like a total, absolute,

logical impossibility. Her perfect scent makes me hard as a fucking diamond. Every time I'm in the shower her scent fills my head. I don't know what it is about having the hot water pound down on me, but every time I wash away the day – the dirt, the grime of the city, the stench of cigarettes from the smokers I'm always around – the smell of home is the smell of her. And when I breathe her in and pick up her scent, I feel the tip of my cock leak and bubble and choke inside my pants.

I've been hard all night – hard every time I'm near her – but this... This is different. This is *all* of my senses lighting up, all at once.

"I'll meet you by the register," she says, clutching her costume, turning into the next aisle. I look up at the sign noting what aisle this is. Feminine products. Her gaze sees where I'm looking, and she blushes. "Now, go on, don't embarrass me."

She shouldn't be embarrassed. I'd be happy to buy her pads, tampons, gallons of ice cream, hot packs, ice packs – whatever she needs.

I turn and start to follow John to the front of the store. I look back and see Pumpkin taking something off a high shelf and stashing it under her costume. When she starts to scurry back to us, I turn around and keep myself moving.

Moments later, Pumpkin drops her items on the counter and the bored check-out clerk starts ringing her up.

"We should probably get some candy, too," Pumpkin says, turning her back to the checkout. "You don't want to show up to a party empty-handed. Would you mind grabbing a couple bags please?"

"Chocolate candy mix? Or sugar candy assortment?" I ask John as we get to the candy aisle.

"Whatever, man."

Pumpkin is sweet enough to eat. I know her mouth would taste like heaven. The delicate skin of her pretty, long neck? I know it would taste like pure, raw sugar. Her nipples? They'd

taste like the juicy insides of a ripe strawberry. I feel my cock twitch as I wrap my fist around a big bag of candy corn.

I've dreamed about her nipples. I know they're little – I just know they are. I like all kinds, but I know her big tits are adorned with crown jewels of little, puckered pink treasures. My mouth waters at the thought. But the thing I really want to taste is her little clit. I want to know how she touches herself and then do the opposite to her with my tongue. I want to make her feel how she's never been able to make herself feel before. I know me and John would be able to turn her inside out, nice and good – make her crazy.

At my side, he glances past me at Pumpkin, who's thrilled with her jailbreak and smiling from ear to ear, completely oblivious to the dirty thoughts John and I are having.

Lord, please – just get me through this fucking night.

And, after tonight, we won't wait any longer. We're going in for the kill. It's time we made Pumpkin ours, once and for all. Fuck the consequences. Fuck what people will say. She was made for us – and we aren't going to play this fucking game any longer.

We aren't just her protectors. We aren't just her dad's friends. We're her men – and we intend to show her exactly what that means.

PUMPKIN

Whatever happened to Saturday night?”

It’s my favorite song! My excited heart is in my throat. In quick succession, we ring the doorbell, are invited inside, and I’m offered a red solo cup full of something.

Like there’s a conveyor belt rolling past us in a candy factory – and we’re here to sample all the treats – John, Elliot and I are offered beer, shots, and a paper plate that has what looks like gummy bears on it. I know to politely decline everything that’s offered to me because of who I’m with.

“Is this everything you hoped for?” John asks me as we wade our way around a group of dancing people. Some people are making out. It’s pretty dark because of all the blacklights, and the ceiling has a colorful spiderweb pattern projected onto it.

The staircase on the right of the wide brownstone has those fake cobwebs covering it, while on the right – where the fireplace and mantle are – fake candles and a fog machine on the floor make everything spooky. A girl in a nurse’s uniform and a red bra that pushes her tits up to her chin offers us some novelty hypodermic needles filled with what I assume is food-coloring dyed shot of something. It smells like it’s vodka – though with my limited experience, I don’t really know.

“It’s everything and more,” I say to John with a grin as I push my backpack into his chest. “I’m going to dance. Who wants to join me?”

“We’re going to watch,” Elliot says, folding his arms across his broad chest.

I get out on the dance floor and start moving my hips, doing a little twist. I find John and Elliot standing against the wall, right where I left them. John smiles and laughs as Elliot keeps his stern eyes on me – but is that the hint of a smile I see on Elliot’s face? I think it is. I don’t know if he’s smiling because I’m having fun, or because of how silly I know I look when I dance. I keep my eyes on them as long as I can, but I start to get swallowed up by the crowd of people dancing.

I know Elliot and John won’t let me out of their sight. I know they’re watching.

I let myself go loose. I’m moving my feet like the floor is covered in hot coals, and all around me, strobing purple and blue lights keep the tempo. I’m participating in an ancient ceremony, and I keep trying to find John and Elliot at the edge of the room, moving my hips the whole time. I finally find John as he walks toward me, easily wading his way through the crowd. He’s at least a foot taller than everyone else, and definitely bigger – and he’s walking right toward me.

There’s something in his eye – something I’m quite certain I’ve never seen before.

“I can’t just watch, Pumpkin,” he says, putting his hands on my hips. He gives them a little shimmy and shake as he rotates them slowly with his big, masterful hands. Oh, my word – his fingers dig into my fleshy hips as watches me, moving them to the music. With every movement, I rotate my hips a little bit more slowly – a little bit more deliberately. With every rotation, I become wetter. His eyes are hungry – flashing, intense. I gulp. It feels like he’s trying to remove my clothes with his eyes.

I throw my arms around his neck, my confidence sprung from somewhere mysterious.

“You’re beautiful, Pumpkin.”

Beautiful? My pulse quickens and my heart flips. I’m floating on a freaking cloud.

My favorite song is playing – not just my favorite Halloween song, but my favorite song, period. I’m dancing with one of my two men. There’s only one way this could be more perfect.

I shake my hips to the music, doing a little twist. John twirls me away from him and then closes his body around mine.

If he weren’t holding me up right now, I’d absolutely be falling down at his feet, and I’d probably be trampled by all the people dancing. The energy is electric as we sway to the music, his shoulders rocking like they’re keeping time for NASA. And then, he pulls me a little closer still.

“Bless my soul,” he whispers near my ear. “You’re amazing, Pumpkin.”

The sax solo in the song kicks in and I bite my lip to keep the smile on my face in control. My heart, though, that’s something I can’t control.

I feel so good in John’s arms that I could die – but my happiness doesn’t make sense because there’s something missing. Elliot is missing. I want John with all my heart, but then, I also want Elliot with all of it, too. How can my want be divided in two and still be whole for each of my men? I nuzzle my face into John’s chest and he wraps his arms around me a little tighter, still swaying to the music. I feel one of his hands drop from my shoulder and fall at the small of my back.

Then, I feel him unwrap his arms from me. It’s like I was sleeping and my big, comfy blanket’s been yanked away.

“Come with me,” John says, slipping my hand into his. “We aren’t taking our eyes off you tonight.”

Please, promise me you won’t take your eyes off me, John. Please. Elliot too. I need you both.

I start to follow John, but someone bumps into me, sending me scrambling backwards. I almost fall down, but the bodies are packed in so tightly here that there isn’t even enough room for my body to find the floor. I crane my neck to try to see

around the throng of people, but I think I've lost John in the crowd.

My eyes dart around the room and I realize I can't find John or Elliot now. I'm being squeezed in on all sides like a gumball in a big, glass bowl, when suddenly, my feet lift off the floor.

My heart soars into my throat when I realize that two shirtless, waxed men my age with neon, glow-in-the-dark warpaint smeared onto their cheekbones and chests, are hoisting me into the air and over their heads. If this is an ancient ritual, I'm the sacrifice.

I'm carried, head whipping back and forth between them, until I'm riding over the crowd like I'm on a wave. Hands pass me to other hands until I'm placed on my feet on top of a closed baby grand piano, tucked into the corner of the living room. With the music coursing and pumping through me, I find my footing – but my heart is still in my throat. It's like ice water has replaced my blood.

My eyes dart everywhere until I spot John and Elliot, and suddenly the blood in my veins warms up again. Their efforts to get to me are impeded by a wall of dancing bodies, but still they press onward. The frenzied dancing doesn't stop, and I feel the flames of the energy below me lick my feet.

Then, hands are emerging from the dance floor and grabbing my ankles – then my knees, then my hips. I'm pulled down to the floor like the stirring undead are rising from their tombs and pulling me down into the depths of the earth with them.

When I feel a hand on my ass, my heart somersaults into my throat.

All around me, neon warpaint smears through my vision. Broad chests and big hands grab at me, and everything is suddenly so dark. I can only make out the outlines of things – the broad strokes. I'm surrounded. Shit. *Shit!* I really *am* the human sacrifice.

I want to scream, but it would be of no use. The dance floor is frenzied and so loud that I'd be screaming into a void. I try to get away, but everywhere I turn, I'm met with one body after another. I know I'm not *really* about to be eaten alive or torn apart for sport or bled out to appease a god... But, damn - that's how it feels!

And the truth is, no matter how much worse it could be, I'm still being groped and touched in ways I don't like. I'm being pushed around like a rag doll and I still can't find my footing.

That's when John and Elliot appear at the edge of the circle around me and invade the space.

They're bigger than anyone and knock everyone else away like they're a duo of bowling balls, rumbling past pins and sending them spinning into a black hole. John lunges toward me and throws me over his shoulder. My heart instantly floats. I lift my head up and watch Elliot as he sneers at the bodies I was ricocheting against. He lets out a roar, sending them scurrying back into the crowd.

In all of the scuffle, my backpack falls to the ground. John picks it up and – oh, shit! Out of my backpack comes tumbling the package of condoms I'd covertly bought at the drug store. It's not like I was planning on using them with anyone – god, no – but I thought they'd be part of my persona tonight. You know? The one where I'm someone else completely, and I *actually* have sex.

The look on Elliot's face *almost* scares me, but it is freaking *glorious*.

His chest puffs up. His eyes are fierce and wild. I think his muscled, rippling arms and shoulders are going to bust right through the seams of his shirt. He stalks along the edge of the crowd, now cowering and helpless before him.

“Who was going to fuck our woman tonight?” he shouts, his fists clenched at his sides and his forearms coiling and rippling.

Holy shit!

I've never heard him talk like this before. It's crude. And it's crazy. And he's pissed off. And it's making my clit ache so intensely that I think I might actually come right now in my soaked panties. When John puts his hand on my ass over his shoulder and gives it a little spank, my eyes roll back and I bite my lip. I squirm helplessly against his body.

"The party's fucking over. Everyone out," Elliot booms. I expect him to flash his police badge, but he doesn't have to. Everyone goes skittering toward the exits all around us as I watch the room spin around me.

PUMPKIN

The three of us tumble into the big walk-in coat closet and the door slams behind us. No one turns on the lights for a moment. Then, another moment ticks by.

My heart is hammering in my chest.

With the lights still off, I feel one of my men come up behind me and breathe against my neck, tickling my senses. It's Elliot. I can feel his power. John flips on the light.

It's dim in here and we're crowded in, but the space between us is electric. I turn around and look up at John's face in the shadows. His wavy hair, normally pushed back from his face, is falling against his forehead. The start of plumping beads of sweat are gathering at his temples.

"I told you we weren't going to take our eyes off you all night," he says, slipping a finger under my chin. A flash of heat spears below my belly button. Shit – am I in trouble? Did I imagine him smacking my ass? Did he do it by mistake?

The tension in the room is sizzling and unbearable. My clothes are too tight. I don't think the palm of his hand on my ass was a mistake.

"Are you trying to drive us fucking crazy, Pumpkin?"

When I hear Elliot speak behind me, I spin around and look up at him. If I thought he was angry before, now he's positively *livid*. His eyes are frenzied and he's losing his cool. He looks like he could punch a hole through a wall with a gentle tap of his knuckles. Don't let this guy go trick-or-

treating right now – he'd punch clean through your front door just to get a fun-size candy bar.

But he doesn't scare me, and there's something else behind his eyes, too. I study him. I watch as his chest moves up and down, and he softly steps toward me. There he goes again with those soft, smooth movements against his harsh, rough words.

“I asked you a question, Princess.”

Oh, *oh* – these words are different, and they make my knees feel weak. His tone is dark, but the words...

Princess?

I swallow hard and shake my head. I feel every single molecule in my body dancing. I can feel every strand of hair on my head bouncing and swaying against my shoulders. I'm small, and golden, and warm again – like I was when I had my head against John's chest and the music was moving us. Everything in me is alive, from the top of my head to my toenails. I bite my lip.

I'm soaked. My clit is aching with wild need for release. I'm hot all over.

Always rough around the edges, Elliot is still waiting for my answer.

“No,” I whimper. “I...I don't think so.”

Maybe I've become temporarily insane, because I don't know if I understand what he means.

“Did you plan to use the condoms with someone here tonight?” John asks.

“No.”

The word is wrung from inside me. It's frantic and helpless. I don't want them to think they were for anyone else. They weren't for anyone else – they weren't for John and Elliot either, though. It was an impulse buy – like a candy bar, or a trashy magazine at the airport. I thought I could be someone else for the night. Isn't that what Halloween is all about?

“Then why do you have them?” Elliot growls.

“I-It was stupid,” I say, with a heavy sob inside my chest. “It was just some stupid fantasy.”

I gulp. John’s eyes rake up and down my body and my breathing crests in shudders. If they’re going to tease me about this, I wish they’d just get it over with. This is cruel. They’ve always been so kind to me – John, especially. Elliot has been harder to crack, and I still don’t think I’ve gotten through to him yet, and I know I can – but this is setting me back miles and miles.

“Princess, what’s the matter?” John’s finger trails along my collarbone and he pushes my hair over my shoulder. My eyes flutter closed.

“It was nothing. It was stupid.” I try to be emphatic. I try to be strong. “Better safe than sorry, right?”

“Do you think she was going to fuck some boy here tonight?” Elliot growls to John.

“No, man. That’s not her. But I do want her to quit lying to us.”

I’ve never been this close to them, all alone with no one else around. They could do anything to me right now – and I’d *let* them do anything to me.

The look in John’s eyes empties a can of gasoline over my head, soaking my hair, my clothes, my body. The flashing of a match against flint is the spark of one of his strong arms wrapping around my waist, and the fire that engulfs us is his lips on mine.

If he weren’t holding me up, I’d be eaten alive by flames.

His tongue is gentle as it pries my mouth open. His tongue is like a flame licking at my belly button from the inside. He catches my moans with his mouth, and I hold on to the sides of his head as he kisses my lips gently and slowly. So slowly. I want to climb up his big body, my arms and legs wrapped tightly around it, and then slide down to feel every little bump and muscle against every part of me – but I’d melt. I’m already melting – and I feel weightless in the fire.

He pulls his lips away from mine and then kisses the line of my jaw. His breath is warm, and he breathes me in. I lace my fingers through his hair as my face finds the crook of his neck. My feet come off the floor.

But it's not John lifting me – it's Elliot, behind me, taking my hips in his hands and turning me around in an act that seems to defy gravity. I'm floating in space, and Elliot wraps my legs around his hips before pressing me to the wall. I feel the length of his thickness pressing against the middle of me and I gulp.

His cock is long and thick, and it scares me. With it pressed up between my legs through my jeans, I squirm so I can feel it against me. The friction is unbearable.

“You *were* trying to make us crazy,” he growls, groping and squeezing my breasts through my shirt. “I don't like to see other men look at you. John and I are the only ones. John may be alright with other men looking, but I'm not. He wants everyone to know who our woman is. I don't give a shit who knows – not as long as *you* know who you belong to. And just know that when we have you, it's going to be fucking raw.”

“Raw?” I repeat as my mind spins.

“That's right, baby. When you come all over our cocks, it's going to be with nothing between us. You're going to feel that thick pulse deep inside you when you cream all over our bare cocks – and when we unload in that little pussy and ass, you're going to feel it inside you.”

I'm rendered speechless.

He pinches one of my nipples and covers my mouth with his. This is not the gentle, tugging fire of need that John was giving me. This is rough, hard, fast – *savage*. With his big body pushing me hard against the wall and his hand assaulting my nipple with an intensity I feel inside my clit, he kisses me with total control.

I...I am *not* in control. I give myself over to him. I let him *take* me, and it feels so good to be owned. His lips tangle with mine and he consumes me fully. Moans keep spilling out of

my mouth and into his, and he just chuckles between groans. Fistfuls of my flesh knead through his fingers as he rakes his hands up and down my body.

He puts me down and spins me around, pressing my hands to the wall. As he caresses down my body, one hand tickles every single inch of my spine as his fingers drag down it.

“This,” he says, kneeling behind me. “This is what I cannot have anyone else looking at.”

He reaches around me and undoes the button and zipper on my jeans with ease. I hold my breath and bite my lip as he peels my jeans down – over my ass and then down my thighs. I feel every inch of my skin caressed by his knuckles. He leaves the panties on. I don’t why, but this somehow feels even more dangerous and crazy than if he’d just stripped me bare.

He spreads my legs with a hand on each knee. I feel his chest vibrate the entire closet with a shudder.

“Oh, my god, *yes*,” I moan into the air above me.

“Did you like all those people watching you dance, Pumpkin?” Elliot asks.

I whimper as his finger finds the dampness between my legs through my panties. My fingers dig into the wall and my eye slam shut. My head falls forward and my forehead finds the wall between my outstretched hands. I’m burning up. The fire is spreading.

“I liked watching you,” John says, sending a thrill through me. My head whips to the side and I see him standing by the door. His hands are on his hips in an authoritative stance. His tongue drags along his bottom lip.

“Watching me?” I choke. My head falls against the wall again and I brace myself with my forearms when Elliot speaks.

“My partner here might like to watch, but that don’t mean *I* do.” Elliot’s words are harsh again against my insides. “Now, I asked you a question. Did you like all those people watching you dance?”

“No,” I whimper. Elliot’s breath is hot against the backs of my thighs. My jeans are still pooled up at my knees as Elliot rakes his fingers against the backs of my legs, teasing me, before standing up and spinning me around.

“Then why did you do it?” John asks. “Why shake that sweet little ass of yours if you didn’t mean for everyone to see?”

“Because I wanted *you* to see,” I confess, the words tumbling out from deep inside me. My fingers play at my shirt, rolling and unrolling the fabric in my fingers. I’m twitching with need. I’m all twisted up. This can’t *really* be happening, but it is. “I thought I could be someone different tonight. I thought I could be *for you* tonight. It’s all I’ve ever wanted.”

“So, it *was* for us,” John says, his gaze raking down my body.

I nod and whimper. They’re my *men* – both of them. The look in their eyes tells me everything.

“What do you need, Princess? Let us give it to you,” John says. I watch his eyes as he glowers down at me from over Elliot’s shoulder.

“Please, please,” I say, as they back me up against the wall. In unison, their big bodies close in on me and John takes my mouth. His lips prevent my brain from functioning.

“Now,” Elliot growls, curling his fingers over the waistband of my panties, “let’s show this tight little pussy who it belongs to.”

ELLIOT

*M*y cock is tenting my pants in a nearly obscene way, the full length pressing against the zipper like it's a medieval torture device.

The condoms were a shock. When I saw them, my blood boiled. I saw red. Everything in the world narrowed down to Pumpkin and what the hell she thought she was doing. If she thought we were going to deliver her to some party to get groped and fucked by some dickhead, she was sorely mistaken about what John and my intentions are.

Not on our watch. Not now, not yesterday, not *ever*.

She's ours – and when we unload our hot come inside her, we're going to know it could be when we knock that pussy up. Tie her to us forever. Make her our woman *officially*. It doesn't matter who gets in there first. It's going to be *ours*.

I take off my jacket slowly as Pumpkin's gaze travels over my body. She licks her thick, fuckable lips and her eyes are half-hooded and hazy with lust. Her cheeks and lips are so damn pink. I know her nipples will be the same color, and her pussy, too.

I've dreamed about this too long to make it quick. I know once I slip my cock between those pink lips I'll be done for. Once I slip my cock inside her pussy, or her ass, it will be the nail on the coffin.

Better to make her beg.

Better to make her whine and whimper.

There's a devil on my shoulder telling me to make her sob with need. I'm a possessive bastard, so I flick the devil away. This is only for John and me. The devil can't watch. Even our maker needs to cover his eyes.

I drop my jacket on the floor and John sits Pumpkin down.

Dragging the panties down Pumpkin's legs for the first time will be the scene playing in my head when I'm on my deathbed. Dragging them down her legs will also be the last thing I do before I'm torn from this world, I'll make damn sure of it.

"Oh, Baby Girl, this pussy is *very* wet," I grunt, sliding one finger up through her crease. Her bare mound makes me growl, but her legs are still pushed together. For now, I'll allow it. I've never seen anything so perfect and smooth. "Why so damn wet?"

"Because I need you," she mewls as John drops to his knees next to her. He covers her mouth and I watch as their tongues dance together. Shit, I'm so fucking hard. My balls are boiling with come and I need to put all of it inside Pumpkin. I stroke my cock through my pants and her eyes are transfixed on me as John moves his lips down the column of her neck

I kneel before Pumpkin. She's squealing and squirming in John's arms.

"Spread those sweet legs for us, Princess."

She opens her legs and I catch a groan in my throat. She's so pink and wet, with her trembling desire dripping down the insides of her thighs. I grab her ankles and give them a tug so she's laying against John's chest.

Pumpkin's eyes grow wide and her pupils dilate like she's taken something – a powerful drug, something that causes addiction and is bad for you.

"This is all for you, Princess," I grunt as I stroke myself. I can see that she wants to touch it. As if she tears the thought from my mind, she reaches out and tries to do just that.

"Keep her still," I tell John. He takes her hands behind her back and binds them there with one hand. He whispers in her

ear to make sure it's okay with her – and she nods frantically, her eyes shut tight. His other hand finds one of her big tits, then the other, alternating between them as he nibbles on her earlobe. Pumpkin's chin tips up and her lips open. She squirms in John's lap. He pulls her closer to him and her eyes pop open in surprise as she finds his cock under her ass.

I pry her legs open and rake my fingers up the insides of her thighs.

“Elliot, please, *please*,” she hisses, her eyes watching as my hands move.

“What's the matter, Princess? Tell your men what you need.”

“I need you to touch it, Elliot. Please,” she whines, wiggling in John's arms. She lets out an impotent moan.

“Touch *what*, Pumpkin?”

“M-my pussy, Elliot,” she cries. “Please. I need this feeling to stop.”

“Never,” John whispers against her ear, “it's never going to stop. We're going to keep you wet and needy from now on, Princess. Isn't that right, partner?”

“That's right,” I growl. “We are going to treat this little pussy *real* good – and you'll come when we say you're good and fucking ready.”

I wind my arms around her legs and over the tops of her thighs. Her legs quiver in my arms as I throw her knees over my shoulders. I inhale her. This is the sweetest pussy in creation.

“Oh, my God – please, Elliot, I can't take it anymore.”

“I want to see this little kitten's tits,” I grunt toward John.

I watch as John peels the shirt and bra down over Pumpkin's big breasts. *Jackpot*.

Her nipples were just as I imagined – pink, tiny stiff peaks like the tips of wet strawberries. When John's fingers tread over the buttons, she lets out a moan and then tries to stifle it.

“You can be as loud as you need, baby,” he growls against her mouth. “No one’s gonna hear. It’s only for us, Pumpkin.”

The party has reassembled outside the door and the music is loud. A sudden knock at the door rips the party out of the background.

“Stay the fuck away,” I snarl toward the door as I pull Pumpkin’s pussy toward my mouth. I remind her who she belongs to. “Now, let’s make this little kitty feel nice.”

Pulling apart her lips with my thumbs, I stroke her hooded clit with the underside of my tongue. I stiffen it and wrap it around her clit, slowly stroking a halo around her little hot button. I feel it pulse against my tongue and my cock lurches in response.

I send a low rumble through her body as I suction my lips around her clit, tapping my tongue against it. Her body begins to convulse and quiver and I push one finger against her opening, backing away from her button.

She is fucking *tight*. Fucking her is going to be like threading the eye of a needle.

“Why did you s-stop,” she chokes. I rake my hands up her legs to tease her. John’s hand glides down the front of her body, pulling the shirt and bra around her waist. His fingers land on her smooth mound, scissoring her clit between his fingers.

“It excites us to see you beg, Pumpkin,” I say, tilting her chin. “You need to know who you belong to – and the more you beg, the more you’ll know.”

A veil of understanding passes over her eyes.

“Then, please – please give me what I want,” she begs. “*Please*. Stop torturing me.”

Her little body writhes against John’s broad chest.

“*Jesus Christ*, Pumpkin.” I don’t know if it’s a prayer or a curse. “You’re sexy when you’re helpless.”

“I already know who I belong to,” she whimpers, her gaze never leaving mine, “I always have.”

A lurching possessiveness hits my chest. It makes my world tilt on its axis. John and I share a dark look.

“You’ve always been ours, Pumpkin? *Always?*”

“Yes,” she breathes. “Always.”

PUMPKIN

*M*y belly rolls with delicious desire over and over, hitting every single nerve inside my body. But now it's uncomfortable. It's pain and pleasure at the same time. It's unresolved. It's sweet torture.

“This *is* ours, isn't it?” John whispers against my ear. Elliot scoops my ass up and puts me down in John's lap with a grunt. One of John's fingers slips down from my clit to my tight hole. I nod and whimper, feeling hot tears form behind my eyes.

“Yes! Yes, it's all yours,” I cry.

Evidence of John's desire lands on my lips as he turns my head to kiss me. Slow, sweet, white-hot, winding kisses lick my insides as one finger plays around my entrance, slipping up to my clit once in what feels like an eternity. Then another eternity passes, and he slides his fingertip up and tickles my clit again. Every time he touches me there, my eyes squeeze up tighter all on their own, and I see a kaleidoscope of colors painted on my eyelids.

Between my knees, Elliot pushes my thighs up. I'm splayed open and my eyelids flutter up for me to marvel at how Elliot looks at me – like I'm precious, or like he's performing some special ceremony. He slips his hands under my ass and pulls me toward his mouth with a grunting rumble, low and deep in his chest.

My mind reels as his fingers bruise into my skin, sinking in farther and farther. I get the sense that it's all he can do to

not lose control. The contact of his tongue against my clit sends my head falling back against John's chest.

"Oh my god, oh my god. Please, don't stop," I whine and squirm. My knees drop open for Elliot's mouth to kiss me deeper, deeper. John's mouth covers mine again and the whole world closes in on me.

I thread my fingers through Elliot's hair, watching his arms and shoulders as he consumes me. Two sets of hands on me. My two men. *Mine*. Their mouths are delicious on my skin and I'm giddy in their arms.

I swallow thickly when I realize what's happening. Oh, god, I've thought about this so many times – but my frustrating touch on my own body could never give me what they've delivered. This is so much better than I ever could have dreamed – and not just the physical sensations. All of it. *All of it.*

My heart pounds in my ears as one of John's hands loops down under my bottom. His finger finds my soaked hole and he pushes it in gently as Elliot's strong tongue keeps prying farther and farther though my folds.

"You're tight, Princess," John grunts against my ear. "Open up for your men."

I try to relax my muscles, but everything is tense. John presses his finger farther and I feel myself open up when an orgasm teeters at the edge of my body.

"Our Princess is a virgin," John grunts to Elliot. His words send a thrill through me. "She has to be." He shifts his attention to me. "Is that what you meant when you said you've always been ours? That you kept that little cunt tight and untouched for your men?"

"Yes, yes," I moan. Warmth envelopes me from the inside out. My pussy tightens around two of John's knuckles as both of my men work their magic on me. The dual sensations of their mouths on my lips and my clit is making me melt until I'm a pool of liquid. They both sense that I'm close. "I saved myself for you – both of you."

“You were meant to come with our cocks stuffed inside you, the first time we had you – but we can’t leave you like this all night, can we? You’re a fucking *wreck*,” John whispers near my ear. “We have to give this horny little cunt what it wants, and it wants to come, doesn’t it?”

Ohmigod! I nod frantically.

“Yes! Please! *Please!*”

Elliot’s tongue trails down to my hole as John removes his fingers. I whine at their absence, but when Elliot’s tongue glides in between my holes – his hands holding me wide open – my body quivers.

“Elliot!” I gasp, my legs shaking. His tongue forces its way inside my ass, the sensation so new and making my skin sparkle. He chuckles as though he knew how I was going to react. His tongue winds through my folds as he approaches my clit again, like he’s trying to find the treat at the end of a twisting maze.

My clit flutters inside his lips as they suction against me. Again, John’s fingers slide inside and he fucks me with them as Elliot eats my pussy alive from the inside out.

“You want to come, don’t you, Princess? This little cunt is good and ready, isn’t it?” John whispers. He’s the master conductor. The maestro. Elliot is the one holding the instrument, playing me like I’m a fiddle. I nod.

“I can’t take it anymore. It...It feels too good,” I choke and sob.

“Then come for us, Princess,” John whispers against my neck. His fingers pump in and out of me and pinch my nipples while Elliot’s strong tongue taps my wet clit over and over. John’s teeth find my ear and he nibbles on my lobe ever so softly, sending me spilling over the edge.

A guttural scream is torn from my throat. I can’t hear myself – I can’t hear anything – but I know I’m screaming because of the fire in my lungs, in my throat. They wring every last ounce of pleasure from me as I come on their

masterful fingers and tongue. When I'm finally finished, there's still a tickle inside me.

"Next time," Elliot says sternly, licking his lips, "that pussy is going to come around one of our bare cocks. We're never using condoms with you, Pumpkin – ever. When we take you, nothing is going to be between us."

Ohh...

"Yes," I whimper, drowsy and blissful. "Yes, *please*."

"That was just a taste of what's to come," John says. His cock is still hard and stiff under my ass. Harder than it was before, I'm now learning.

And I don't feel satisfied. I want *more, more, more*.

"Please," I say, wiggling in his lap, "that's not enough."

John chuckles.

"Pumpkin, you think we're going to claim you here? No. When we claim you, it's going to be all night long. We're never letting you go again – and as much as I want everyone to know, we can't have you walking through here with the stamp of *just-got-fucked* on your face."

I can't argue. I'm too full of bliss. The guys help me put myself together.

Someone knocks on the door again, though it barely registers. Elliot shouts for whoever it is to say the hell away.

But suddenly, everything shifts and the door busts open. It cracks, and splinters, and bursts, sending shard of wood everywhere. I shield my eyes from the onslaught and feel two sets of strong, big hands – hands that have done crazy things to me – pull me against the back wall of the closet.

Elliot's barges chest-first, ferocious, back into the swell of party-goers, rushing them like a linebacker and kicking the door closed behind him. John holds me safe in his arms before the door swings open again, being ripped off its hinges by a pair of mean, big men in hockey masks.

Hockey masks – like Jason’s. I was sympathetic toward that mask.

But now, those masks are the things of nightmare – the dark ushers in the theater of doom, and I’m the star. A big guy with a polaroid camera shoves the flash into my face.

“Smile for the camera, Sweetheart.”

The flash of the bulb is quick and brutal to my drowsy eyes, and then my world goes black.

JOHN

Did we walk her straight into the devil's den? In the fury of the moment, I shoulder my way through the brownstone, taking my phone out of my pocket and checking the security feed at her house. Where I should see views of the interior and exterior of the house there's only static – still blackness.

The party erupts. People are scattering everywhere. The sound of a revving engine tears through the night as I crash through the house, chasing after Pumpkin. She's thrown over the shoulder of a big, rough beast dressed in black. A form running next to him is smaller and slender – a woman, I presume – and as I rush against the torrent of flailing arms and sorority girls screaming their way toward the front door, I keep pushing on.

My eyes are kept with rapt attention on the back of the big thug's head. He turns and I see that fucking hockey mask over his face. I try to crane my neck to get a better angle as I bust through the throng of party-goers. The fact that it's dark and smoky in here isn't helping. Of course, this *had* to happen on the one night of the year that everyone's dressed up like someone else – drunk, high, driving like a lunatic, or otherwise impaired. The woman next to the beast turns. My heart leaps into my throat as adrenaline-soaked blood courses through my veins. She's wearing the same mask.

Instinct kicks in – and where thought should be, there's only movement. I have no time to find Elliot. I keep trailing Pumpkin and her captors, and she keeps beating her fists on

the man's back, kicking her legs to try to pry herself from his grasp. It only makes him hold her harder. Eventually, she stops kicking.

I crash through a door to the kitchen. A pair of girls in angel costumes scream as I barrel past them and onto the back porch. A short flight of stairs leads down to a narrow backyard garden, and when Pumpkin and her duo of thieves find the narrow slats of wood that fence us in, the man kicks them down with one, big thump from the bottom of his boot. On the other side of the fence is the alleyway between backyards.

Shit.

I race toward them, but they're fast – almost too fast. There's a black Cadillac with Jersey plates parked in front of the backyard next door, and the woman grabs the handle while Pumpkin is thrown into the back of the car. The woman gets into the driver's seat and the man takes the passenger' side.

As I watch them peel away, I see the headlights from a car behind me speeding toward my back. I spin around and motion for the driver to stop and get out of the car.

A man in skeleton paint stops short and I flash my police badge at him.

“Jesus man, take it easy,” he stutters as he gets out of the car. I take him by the collar and throw him out of the seat and into the fence behind him.

When I'm inside, I throw the car into drive and peel down the alley. I'm closing in on the car holding Pumpkin – and as it approaches the end of the alleyway, it careens onto the street ahead and makes a sharp right turn. I lean on my horn and follow with blind faith, throwing myself onto the street behind them.

My cell phone buzzes in my pocket. It's Pumpkin's father.

“I'm on them,” I say, putting the phone on speaker and throwing it onto the seat next to me.

“We received an email ten minutes ago with Pumpkin's picture. The people behind this are demanding ransom – and they're giving us a warning.”

He doesn't have to finish. I know what he's going to say. It's ransom, *and* we drop our investigation.

Are these fuckers really stupid enough to kidnap the police captain's daughter? They're either that stupid – or that bold.

“We have cars on them and the NYPD has been instructed to not shoot. They know she's in the car. Just be careful, John, and bring her home safe. Don't let her get hurt.”

“I'll make sure nothing happens to her, sir. You have my word.”

I don't know if my word counts for shit right now, but I'll move Heaven, Hell and Earth – do everything within my power – to ensure her safe return home. And then, I'll deal with the people who took her. But *she's* my priority. She comes first, always.

“Where is Elliot?” the Captain shoots.

“I don't know. You'll be the first to know when I hear from him.”

“And. John?”

“Yeah, boss.”

“They disabled the cameras at the house. They meant to take her there. If you hadn't had her with you... Well – let's just say these people would have had a big head start.”

I nod as we end the call. I focus on following the car in front of me, white-knuckling the steering wheel as I drive.

I promised everything within my power to bring her home – and right now, that means jerking the steering wheel to the right as I check my rearview mirror. The car in front of me is gaining on the night in front of us, and I narrow my eyes to look for its next possible move. A sharp, screeching turn to the left makes me follow the car down a residential side-street.

Up ahead of the speeding car in front of me, I see headlights closing in on us, rushing toward us. *Shit*. The car in front of me hits reverse and I watch with my pulse in my ears as the driver turns around to grab the back of the passenger's

seat. I want to hit a narrow three-point turn, but there's no room.

I curse under my breath as I throw the car into reverse. The thing's good and it hits on a dime, squealing to a stop before allowing me to move backwards onto the smooth, rolling earth. The acceleration sends the blood pumping in my head into overtime, and when I check my rearview mirror, I also lean on the horn.

As the horn assaults my senses, the passenger in the car carrying Pumpkin plants a portable police siren on the dashboard and hits it.

Is this a fucking undercover police car? Is it stolen? Borrowed from a corrupt cop? Am I dealing with two corrupt cops right now? I have no time to go through all the possibilities. The siren wails as the back of the car keeps speeding toward me and painting the houses around us in blue and red lights.

When I get to the corner I drift onto the street and the car in front of me shifts into drive again, whipping onto a wide street flanked with short, stocky lofts and old, worn factory buildings on either side. There's music pumping from the broken windows in the building to my left, and on my right, a newly burned-out building looks like it's insides have been freshly decimated into ash. I shift gears and hit the gas harder. I'm fucking losing them, but I need to keep them in my sight.

The railroad is up ahead. My knuckle bones could pop though my skin right now. I try to loosen up my shoulders and I crack my neck, but there's nothing I can do to ease the tension. I know it's a kick-in-the-ass adrenal response to danger, and the tension is making me laser-focused – clear. Determined.

When we get to the railroad tracks, I expect them to floor the pedal and try to lose me, but instead the driver hits a sudden turn to the left and starts racing down the railroad tracks.

I take a deep breath and ease onto the brakes to take the turn. Security lights suspended on poles high above the rails

pop on one-by-one as we race onto the tracks. We have a one-way ticket to getting smashed head-on by a speeding train.

Pop.

Pop.

Pop.

The lights keep bursting above us. I don't know if our creator is shining a spotlight on our wickedness – or the devil is setting us up to perform for him.

All I can do is white-knuckle the steering wheel and keep my eyes straight ahead.

PUMPKIN

*M*y eyes spring open. I cough what feels like dry ash from the back of my throat as all of my senses come alive. Well, all but one. My head is covered with a heavy black sack. I try to swallow, but the back of my throat is so dry. I feel like I've eaten fire.

My fingers tremble. My wrists are bound behind my back in a tight vice. These aren't handcuffs – I've seen how handcuffs work before. Those are two metal rings, just like the ones you see on TV. No, what's binding my wrists together right now is something less compassionate than handcuffs – more barbaric. It's a plastic cord, or a zip-tie, maybe – or maybe just good, old-fashioned rope.

If it's a zip-tie, I know how to break free. My dad paid a lot of money for me to take self-defense classes from trained ex-military men after my mom passed – but, right now, there's no possibility of breaking free. I can barely keep still. The car is too fast – the ground beneath us too rough.

Fuck. I feel tears press behind my eyes. This was the best night of my life, and now I'm going to fucking die. Worst of all, I don't even know what's happening to me or, more important, why.

No. *No*. New blood courses through me. I will not die – not tonight.

With fresh determination in my body I feel the ground beneath us change. It's less rocky and bumpy and then becomes completely smooth.

The car behind us taps the corner of the bumper. I do what my self-defense training taught me to do – I press my wrists together over my head and then slam my arms down onto my back. The zip ties snap and I pull the bag off my head – but I also get the attention of my captors.

When the driver's head turns to catch me with her eyes, the car swivels and she braces herself on the steering wheel, eyes locked forward. The man in the passenger seat lets out a roar as his big hands reach into the back seat. He grabs my shoulders with both hands and pushes me back into the seat. He's so big that his chest and shoulder take up the entire space when he pushes me back. I settle down under his firm, silent command – but not before I throw a fast glance behind us.

I can sense that we're being followed because this car has taken every crazy detour it could. For a second there, I thought we'd actually achieved lift-off and were being catapulted into space.

The headlights behind us are bright, but I squint and catch a glance at the face of the man driving.

My heart leaps with joy. It's John.

John is right behind us, and he hasn't taken his eyes off me this entire time. But then, my heart sinks. Elliot. I choke back a sob as I turn back around, my attention now rapt on the windshield. I can't. Tears gather as I try to swallow around the big, fat lump in my throat.

I feel our death cab lurch as the driver hits the gas harder. My hands fly toward every corner of the back seat. When I think I have a grasp, I look out the window and see dense woods rolling past us. I don't know how far we've gone, but we could be in Forest Park. My eyes dart around, trying to find any hint as to where the hell we are. The only sound is the fury of the engine.

And then, just as hopelessness tries to seep in on me, the car spins with the force of something hitting the back, corner bumper.

And its spins. And spins. I hold on for dear life as the man in the front puts his hands toward me, his palm open and big for me to hold onto. His forearms flex and the muscles contract with furious heat as he pushes my belly to the backseat. He pins me down. Apparently, whoever captured me wants me alive.

The driver holds the wheel but cannot regain control. I know we're spinning fast, but it feels like slow motion. The green and black of trees against the night sky spin and spin in the windshield, but I feel weightless.

And then - *crash*.

I'm flung into a corner of the car and my head nearly smacks the window, but a strong hand grabs my wrist and secures me.

All I can hear now is the pounding in my ears. The man in the mask puts his finger to his lips to tell me to be quiet. I do what he says. I don't want to anger him. The airbags have been deployed and the woman in the driver's seat is limp. The man who has his hand wrapped tight around my wrist is so big that the airbags didn't knock him out. Neither did the impact of the car against a tree on the side of the road.

I try to get away by kicking at the back door, but it's no use. The man pulls me into the front seat with ease and I swallow thickly as my hands find his chest. He could eat me alive if it weren't for the mask. He opens the door with one hand, and with the other, he wraps me up in his arms. He's strong, but he doesn't feel aggressive.

He puts me down next to him and finally my feet find solid earth beneath them. I put my hands on my knees and cower against a tree as the driver tries to open the door on her side. When she discovers her door is blocked by the side of a thick tree trunk, she climbs into the passenger seat with her gun trained on me.

John's car screeches toward us and he slams on the brakes.

John.

I don't know if I say his name out loud or if it's only in my head. He gets out of the car and puts out a hand for me to stay where I am. As I back up, the man in the mask pulls me toward his chest.

I know how this ends. There are two of them – my captors in masks – and two of *us* – me and John. Only three of us have guns – and the one who doesn't?

Well, that's me.

My eyes dart over to the woman, her gun trained on John. John has his gun aimed at her as his eyes dart between her and the man holding me.

There's sudden, slow movement from the man holding me in his clutches. I look up at his flashing revolver – as he turns to point his gun straight at the woman in the mask.

What the fuck is going on? My insides turn electric as he pushes me toward John. I falter and tremble as John catches me with one big arm and stows me behind him. I grasp his shirt, my fingers kneading through the fabric.

And then, the man with the mask peels it off.

Elliot.

It was Elliot this whole time.

“NYPD,” he shouts, flashing his badge and sending the woman to her knees. She drops the gun and Elliot runs over to secure it. Behind us, I hear the fury of a speeding car careening toward us. The headlights spread out on the wide road. The car stops with a screeching sound that's so loud it cuts through the darkness. John and Elliot pivot to face our new arrivals. John wastes no time in making sure I'm crouching down behind him.

The headlights cut out and I peek around John's legs. The two men in the car, their masks illuminated by the taillights of the smashed car, put their hands in the air.

These fuckers thought they were following one rogue cop driving blindly into the belly of the beast. Instead, they got both Elliot and John.

My men.

ELLIOT

Now, I have to warn you – this is the worst hot chocolate in the world,” I say as I put the warm cup in Pumpkin’s hands. We’re in her father’s office down at the station.

She smiles up at me as she blows on the rim of the cup. I sit down next to her. John’s already sitting on the other side of her, and the three of us are facing her father.

Her father puts his hands flat on his desk before bringing a fist to his mouth to clear his throat. Pumpkin is his world. I imagine that the emotional turmoil he’s been through tonight can only be compared to what he experienced when his wife was taken from the world, all too soon. John and I have been running on adrenaline all night. First, when we walked into the Rileys’ home, then when we... Well, you know what happened

“We were able to recover the security footage on the backend,” Pumpkins’s dad says, turning the screen of his phone toward us. “As you can see, there were five of them. They methodically disabled the cameras and then went inside, knocked some stuff around.”

“I never did like the furniture Cynthia picked out,” Pumpkins grumbles.

Her dad flashes her a smirk.

“This was just a red herring, though,” he continues. “One of them was camped out all evening in a car across the street.

When he spotted Pumpkin climbing out of her window, they followed the three of you to the party.”

“It was all because they wanted to put pressure on us to drop our investigation,” I reply.

“Yes,” he says, folding his hands on the desk, “but there’s something else. Because of your actions tonight, we were able to make arrests that we hadn’t before. Our evidence is now stronger than ever. We have you both as eyewitnesses to what happened tonight – and the people who took Pumpkin tonight were key players. So key, in fact, that our DA has decided to go forward with charges and is working on deals with their attorneys right now. They’re going to flip on some of their higher-ups – and you lead us straight to them.

Behind us, Pumpkin’s stepmom bursts into the room.

“Oh, darling,” she wails, her arms flying around Pumpkin’s shoulders. “I was so worried about you! Worried sick!”

I tighten the grip on the armrests of my chair. This woman has the concerned mother role down. I don’t know how sincere it is, and it’s not my place to ask. That’s between her and Pumpkin’s dad.

My eyes turn and meet the Captain’s steely gaze.

“Cynthia,” he says, rising in his seat, “I think you should go. We’ll talk when I get home.”

“Oh, of course,” she huffs, rushing around the Captain’s big desk and throwing herself at him. “I know I’m not really part of the family, exactly. I know Pumpkin will never fully let me in.”

My fists clench. I have half a mind to tell this woman that Pumpkin’s heart is bigger than the ocean, and just as deep and clear. Any failing to let this woman in is on *her* part – because as loving as Pumpkin is, she’s not naïve, and she doesn’t accept anything but total trust, total devotion, and total love.

After the door is closed behind Cynthia, the Captain sits back down and his gaze finds first mine, and then John’s.

“I want you to take her home with you after she goes back to our place to pick up a few personal items,” he says. “I have some things I need to take care of at my house, and I don’t want Pumpkin there while I attend to these... *matters*. If that’s alright with you, Pumpkin.”

“Um, yes, of course,” she replies with a smile.

“And I want to express my deepest gratitude,” he says, standing to shake our hands. Pumpkin throws herself into her father’s arms and I see the relief painted all over his face. He puts his hands on Pumpkin’s shoulders and holds her away from him as though he’s checking her for any scratches or scars.

EMTs on the scene had already checked out Pumpkin, John, and me – and there weren’t any injuries except for a few bruises on Pumpkin’s arms. John had to force me to get checked out. I didn’t want to take my eyes off Pumpkin.

So, I hadn’t. I’d insisted that we sit together in the back of the ambulance – with my coat around her shoulders while a couple of EMTs took our vitals and confirmed we were okay to go home.

And home is where we’re headed.

We gather Pumpkin up and sweep our jackets over her shoulders. She bundles them against her cheeks and rubs the collars over her sweet skin, like she’s a kitten who’s just drank some warm milk and is ready for a sweet nap.

“Let’s get her home,” John says, putting his lips to her hairline. She beams up at him and then throws her arms around both of us – and this time, we settle into the embrace.

This time, she really is ours.

PUMPKIN

When we got home, John and Elliot brought me to John's room and insisted that I get to bed. They thought I'd be most comfortable sleeping alone, so Elliot slept in his room and John grabbed the couch.

When I wake up, it's already the next evening. I slept all day, and I'd needed it. Everything that happened last night feels like a dream.

I sneak into the bathroom and run a hot shower for myself. I use their body wash – I squeeze a little from each of their bottles into the palms of my hands and run it all over my body, using my fingers to mimic what they'd done to me the night before. I lather the cocktail of scents through my long hair and revel in the sensation of being so close to them. But then, I stop – because I don't have to do this anymore. Now, I can have them – the real thing.

When I'm done with my shower, I go out to the living room. I can't believe I've never been inside their home before, but it looks just as I imagined it. Two bedrooms and a small eat-in kitchen. Everything is comfortable, soft textures against hard surfaces. Behind them, in the kitchen, I run my hands over the marble kitchen island as they watch me. I pull the big, fluffy robe tighter around my shoulders. I feel more at home now – with their eyes on me – than I have in a very long time.

Watching me. Not through security cameras. Not from afar.

I walk to the living room and stand in front of them for a lingering moment before letting my robe drop from my shoulders.

John's eyes grow wide and he puts his hands on his knees to lean forward. Elliot's eyes narrow on mine. Together they stand up and begin to circle me. I can smell their strength, their eyes caressing every part of me.

Elliot picks me up by my hips and wraps my legs around him.

"We're never letting you go again, Pumpkin," he growls against my lips before covering them with a kiss. "Every time we looked at you on those cameras, it took everything in us not to kick the fucking door down and drag you out with us. We've wanted you since the moment we met you, and it's consumed us. We've watched those cameras with our fists clenched and our jaws hard and tight just waiting for you to bring some guy home."

"But you never did, Baby – because you were ours the whole time, weren't you?" John says as he tugs on my chin.

"Yes!" I moan, my belly doing barrel rolls.

Elliot and John sit me down on the couch, and then Elliot pulls me against his lap so I'm straddling him. He grips my hips and grinds me against his lap, his eyes traveling down my body and his hand following. I let my fingers explore his big chest until he slips one finger past the fabric of my thong, stroking my clit in long, wet, big motions with his strong fingers.

"You're fucking greedy, man," John says to Elliot, pulling me into his lap. "I haven't gotten to taste that fresh young thing yet."

"Fuck, man," Elliot growls, pushing a strong hand through his hair with one hand and grabbing my thong where it sits above my ass with the other. "Once you taste that pussy you're going to get addicted. It's perfect."

My heart slams front-to-back inside my chest as Elliot kneels behind me, pushing me against John's lap. I whimper

and squeal as my fingers find John's chest and he pulls his shirt over his head. My mouth waters when I finally see his broad shoulders, his chest. My fingers play against his shoulders as he brings his lips to mine. He strokes inside my mouth with his tongue, swirling around my tongue like a flame.

"That's it, baby," Elliot growls behind me, tugging on my thong. "Get this pussy nice and wet for us."

I gasp as he tugs harder and the soaked lace creates friction against my clit. John pulls his lips away from mine and looks down.

"I can see that tight little pussy through your panties," he says, grabbing my thong. He pulls it off and the fabric tears easily. "There, that's better."

He tosses me off his lap and lays me down. I'm an aching, panting, crazy mess, and it's fucking glorious. Delicious. Seeing my men in front of me, staring down at me with the devil in their eyes is getting me so wet that I can feel my juices running down the insides of my thighs. I get up on my knees and pull both of my men toward me, my fingers curled over the tops of their jeans.

"That's it, baby," Elliot, my stern taskmaster grunts. "Take it out and get a nice taste of what's going to be hitting all the way inside that cunt. Get a taste of the come I'm going to shoot inside the walls of that little box of yours. *My little box, girl.*"

Holy shit! I always knew he had something crazy going on behind his eyes – but this?

I should have known what he was capable of when he asked a room full of people if they wanted to fuck his woman.

I gulp hard as I watch John undo his pants and pull his cock out. The tip is thick and bulbous, dripping with pre-come and making my mouth water. Elliot senses it in my eyes and in the way I'm sliding my hand down my belly to touch my clit.

"You want to lick Johnny boy?" Elliot asks, with tempting sympathy in his voice. His thumb drags down past my lips,

past my chin, and finds my throat. He pulls me toward John's cock and grabs both of my hands, pinning them behind my back. "Now you do what I say and lick Johnny's cock. And you don't put your hands near your pussy. That's my job right now."

My head falls back as he wrings a moan out of my lips, two of his fingers spearing around my clit to pull it from inside my folds. Then, one of his fingers finds my clit and traces it lightly.

"You heard Elliot, Pumpkin," John growls. "Open up those pretty little lips and slide this thing inside."

I choke back a shudder in my chest. I've wanted this for the longest time, fantasized about giving both of them pleasure, so I gather my courage from a deep, hidden well and lick the underside of John's dick before flicking my tongue against the slit. Then I open up my mouth and wrap my lips around his impossible girth.

"Good *god*," John grunts, pushing his cock deep into the back of my throat. He tastes like man, salty and pure. I breathe in deeply through my nose, savoring the sensation of Johnny in the back of my throat. My belly crumbles inside me as Elliot pulls his fingers away from my pussy. The metallic clank of a belt and zipper follow, and then Elliot puts me down on his lap.

I expect him to slide my body down onto his thickness, but instead he presses his length between my lips and slides me back and forth, making his cock bump at my clit every time.

I squeal in delight with John's cock stuffed in my mouth. He looks down at me and pushes my hair away from my forehead, pulling himself out of my mouth.

"Fuck, hearing you moan around my cock was almost enough for me to bust down that little throat," he grunts. "But I have other plans for you. My turn."

He pulls me off Elliot's lap and tosses me down on the couch, then dives between my legs.

“Oh fuck!” I breathe as one of his fingers slides up into my ass. The sensation sends rippling pleasure through me, and he curls his lips and tongue around my clit, then pulls away from it and taps it with his fingers – lightly at first, and then a little harder, and then *harder*.

“You’re a bad girl, Kitten. Keep it nice and bad for us.”

Each sharp smack of his fingers on my pussy is followed by a slow, smooth circle drawn around my clit as he fucks my ass with one thick finger.

“Fuck, man,” Elliot grunts, “I like what you’re doing to our girl. Do you want to make her come like this?”

“No, no – she ain’t coming like this,” John says as he taps my clit. “She ain’t coming until she’s sitting pretty on both our cocks.”

“Oh god, please!” I moan, threading my fingers through his hair. “I need it!”

“No going back from this, Pumpkin,” Elliot growls. “When we have your cream on our cocks, we’re *keeping* it. Isn’t that right, partner?”

“That’s right,” John says, his eyes clouded with lust. “When we mark that little cunt, we’re going to be coming home to it every night.”

“Please, I’ve wanted to give it to you for so long. Please, please,” I moan with a sob. “I want to have your babies!”

My hand flies to my mouth to cover my grin and my heart leaps. Where the hell did that come from? I love it, and it’s true, but – damn!

“You remember what we said about taking you raw?” Elliot grunts with a chuckle, pulling me toward him. His cock presses up against my belly and my mind spins as he pulls me onto the couch with him.

With darkness in his eyes and his brows knotted with desire, he bites his bottom lip and lowers me onto his thickness. When the tip breaches my hole, my fingernails dig

into his back. He lowers me more, and my hot, tight pussy stretches out to take him.

Behind me, John unclasps my bra and covers my tits with his hands. The look in Elliot's eyes is fierce and hard, and he lift his hips to break through my tightness. Our moans catch inside each other's mouths and when John slides his finger into my ass, I feel myself slipping over the edge.

"Oh my god, that feels so good," I moan against the crook of Elliot's neck.

"Don't you dare come," John says, sliding his finger in and out of my ass and wrapping his fingers around the back of my neck. Elliot presses his hips up and grinds me down around his thickness, rocking me there and making me move my hips against him. With every loop forward my hips make, my clit grinds against the trunk of his cock, filling me up with fire.

"I can't help it," I sob, "I'm going to come. My pussy... It feels too good. It's going to come."

"Fuck, no," John says, lifting me off Elliot's cock. "Not until I get inside there."

"Shit, I was about to unload," Elliot grunts, pushing my hair away from my neck.

John flips me onto my belly and pushes me down on the couch. I turn my cheek to see them and feel his and Elliot's hungry gaze on my ass. I squirm under their heavy lust.

Elliot's hand comes down on one cheek, making my ass jiggle under the smack. With two hands he spreads my ass apart and I slam my eyes shut as the tip of John's cock slides inside me.

"That's it, nice and tight," John grunts as the palms of his hands find either side of me. One hand finds my tight nipple and then rakes up to my neck, where he pulls me back gently to kiss me from behind. "Ready to give up that tight ass?"

My mind is reeling. I bite my lip.

"I'm going to lose my fucking mind if you don't both take me," I say, my heartbeat slamming through me. Everything is

and I'm *so* ready! "I adore being traded back and forth between you, but it's not what I really want."

"This time, we aren't stopping until you're creaming all over us," John whispers as he pulls me onto his lap. "That first cream after we've claimed that very tight cherry."

Behind me, Elliot presses a finger against my ass, breaching the tight band carefully. He works on me, fucking my tight ass with his finger until I'm a little more used to the sensation.

And I am – but only barely. Fireworks are still going off in my belly. With every new touch – every new sensation, every new depth – goosebumps keep plumping up on every inch of me.

"Oh baby, I need that tight ass," Elliot whispers against my ear. As if they're working in perfect unison, John holds me still with the tip of his cock at my entrance as Elliot's cock works its way past my tight hole. I bite my lip and breathe through the pain as it subsides, giving way to the most incredible, foreign pleasure I've ever experienced.

"Ohhh, my god," I moan drowsily, feeling my eyelids slip down. "Is...Is that all of you?"

He pushes in farther with a grunt until I feel his balls slap against me.

"Does that answer your question?"

This isn't sweet loving – this is hard, and fast, and wild. They've loved me sweetly from afar long enough. *This* is what I need.

Our bodies find a perfect rhythm, and John and Elliot's grunts become louder, more intense. My body is on fire, and I feel the dizzying, spinning, grinding waterfall of an orgasm building up inside me until I can't take it anymore.

They sense it. They're so attuned to me. They ramp up their movements. They bear down on my body and *take* me only the way they can. As they both tense up against my body – their mouths raking all over me – I feel both of their cocks twitch and jerk deep inside me.

“Pumpkin, you better come right now,” Elliot demands, reaching around to stroke my clit – and that does it for me. I scream out my release as my pussy and ass clamp down on their cocks, their thick ropes shooting inside me as they keep me closed in around them.

“Keep that pussy creaming all over us, baby,” John growls against my ear. I feel their come unfurling and splashing inside me until their hard cocks are pumping against me so hard that their come starts dripping out and making a mess of me.

I’m so spent that I can’t even think straight – and that’s okay, because in the warmth of their embrace, I don’t need anything else.

“We love you, Pumpkin,” Elliot says as he wraps his arms around me. “You made us happy just by letting us breathe the same air as you. By letting us check in on you. By climbing out your window.”

I laugh as a grin spreads across my face.

“We’ve always loved you,” John says. “You were always ours.”

“I was always yours,” I say. “I love you both so much. You’ve always made me feel happy and loved. Safe. But now you’ve made me feel perfect.”

Elliot picks me up and throws me over his shoulder.

“Where are you taking me?” I squeal.

“The night’s young and we have the next three days off, Princess. We wanna see you in those kitten ears.”

That grin on my face grows bigger.

Yessss!

PUMPKIN

THANKSGIVING

*M*y dad sent me home with John and Elliot that night because he wanted to ask Cynthia for a divorce in private. He knew she'd likely throw a hissy fit and didn't want me to be there for it. I actually would have liked to see it happen.

She threw my mom's diamond earrings down onto the kitchen table and said I was a spoiled brat. I *really* wish I'd seen that so she could say it to my face. I would have acted stoic in the face of her bitchiness. Screw fighting fire with fire. Icing her out would have felt *so* much better.

My dad said *she* was the brat – and told her he'd give her a million dollars in return for the divorce. She'd married him for the money to begin with, and she was happy to walk away with a lump of cash and not have to deal with me or dad ever again.

The act she'd put on at the Halloween party, when news of my capture had hit, was actually caught on camera by a local news channel camped out in front of the Waldorf Astoria, where the party had been held. She'd made it all about her. This was the nail on the coffin for my dad. He hadn't told me before all this that he'd already been on the fence about asking for a divorce, but I can't say I was surprised.

He'd considered selling the brownstone, but he kept it even though it's too much house for one person. He kept it because he knows I'll want to visit. An argument could be made that he should have sold it to move on with his life. It's so much a reminder of the life we had before my mom died.

But that's also part of why he decided to keep it – that, and he knows he's going to want lots of room for his grandkids to visit someday.

Someday soon.

I moved in with John and Elliot, naturally, and they always insist on driving me to campus together.

John likes to put me in tight little dresses and high heels and show me off, taking me to nice restaurants and cultural events. Elliot grunts after us with his arms folded across his chest, biting back sneers whenever anyone looks at me, and when we get home, he gets to be the first to do whatever he wants to me.

When it comes to Elliot's turn to plan date night, we all stay inside – and when our dinner deliveries arrive, he shoves a wad of cash at the poor delivery guy and slams the door in his face. I make him tip the full bill when he does that to make up for how brusque he is.

I love them both with all of my heart. One hundred percent of my heart belongs to John, and one hundred percent belongs to Elliot.

I dream about both of them every single night.

I took a test last week and yesterday I had a doctor's appointment to confirm it. I don't know which one of them the biological father is, but I know who the father is in spirit. It's both of them – and this kid is going to be so damn spoiled by all three of us – and my dad – that it'll give Cynthia whiplash if we ever run into her.

My heart is so full, and it's about to get fuller.

“You are so fucking gorgeous,” Elliot says as he comes into the kitchen. I breathe him in. Deep caramel and whiskey. It makes a little ribbon uncurl behind my belly button. He wraps his arms around me from behind and puts a kiss on the back of my head. “I like this.”

His fingers find the edge of my little black dress and he starts to peel it up my thighs.

“I can’t,” I laugh. “Dad is going to be here soon and someone has to get the mashed potatoes started.”

“I’m on it,” John says as he comes into kitchen. I turn to catch a peek at him. There’s a spring in his step. He flashes this knee-weakening smile at me.

“Listen, boys,” I say to both of them. I steady my shaking fingers on the edge of the counter. I take a deep breath. “I have...*news*. I-I took a test.”

Elliot sweeps me up in his arms and kisses my hand like he’s kissing a queen’s ring. John throws his arms around both of us.

My heart is so alive. In bright, blinding color. Neither asks me who the biological father is. I know they both wish it were them, but hey – we know we’ll want more kids, so we’re pretty sure they’ll both have that opportunity. And if not? Well, we’ll have so much love around us that it’ll be hard to complain.

Everything is already so good, and it’s only going to get better. The doorbell rings and I quickly rub my hands on my apron as I go to answer it.

John and Elliot had told my dad about their feelings for me – and my feelings for them – when they’d dropped me back at home once Cynthia was done moving all her stuff out. I eavesdropped from the staircase. They didn’t say anything I hadn’t expected – but they were so delicate and careful about explaining things to my dad. The way they described their feelings was surprising. They were deferential to my dad’s feelings. They told him in no uncertain terms that they both love me and want to take care of me as equals.

For a second, I’d thought my dad actually blacked out. He said nothing for a good, long while. I let out a big chuckle from the stairs and I know they’d heard me because they’d laughed too. I think if I hadn’t laughed at that exact moment, the three of them would have sat in silence together forever. Like, literally forever.

Dad's always been perfect, so I didn't hold it against him when he said he needed time to process everything. My feelings toward two men surprised even me, so I didn't hold it against my dad that he was surprised, too. Hell, sometimes I'll still wake up in the morning surprised at how lucky I am to have both John and Elliot.

There have been little bumps in the road when it came to my dad accepting us, but not in the way I'd expected. He's more concerned about how society at large will see us. Many questions have been asked, and not all of them have been answered yet – not fully, anyway. We just don't know how to answer them, but I know Dad has so much respect for the guys – and loves them like family – that he trusts we'll figure everything out along the way.

Some of the questions, though – they've been pretty funny. Some of them have been pretty damned out there.

What will you tell the doctor when you go in for your prenatal appointments?

So, yes, he's already asked this, even though he won't find out about my pregnancy until today. Who says we have to make a big to-do about it? I mean, Dad, I know you're detail-oriented, but how about we just play it by ear?

If the doc wants to confirm the paternity, that's fine. If she doesn't mind not knowing, that's fine, too. To be honest, I don't really know what I'm getting into because you can never fully know – but I know John and Elliot will have my back, so I trust that it'll be okay.

Is that naive? I don't think it is. Maybe I'm wrong, and the universe is going to smack me on the forehead and say I rushed into things. Maybe the universe will wrap me up in a big hug and tell me that I finally have everything I'd ever wished for. What if the doctor judges us? To that, I say: *What if she doesn't?* What if everything turns out perfectly, in every single way?

Who is going to be in the room with you when the baby is delivered? I don't know! Again, we'll just have to figure it out. Anyway, we're going to have more than one, so maybe we'll

just flip a coin to determine who goes first. Either way, John or Elliot will be there in the waiting room with you, Dad, so you know you'll have a good friend nearby no matter what.

When I get to the front door and open it, my dad is standing there, smiling, with a big bouquet of yellow roses.

“Hey, Pumpkin,” he says. He steps inside and gives me a kiss on the cheek. “What did I tell you about answering the door without checking who it is?”

“But I did know who it was,” I say to him with a smile, “and anyway, everyone knows not to mess with John and Elliot.”

I feel my men come up behind me, each putting a hand on my shoulder.

I take a deep breath and look up at each of them. My men.

The men I belong to.

THE END

NIGHT SHIFT

PREVIEW

Dirty little secret? I have two.

They're my dad's best friends - and my first crushes. That's right - I have *two* first crushes.

Officers Jonathan Myers and Maxwell Drake. The co-stars of all my deepest, craziest fantasies.

Jonathan is the dark, quiet one. The one who makes my mouth water and my belly melt when he looks at me. Maxwell is the confident, demanding one. He makes me want to do things I'd never breathe a word of.

I left my small town to make it as an actress in L.A. When Jonathan and Maxwell left town years ago, I was crushed. But now I'm back - and so are they.

And they look better than ever.

Two hard bodies. Two sets of smoldering eyes. Two big...
night sticks.

My two dirty little secrets, my two first crushes.

And when I finally admit that I've always wanted them,
craved them, longed for them - they promise they're going to
be my *firsts* in exactly the way I've always dreamed of.

*Hold on tight! This book does not contain violence, but does
contain mild depictions of two hot cops showing the bad guys
who's in charge. And not-so-mild depictions of two hot cops
showing their woman *exactly* who's in charge (with no MM
scenes - this is all about her). And crazy-hot depictions of all
the other stuff you know you want.*

*This book is part of the "Night" series but each is a stand-
alone and they can be read in any order.*

Enjoy!

xx, Lauren

JONATHAN

*W*e have something happening at the convenience store at Ninth and Pine. Identity is unknown, this just got called in by a state trooper. Myers and Drake, go check out the situation.

The voice of the police dispatcher on duty tonight crackles through our radio. Before she's done, I've throw my partner a stern nod and I shift into drive. We peel out of the diner parking lot, throwing pebbles behind our tires and leaving the grinding smell of rubber in our wake.

The convenience store we're speeding toward doesn't have a name - it's that shitty. There's the grimy outline of letters where the name used to be, but the owner didn't care enough to replace them, or maybe he can't afford to do the job, so now it's just called the convenience store. An unnamed, unremarkable hole in the wall on a plot of land that used to house a gas station.

The headlights of our patrol car rise up ahead of us as we speed up an incline. I know these winding roads like the back of my hand.

“Do you think it's James this time?”

I throw my partner a glance as we make a left onto Pine. He rolls his window down and hooks his elbow over the edge.

We've been monitoring a ring of low-level drug pushers for a week, and this is the first night we're back on patrol after working exclusively on intel back in the precinct. Two years ago, we were recruited by the NYPD in a joint effort between

the New York City police and New York State troopers to cooperate in the pursuit, arrest, and prosecution of the members of a then newly-formed, small group of drug dealers and suppliers.

Maxwell and I were undercover in the city, working as the bodyguards for the owner of an elite club. The city's politicians, movers, shakers, celebrity chefs and supermodels gave the club a veneer of legitimacy, but the owner was using it as a front to launder money from his burgeoning drug empire.

And once it became an empire, we tore it down.

"I don't think it's James," I say, considering the possibility. James was one of the low-level dealers back in the city. The kind of guy who would be a middle manager at a corporation had he gone the straight route. Unremarkable. A yes-man. A round face and a rounder gut that he tries to hide with button-down shirts that are slightly too big for him. The kind of guy who'd do whatever the last person he'd talked to told him to do. He plead out and was given probation for dropping a dime on the rank above his. "I think he's got better things to do on a Friday night than go out to buy a pack of cigarettes."

We slow down and make our stop across the street from the convenience store.

"Do we know who that is?" I toughen my grip the steering wheel. We're in an unmarked car and in plainclothes, but I want to suss out the situation before we approach.

"Never seen him before."

He's standing outside the convenience store. Mid-twenties, white male with his hands shoved deep into his pockets and his feet shuffling around like a chicken's. A car grinds up the road toward us and makes a turn, rolling into the parking lot. The driver gets out. He looks just like the guy who's waiting for him, and the two shake hands.

These guys look like nobodies. Maybe a low-level guy and a buyer. This is not a big deal.

"Shit, Jonathan, are you seeing what I'm seeing?"

I search for what my partner's telling me to look at. I scan the perimeter of the place with my eyes. It's all thick wooded land around here. The guys go inside the store and I follow them with my eyes, and that's when I see her.

Jesus Christ.

It's Leah. Leah Collins. The police captain's daughter.

Two years. We haven't seen her in two years. And the last time we saw her, she didn't look like this.

She dropped out of the local college two years ago and we got word of her skipping town from her old man. She went out to L.A. to become a movie star. She isn't supposed to be here, she's supposed to be out in Hollywood, becoming famous.

And she isn't supposed to be looking like *this* - all long hair, fantastic tits, thick hips, and big, plump lips that look perfect and ripe for kissing. I remember the hair. She always wore it in a ponytail. But now it's down, flowing against her back in an incredible cascade of wavy, thick locks that I want to slip my fingers through.

I peer at her through the windshield, swallowing a groan and white-knuckling the steering wheel. I have to hold the steering wheel tight. I have to do something to make my cock go down. I can't very well adjust myself right now.

I've looked forward to this day for two years. I always thought the next time I'd get to see her would be with her on the silver screen and me with a bag of popcorn in my lap. Not with...*this* in my lap.

"What the hell is she doing here?" I say, flashing a look at my partner.

He doesn't reply. We watch through the dirty window next to the checkout counter as she moves. She turns away from us and reaches up to grab a pack of rolling papers from the wall behind her before turning again to slap them down on the counter.

My eyes flicker over to the two guys.

“Hey,” I say into the radio, “do we have any new info on who the guy is?”

We just got word, the dispatcher says, he’s the son of a mid-ranking foot soldier for the big boss.

Shit. We’ve been given instructions to not make any arrests - yet. The case *our* big bosses are making relies on tracking and gathering as much information as possible before doing a big, sweeping round of well-targeted and coordinated arrests, followed by airtight indictments sent down from Albany. We aren’t supposed to be doing this piece-meal.

“I don’t like this shit,” Maxwell says. “I say we stay here and keep eyes on her. Do you think her father knows she’s here?”

I can’t keep my eyes off of her. The smooth, round curve of her breasts in her skimpy white tee. The smile that’s lighting the place up. She doesn’t fucking belong here, and I highly doubt her father knows she’s here. She’s always been careful and deliberate about what she does, where she goes, who she associates with. About how her family perceives her. As an only daughter, she wanted to be golden. And after her mom passed away, that desire only grew.

My gaze zeros in on the guys.

“No, he doesn’t know she’s here,” I say. “Follow my lead.”

ALSO BY LAUREN MILSON

Jack Frost

Private Client

Touch

Claiming His Valentine

Claiming His Dancer

Firefighter Next Door

The Wedding Date

Dirty Treat

Night Fever

Dirty Professor

Summer Crush

Night Moves

Night Shift

Her Friend's Father

Her Cowboy

Night Shift