



Cross Point

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Category: Romance, Crime And Mafia, Action

Description: IAD agent Katrina "Trinity" Cross is in desperate need of a vacation. When a friend asks for a personal favor, Trinity agrees to fly to Crescent Island, only to find that things in paradise aren't what they seem...

Jackson Stone is a man who likes regulation and order, but when Katrina Cross arrives on his island, life as he knows it'll never be the same.

Falling behind schedule is not allowed in Maxwell King's orderly world. Missing money, cheap materials, and a dead foreman top the list of his problems, but nothing shakes him more than the sexy siren that sets his body on fire...

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Chapter One

“I need a favor.”

Hearing her friend’s words as soon as she’d answered her phone made Katrina “Trinity” Cross let out a heavy sigh. No greeting, no warning. Just...a favor. Coming from this particular friend, a favor could mean anything from flying overseas to take out the dictator of a small country to leading a rescue mission to the middle of the Congo. No matter what it was, it probably meant something that she wasn’t going to like.

Staring out at the dreary sight of the Chicago street outside her apartment window, she desperately wished for some sun and warmth. Instead, winter seemed unwilling to completely release its hold on the city, blanketing it with cold, icy rain.

And this phone call did nothing to improve her mood.

It made her instantly regret answering it. She really should give being antisocial a try. Fuck it, that wouldn’t work for her. She normally liked interacting with people a lot, but dealing with T-rex was a whole different story.

Trinity sighed again. “You know, every time I hear those words from you, someone ends up trying to kill me.”

Her friend and fellow IAD agent Tara “T-rex” Toshi had the damn nerve to laugh at that. Even from miles away in Las Vegas, T-rex was still a fucking menace.

“You still can’t be mad about Prague.”

“You ruined my damn jacket! Do you know how hard it is to find buttery-soft, red leather in that style? Impossible. I know because it took me fucking forever to find it in the first place. I shouldn’t have blocked that damn knife for you.”

“You’re blaming me for that? Blame the fucker who tried to slit my throat!”

Trinity sighed. Now, she was just being petty. “Okay, I guess that was worth getting stabbed.”

Tara chuckled, then said, “I guess I never did thank you for taking that hit for me, but you were too busy bitching about the stupid jacket at the time. By the way, I still have it.”

“What? The jacket? Seriously?”

“Hell, yeah. You were right. That jacket is the fucking bomb. You wanted to toss it, but I got it repaired for you. I was waiting until the next time I saw you to give it to you, but who the fuck knows when that will be. I’ll send it to you. The sleeves now have reinforced protective patches on them. I also had them add a protective lining inside, so you can block all the blades you want.”

Trinity laughed. “Thanks.”

“So, about that favor...”

“Fuck me. I’m hanging up now.”

“Don’t!” Tara chuckled. “Listen, it’s not as bad as you think. It’s a totally innocuous situation I need you to look into. No one will try to kill you.” Pausing for a heartbeat

or two, she added, “At least, I don’t think they will.”

“Gee, how positively encouraging,” Trinity said dryly.

Both women worked for IAD, a specialized intelligence agency and counterterrorist task force that very few people even knew existed. The International Alliance of Defense was a transnational covert branch in the intelligence community with agents from all over the world. Government agencies regarded the members of IAD with awe, not to mention a great amount of envy. Not that it didn’t piss off those other agencies when they had to defer to IAD agents if the situation called for it.

Then again, they didn’t have much choice.

If IAD were called in to handle a situation, everyone else needed to step the fuck back. That was simply the way it was.

The members of NATO had formed IAD with a policy of “get it done, no matter the cost,” making the agents the ultimate warriors of global warfare. Because of that, IAD handled their own problems and discourses internally, and that was just the way they liked it.

They were the elite, and only the best were chosen to serve.

For the highly skilled members of IAD, the autonomy they were given was a dream come true since most of the agents had been disillusioned with the rules, regulations, and red tape of the regular intelligence branches. Only the highest, most qualified candidates were chosen for IAD, and they were given a kind of worldwide immunity for their actions. With that independence came great responsibility, and that was something none of the members of IAD took lightly.

That was one of the things Trinity loved most about her job...freedom.

Born Katrina Briars, Trinity was an interesting mix of contradictions. At thirty-one years old, she had been through a lot in her life. She considered herself a tomboy at heart, but with her long, light-brown hair, intense hazel eyes highlighted with long, thick lashes, and full pouty lips, she looked more like a supermodel or an actress.

Even so, she would rather play with her guns than go shopping.

An adrenaline junkie to the core, she had found her calling in covert work. Growing up in Chicago, she had never known her father and had been forced to deal with her raging alcoholic mother until she was thrown in jail when Trinity was only five.

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Lost in the foster care system, she had fallen into the wrong crowd until her life changed at thirteen when she tried to steal a car belonging to Homeland Security agent Ben Cross. Ben and his wife, Veronica, had taken one look at the bruised and battered young girl and welcomed her into their home.

From that day on, her life had changed drastically.

Following in her father's footsteps, Trinity joined Homeland Security after graduating from college early, becoming one of their youngest agents. Although she had specialized in cybercrimes, she had also qualified for sharpshooter status, making her a viable asset to any operation. The problem was that Trinity had never really grown out of her rebellious nature or her disregard for authority, especially when she knew she was right.

Despite her numerous accolades, she'd also held one of the highest number of reprimands in the agency. Equally proud of both, when the chance to work for IAD came along, she jumped at the chance.

And Trinity had never regretted her decision.

Even after the last clusterfuck she'd been through, she still enjoyed every second of being an IAD agent. That said, Trinity had just come off a pretty nasty mission that left her battle-scarred and, in her opinion, slightly mind-fucked, which was not conducive to being a field agent. Taking herself out of the game was killing her, but she would never put her fellow agents and friends at risk.

Until she got her mind right, Trinity had no choice but to bench herself.

However, that was turning out to be a problem since no one was listening to her.

She silently cursed as her interest was piqued, just like her friend knew it would be. Damn her. An interesting case always got her revved, and this was no exception. Still, she knew she shouldn't involve herself in any IAD missions until she had fully recovered.

“You know, I haven't even officially been on leave for a full month yet, and you're already trying to drag me back on active duty.” She paused, then said, “I was even considering retirement.”

Tara laughed so loud that Trinity had to hold the phone away from her ear.

“Bullshit, Trinity. You know you can never really retire from IAD...unless you retire from living. It's like Hotel California. You clock in, not out. You never stop being an agent until you're six feet under.”

Damn her again, Tara was right.

“Anyways, you've been doing nothing but sitting on your fabulous ass for weeks now,” Tara said. “I thought you could use something to do.”

Trinity hadn't been sitting around for shits and giggles. She'd been on medical leave recovering from a grueling mission. She had gone undercover in Mexico to help take down a particularly nasty ring of Coyotes, traffickers who took money to help people sneak across the border into the US.

This particular group had a tendency to use those who came to them for help as drug mules. They also ended up extorting more money from them to gain their freedom once they were on American soil. For the pretty young men and women, the outcome was even worse. After they were taken across the border, they were forced into sexual

slavery or sold to the highest bidder.

Trinity had positioned herself with a group asking to be taken across the border, as IAD had been trying to track down who the buyers and contacts were on the US side. She had been tagged with a tracking device that had been affixed to her skin and was untraceable to most sensors. The mission had seemed simple enough. She just hadn't planned on four of the assholes running the smuggling ring to join her in the back of the truck, wanting a taste of her and the other young woman in the group during the trip over.

That had been a serious miscalculation on her part.

With her hands tied behind her back and using nothing but her bare feet, Trinity had stopped the men, earning a couple stab wounds to the side and a bullet graze on her thigh for her trouble. She had also been beaten to shit by the time the truck had arrived at the drop point, but what had done the most damage to her psyche had been being locked in the back of the truck with four dead bodies in the heat and the dark.

The doctor monitoring her recovery had been able to help heal her physical wounds with the aid of an experimental drug, but her mind was a whole different story. Her brain was a minefield that she was told would take time to heal.

Personally, she thought she was fucked.

What the hell kind of agent could she be if she freaked out in the dark?

Unwilling to put her friends at risk, she'd put herself on an extended sabbatical from the agency, only to find that it really was impossible to leave completely. She sighed again and knew, without a doubt, that this was going to be a mistake.

"What do you need me to do?"

Trinity could practically hear her friend's grin as Tara responded. "Julian's family is working on an expansion project on an island off the coast of Florida. Seriously, I'd never even heard of the place before he told me about it. They're expanding the Palace Resort and Spa there, but things have gone FUBAR, and no one can figure out what's going on. We were going to fly down, but I got called in to help the guys from the LA office and can't now."

Damn it.

Julian King was Tara's fiancé, and Trinity really liked him. He'd basically become a part of the IAD family, and everyone knew that Trinity would do anything for family.

"Give me the basics."

"The resort is located on an island that caters to the wealthy and elite. It's one of their most lucrative properties in the US, and they recently bought the land next to the hotel for their expansion project. The problem is that nothing seems to be going according to plan. There have been delays and other problems, especially with the finances of the project."

"Can't Julian have one of his minions go down there and bash some heads together?"

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“That’s what you are for, sweetie.”

Shit. Now it made sense why Tara was calling in this favor.

“This project has been headed up by Julian’s brother, Maxwell, but he’s been busy handling another issue at their hotel in Monaco. And their mother and sister are handling some big convention in New York. Come on, Trinity. It’s a resort...on a beautiful island. Are you really telling me you don’t want to take a vacation at one of the most exclusive resorts in the world...for free?”

As she glanced over at the rain-drenched windows again, the fantasy of warm weather and white sandy beaches with crystal-clear blue water swayed Trinity. Even though she had naturally golden skin, she was in serious need of a tan.

“Fine. I’ll go, but you’ll owe me.”

“I totally will. We’ll even set you up in the owner’s suite for your stay. Julian tells me it’s huge, and there’s even a private pool.”

“I never understood that. Why do you need a private pool when you’re practically on the beach?” Trinity mused.

“Ah, that’s a good question. Maybe so you can swim naked?”

“But I’d do that on the beach.”

Tara laughed. “That’s why I love you. You’re a wild one, Trinity. Go check this out

for us, and you can stay down there as long as you'd like and become a mermaid."

That made her lips curve in a grin. "See if I don't. Fine, I'll do it, but you're paying for all my shit, room service and everything. And I just might get a massage every day. I think I deserve a little fun in the sun."

"Exactly! I haven't been down there myself, but I've seen pictures of the island. It's absolutely beautiful. Trust me when I say I think you'll totally love Crescent Island. You'll be able to reach me on my cell, or you can contact Julian directly when you know what's going on. Go enjoy yourself. And if you end up swimming naked in the ocean, you'll have to tell me all about it. Especially if there's a hot guy involved."

"Perv. You're engaged now. Doesn't that mean you can't think of other men now?" she teased.

"First of all, hello pot, said kettle. And no. I might be engaged, but I'm not dead."

Trinity was still laughing as she ended the call.

Her mood lifted as she thought about her upcoming trip. Yeah, she could really use a vacation to a sunny, beautiful island where the only thing she had to worry about was what type of drink to order next.

And where no one tried to kill her.

That would definitely be a welcomed change of pace.

Chapter Two

"Well, shit..."

Clearly, someone hadn't gotten the message about Trinity's dream vacation where no one was supposed to try and kill her.

Until now, she had been having a damn good day.

Arriving on Crescent Island earlier courtesy of the private plane that Julian had booked for her had set her off to a great start. She had flown out of the dark, dreary skies of Chicago, and into the bright blue, sunny climes of Crescent Island off of the Florida coast.

As soon as the plane had lifted off, so did her mood. The weight she'd been carrying from the last few missions had been left behind and she'd actually started to look forward to her vacation.

During the flight, she'd treated herself to a couple of mimosas while she'd scanned the data Tara had sent her about the renovations. Right away it was clear there was something hinky going on with the financials. She wasn't an expert on construction by any means, but the cost projections of the renovation seemed to be extremely off. It didn't take a genius to see that they were over budget and way off the estimated timeline.

When she'd landed on the island, a sleek town car had been waiting for her. The driver had loaded her enormous suitcase into the trunk, but he'd given her a weird look when she refused to part with her duffle bag.

No one touched her go-bag but her.

It contained everything she'd need to survive on her own for weeks. Hell, she could even wage a small war with the contents in her bag.

To the driver's consternation, instead of getting in the backseat, Trinity had climbed

into the passenger seat with him in front. At first, he had been guarded, but Trinity's natural charisma and innate charm had him loosening up in no time. The driver turned out to be quite nice and had given her a little background about the island and its locals on the ride to the hotel.

He nearly shocked the shit out of her when he told her the island catered to alternate partnerships and ménage relationships, but Trinity recovered quickly, intrigued by the setup. She'd grinned at the thought of all the naughty fun she was going to have and silently thanked her friend for coercing her to come on the trip.

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They had driven down a deserted road lined with the rainforest on either side until a striking structure had finally come into view. Rising over the treetops with the sea at its back, the Palace Resort and Spa was a truly extraordinary sight. The resort reminded her of Aladdin's palace with a contemporary twist. Several towers held the VIP suites, varying in different sizes. Even though it was one of the smaller hotels in the Palace chain, the main building hosted an impressive number of rooms.

Once inside the hotel, she'd been able to bypass the tedium of checking in since the executive manager had been waiting for arrival. She absently wished that Julian hadn't informed everyone she was coming, but it did make things go more smoothly. The executive manager immediately led her up to the top floor of the largest tower where the owner's suite was located, cheerfully chattering on about the various amenities available at the resort along the way.

Unique in its design, the owner's suite was magnificent. More like a self-sufficient condo than a hotel room, it had a complete 360-degree view of the island. There was a large, open living room with a full kitchen and two bedrooms on opposite sides of the suite in a split arrangement. It was almost shameful that she would be the only one staying there since it was such a large space, but she wasn't about to complain.

With its lavish furnishings, quiet elegance, and wide windows that overlooked the sea and the bay to the north, it wouldn't be difficult to spend a few weeks enjoying herself there. Although she loved it all, her favorite part of the suite was its large balcony with a patio table and its very own lap pool. She imagined it would be absolutely blissful to sit on the deck and have a big ass glass of wine as the sunset over the water.

Wanting to get the work part of her vacation started so she could get it over and done with, she unpacked quickly before leaving the resort. She'd wanted to head over to the construction site next door to take a closer look around. She'd been pleasantly surprised when the valet handed over a set of car keys to a sleek little silver convertible when she came back down to the main entrance.

Sending warm thoughts to her friends when she was told that Julian had arranged for the car to be at her disposal for the duration of her stay, she headed the short distance to the construction site.

The Palace Resort and Spa sat on a large plot of land, which was cleverly used to host a variety of activities. There were two huge pools on the property as well as tennis courts and a beautiful golf course located south of the main building. The new expansion plans included the construction of a sister site on the plot of land next to the existing location which was nestled into the bay on the western side of the island.

Surprisingly, when she arrived, the lot was completely empty of workers. That had given her the time and space she needed to poke around. As she'd strolled around the property, she was glad she had changed into a pair of comfortable flats to go with her jeans and the simple white shirt she'd thrown on before she'd left her room.

From her survey of the progress, she immediately knew that the project was way off the mark. What should have been a solid foundation of the building's structure was no more than a skeleton of concrete and wood. Shaking her head, she had worked her way carefully around the structure, wanting to get a better view of the entire site.

Not that there was much to see.

When a man called out to her, instinct had her reaching for the grip of the Sig Sauer hidden in the waistband of her jeans. Fucking hell, she shouldn't have been so damn skittish. As the man got closer, she noticed the security logo on his shirt and greeted

him with a smile instead of a face full of Glock.

“Hi.”

The security guard frowned at her. “Ma’am. This is private property and you’re trespassing. You need to leave.”

“Actually, I’m a friend of Julian King. He said I could come by and check out the new project while I’m visiting the island.”

Trinity had chosen to bend the truth a little since she didn’t want anyone to know exactly what she was doing there yet. She’d shot him what she hoped was a look of innocent concern. “It doesn’t look like much yet, though. I thought it would be further along by now.”

Trinity had noted the security guard started fidgeting at that.

“There’ve been some slight delays. I’m sorry, but I’m still going to have to ask you to leave. It really isn’t safe for you to go walking around here. I wouldn’t want you to get hurt.”

She flashed him another smile as she made a point to glance down at the badge attached to his pocket. “No problem, Billy.”

She’d gotten back in her car and left with a friendly wave. There would be time to return once she’d looked over all the records stored in the office.

Hunger pains distracted her, making her debate whether or not to find somewhere to grab a bite or just return to the resort to indulge in some room service. Deciding to take the scenic route into town, she headed up the coast. She knew from her study of the island that the road would branch out and take her straight into town after she

passed some of the private villas.

It wasn't more than ten minutes into her drive that she noticed a black jeep coming up behind her on the empty road. Fast. Way too Fast. Instincts kicked in gear when she noted the mud-splattered window that obscured her view of the driver. More mud hid the license plate of the approaching vehicle. On the chance that she was just being paranoid, she slowed her car and pulled a little toward the right to give him plenty of room to pass.

That move ended up saving her life.

The jeep surged forward, slamming into the back of her car. Cursing at the hard jolt, She used every bit of skill and experience she'd learned to keep control of the car. She pulsed her foot on the brake instead of slamming down on it, swerving slightly to slow down further. The jeep rammed her again, this time throwing her into a violent spin.

"Son of a bitch!"

Someone really was trying to kill her.

So much for her fucking vacation.

Trinity jerked hard on the wheel, trying to counter the spin. Her heart nearly stopped for a moment as the car slammed into the guardrail, the only thing protecting her from going over the cliff. Moving fast, she jumped out of the car and pulled her Sig, training it on the jeep as it quickly turned around and sped down the road. She didn't hesitate and fired repeatedly at the rapidly departing vehicle.

Cursing again, the loud pounding of her heartbeat was joined by the low throb of a motorcycle engine coming from the same direction the jeep had fled. On guard, she

turned and pointed her gun at the individual on the bike as he pulled over and parked a few feet away. Her breath hissed out for a very different reason as she got her first good look at the newcomer's face.

Around six-three and built like a golden god, the man was wickedly handsome. Built like a prized fighter, he was packing some serious muscle and had a fierce aura about him that all but screamed law enforcement. His shaved head only showed a hint of dark hair that matched the five o'clock shadow covering his chiseled jaw. Intense green eyes seared into hers as the man pulled his own weapon, approaching her slowly.

“CIPD, put your weapon down.”

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She'd called it right.

Of course, he was a cop.

She cocked her head to the side, intrigued by the easy command in his deep voice. Never one to pass up an opportunity to poke at authority, she flashed him a grin. "Badge me."

He froze. "What?"

"Badge me, baby, because I'm not putting this down until I see your brass."

Chapter Three

What the hell?

Jackson Stone stared at the woman pointing a gun at him, amazed by her audacity. As a former officer in the Army and current lieutenant with the Crescent Island Police Department, he knew a trained shooter when he saw one. It was in the way she held her body at a slight angle to present a smaller target, and the steady grip with which she held her weapon. But most of all, it was the hard gleam in her hazel eyes even though she was smiling.

It didn't matter that the woman looked like a damned pin-up model.

She was dangerous.

Still, her provocative statement had its desired effect on him. Jackson felt a wave of lust shoot through him as he took her in at a glance. She had long brown hair that he wanted to wrap around his fist as he plundered those perfect pouty lips. Her full breasts strained against her shirt, and he imaged what it would feel like to have those long legs wrapped around his waist.

He wanted to curse as his traitorous dick twitched at her low, throaty demand. A hard, skilled operator himself, he'd never reacted to a woman under such strange circumstances.

But he guessed there was a first time for everything.

Scanning the scene with a trained eye, he saw the skid marks on the pavement and the damage to the back of her vehicle. Although it seemed like she was the victim in this scenario, he couldn't be too careful. There was something about her that told him she was far from innocent and that put his guard up.

This was his island and it was his duty to protect it.

He kept his weapon trained on her as he reached into his back pocket and slowly pulled out his badge. He watched those captivating hazel eyes drift down to scan his badge, but the willful little witch kept her gun pointed at him. This was definitely not the reaction he was used to when he was trying to help someone.

"There, you saw it. Now, put your weapon down. I'm not going to hurt you."

"Hmm. Not just yet. See, I have this little problem. Someone just tried to run me off the road, and you just show up at the same time? Call me a cynic, but that seems like some timing you've got seeing as this road seems pretty empty and all."

Not used to being questioned, his jaw clenched against the insult.

“I live up the road and was heading home. I saw your car had hit the rail and pulled over to see if you needed help. I’m a police officer. It’s my job to help you if you’re in trouble.”

“Did you pass a black jeep?”

“Yes. Was that the car that hit you?”

“Yep. Damn near pushed me over the edge. Would have, too, if he’d gotten a chance.”

Jackson blew out a breath. “Can we continue this conversation without the guns now?”

“You first, Lieutenant Stone.”

Taking a chance, Jackson lowered his gun, keeping it at his side. “You can call me Jackson.”

Mirroring his gesture, Trinity kept her gun in her hand, knowing that she could still take him out if he made a wrong move. He really was a good-looking man. During her perusal of him, she noticed he didn’t have a wedding ring on his finger. Hell, she was on vacation...or was supposed to be.

Why not mix a little pleasure with business?

She smiled. “I’m hungry. Want to get something to eat?”

“What?”

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She wanted to laugh at his stunned expression but held it in, knowing instinctively this man wouldn't appreciate being laughed at. He was so serious. Unlike her, he didn't seem to find this situation the least bit amusing. She would have thought he was a machine if not for the flicker of bafflement in his eyes.

"I'm hungry. I was heading into town to get something to eat when that asshole tried to run me off the road. I haven't eaten since I left Chicago this morning, except for some munchies on the plane."

His brows furrowed. "You arrived on the island today?"

"Yep. Not exactly the welcome I was expecting, but what are you going to do? So, is that a yes to food or what?"

She could tell that she'd stirred his temper when his nostrils flared, and she got a perverse sense of pleasure at the show of emotion. She wasn't sure why, but something about the man made her want to keep messing with him.

"Lady, the only place we're going is to the station so we can report this. There are procedures to follow for a hit-and-run. You're involved in something here, and I also need to see if you have a license for that weapon."

Trinity sighed. He sure was pretty to look at, but she hated a tight ass who always followed the rules. That shit could get annoying fast.

"The name is Katrina Cross, but you can call me Trinity. And sorry, sugar. I can see where you're coming from, but unfortunately, if you took me down to the station it

would only take one phone call before I was released. Then, I would just be pissed off if I had to wait longer to get something to eat. It would be a better use of our time if I could tell you about it over lunch...or dinner.”

He stared at her with an incredulous look as if she were an alien speaking Swahili. When he spoke again, he did so slowly like he was speaking to someone mentally impaired.

“Someone just tried to kill you, and you want to go get something to eat?”

“Well, yeah. Hungry here.”

“You’re...that’s...” he sputtered, then his attitude hardened again. “I don’t know who you think you are, Ms. Cross, but you’re coming with me.”

She ignored him and walked over to her car, keeping him in her peripheral vision while she did. She commended him silently when his gun hand didn’t even twitch, but sensed that deliciously buff body of his tightened, muscles coiled at the ready to move if he needed.

Reaching into her car, she lifted her cell phone slowly so he wouldn’t overreact. Dialing a number, she kept her gaze locked on his as she made her call, putting it on speaker.

“You’re calling to brag about sitting on the beach with a drink in your hand while I’m stuck here in the dungeon, aren’t you, you bitch?” Tara asked as soon as she answered the phone.

“Actually, no. I’m calling to tell you that your little favor is not so little anymore. You’re going to owe me big since I checked on your little problem at the resort today and someone just tried to run me off the road.”

“Son of a fucking bitch! Are you okay?”

“Yeah. He missed his chance and blew. I’ve got a Lieutenant Jackson Stone here with me of the CIPD,” she announced and heard the faint sound of rapid typing.

She knew her friend had gotten her message and was currently pulling up any data on the man to make sure he was someone trustworthy before she told him anything.

Jackson’s expression darkened. “Who are you—?”

Trinity held up a finger, cutting him off. She took a moment to admire his restraint as he visibly calmed himself down even as his eyes were narrowed with irritation.

“Jackson Stone, lieutenant in the Army before leaving the service to join CIPD. Shit load of commendations, seems like a good cop. He’s clean, Trinity.”

“Who the fuck are you talking to?” Jackson finally exploded. “What the hell is this?”

“Oh, he’s got a sexy voice,” Tara practically purred over the phone. “Is he cute?”

“Very,” Trinity answered, enjoying the fire that lit his eyes to green flames.

“That’s it. If you don’t tell me what the hell is going on, I’m going to arrest you!”

“No, you’re not,” Tara countered, her voice hard and devoid of the teasing tone from a few seconds ago. “Lieutenant Stone, you’re speaking to a director of IAD and you’re standing with one of my agents now.”

At the news of her employer, Jackson let out a vicious curse that Trinity ignored. Tara had recently been promoted to the director of a new division of IAD in Las Vegas and wore the mantel of authority with ease when she wanted to. It wasn’t

surprising since Tara was a badass, just like all of the IAD agents were.

She was a kill first, ask questions later kind of woman.

Just like Trinity.

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“You just have to rub in the director thing every chance you get, don’t you?” Trinity teased. “And I’m not officially an agent right now, remember?”

“Consider me being a director your get-out-of-jail-free-card, so don’t hate. And you’re on medical leave but consider yourself back on the roll. Now, give me the sitrep.”

She sighed. There really was no chance in hell her friend was ever going to let her retire. None of them were.

“I went to check out the expansion site after I got to the resort. I was just heading into town to get something to eat when a jeep came up on me and slammed me into the guardrail. He took off, then Jackson was on scene.”

“Plates?”

“Covered in mud. Same with the windows, so I didn’t get a good look at the driver. Could tell it was a man, but that’s about it.”

“Damn it, what the hell is going on?”

“Don’t know, but I’m going to find out.”

“Contact me and keep me updated. Oh, and sorry someone tried to kill you again.”

“Yeah, well, it happens,” she said with a laugh, then hung up the phone.

She'd watched Jackson's face throughout the entire conversation. It wasn't hard to do considering he was really hot. Even though he'd fought back showing any expression on his face, she could practically feel the tension radiating off him in waves.

Tucking her phone in her back pocket, she leaned back against the car and crossed her legs in a casual pose. She let the silence settle between them for a moment, then couldn't help but poke at him again.

"So, are you going to play nice, or are we going to have to go through the dance?"

His nostrils flared and he clenched his teeth, but his voice came out calm when he spoke. "We get you something to eat, and you tell me what the hell is going on. Follow me into town."

With that Jackson turned around, stalking back to his bike, giving her a spectacular view of his ass. It was obvious that he was pretty pissed, but at least he was past trying to arrest her.

At least, for now.

Chapter Four

Jackson watched in amazement as Trinity devoured her cheeseburger in no time flat. For someone with a slim build like hers, he figured she must stay very active in order to eat like that.

Then again, as an IAD agent, she'd have to.

With his military background and time serving in law enforcement, he'd obviously heard of the agency before. However, he knew very little about them. They were like the boogiemens of the intelligence community. The ultimate clandestine warriors,

hidden in the gray areas outside the scope of the law.

For someone who believed in the rule of law as much as he did, he couldn't say he agreed with the lack of restrictions IAD operated by. Still, he knew there was a need for such agents in the global war on terror. That kind of evil didn't play by the rules, so those who hunted them needed a little leeway to stop them.

Despite the conversation he'd overheard, he'd shot off a text to one of his officers to have her checked out. The text he'd gotten back confirmed she was legit, but his people couldn't get much on her. That in itself was telling. She was a covert agent, so it was understandable that her file was redacted.

He just didn't know what the hell she was doing on his island.

Jackson had grown up on Crescent Island as the only child of his mother, Sandra, and his two fathers, Anthony and Brendan. Because of his rather unconventional upbringing, he had discovered at a young age that a ménage pairing was not for him.

His mother had come from a wealthy family. When she had fallen in love with the bad boy local cop Brendan Stone, her parents had been disappointed yet tolerant. But they'd cut her off, disapproving of their ménage lifestyle when Sandra had added rich Italian Anthony Vincenti to the mix.

Vastly different, Anthony and Brendan had both fallen in love with the striking beauty. For her, it had been an ideal relationship. Anthony had allowed her to continue living in the luxury she was used to, while Brendan catered to her wild side. She loved them both, but she couldn't seem to stop trying to pit both men against one another, creating a very volatile home environment.

Jackson had grown tired of the strain her actions caused, so when he turned eighteen, he left the island and joined the Army. In the military, he'd found his calling. A

natural-born leader, he excelled in strategic tactical planning and analysis. He had quickly risen in the ranks, becoming a lieutenant that those under his command had depended on and respected. His life had been going according to plan until the night he'd gotten the phone call telling him that his father Brendan had been killed in the line of duty.

Deciding to leave the military, he returned to Crescent Island and joined the police department in honor of his father. His mother had been inconsolable. She had begged and pleaded for him to quit, saying that she couldn't watch another loved one die in such a violent way. But he wouldn't, couldn't do what she'd asked of him.

He was born to be a soldier.

A cop.

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A warrior.

Unable to stay on the island now that Brendan was gone, his mother and father had left the island, relocating to their villa in Italy. They had given the secluded estate on the west side of Crescent Island to Jackson, where he currently lived alone. Serious in nature, he held to a strict moral code that often clashed with the free-spirit attitude of the island, and so he used his oasis to retreat from the world.

Determined, focused, and extremely devoted, he lived and breathed the job. Jackson was known as one of the go-to guys on the island, and people often looked to him for answers. Although he was only one of the proud members of the Crescent Island Police Department, Jackson considered the island his.

His to watch over.

His to protect.

And he couldn't do that if he didn't know what the hell was going on and why someone had tried to kill the hot little spitfire sitting across the table from him. His mood darkened as he thought back to what had happened earlier on the cliffs.

It was time for some answers.

Known for good food and cold drinks, Jackson had taken her to Siren's Cove, a local pub run by the family of one of his fellow officers. It was one of the favored hangouts for both the locals and tourists on the island. There was a large statue of three beautiful sirens basking on a cropping of rocks near the entrance that looked like they

were just waiting for a chance to lure passing sailors to their doom. The piece had been created by a local artist and perfectly suited the theme of the place.

Waiting until Trinity ate the last fry on her plate, Jackson leaned back and crossed his arms across his broad chest. Speaking of doom, he felt like he was being lured to his own when she smiled at him. Damn it, he could all but see the mischief stirring behind those bright hazel eyes of hers.

“Tell me what’s going on, Katrina.”

Trinity sat back with a satisfied sigh, and she studied him as she raised her glass of beer to her lips and took a long, slow drink. She was impressed that he had waited this long to ask. Jackson didn’t seem like a man who had been born with the patient gene, but she appreciated that he’d let her eat before attempting to interrogate her.

She liked the bar he had chosen. It suited the island with its casual atmosphere, and the steady stream of business, even during the off-peak hours, told her it did well. As she glanced around, she realized what the driver had told her earlier was true. There were several other couples in the bar. A few consisted of two women and one man, but most of them were two men and one woman.

The chemistry flooding the place made it clear these were not just friends out for a bite to eat, but rather intimate, committed relationships. It seemed like she had landed on a fantasy island, and she might as well get started on making her own fantasies a reality.

But first, they had some business to get out of the way.

Hoping to throw him off balance again, she braced her elbows on the table, propped her chin on her linked hands, and smiled sweetly at him. She watched his irritation clear as he simply blinked at her.

“Okay, here’s the basic rundown…”

She told him why she’d made the trip down to the island and what had happened during her visit to the construction site. She explained up until the point she had met him on the cliffs, then stopped as their waitress walked over to their table. The young woman was wearing dark jeans and a blue polo shirt with the Siren’s Cove logo on it, and she shot them a sunny smile as she bussed their empty plates away from the table.

Once she was gone, Jackson leaned forward. “Obviously there’s something going on there that’s dangerous. You need to leave this to the cops and—”

“Nope. No can do. I told my friend I’d figure this out, and that’s what I’m going to do.”

“Damn it—”

“Are you seeing anyone?” She took another sip of her beer as she watched him blink in surprise again. Damned if she didn’t love pushing his buttons.

“W—what?”

She smiled and blinked at him innocently. “I asked if you were seeing anyone. I didn’t see a ring, but I thought I’d ask if you were involved since we’re on a date and all.”

He clenched his teeth so hard that she was surprised they weren’t ground to dust.

“This isn’t a date.”

“Oh? Well, I guess you’re not attracted to me then. My bad.”

“I didn’t say that,” he snapped, then blew out a breath trying to regain control of his emotions. “Are you always this...forward?”

She shrugged. “When people are trying to kill you all the time, I figure wasting time is just that...wasting time. But I disagree. I would have to call this a date. We had food, drinks, conversation, and I might even let you kiss me later. Ergo...date.”

Jackson seemed completely at a loss for words, which pleased her immensely. She really did get a kick out of baffling him. When the waitress came back to the table, Trinity whisked the check away from her.

Winking at her dinner companion, she said, “This one’s on me.”

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He frowned and reached for the check, motioning for it with his fingers. "If this is a date, then I pay."

She playfully held it out of reach as she took some money out of her pocket. "Nope. I got it. You can treat me next time."

Smiling as he grumbled in irritation, she slid the money into the book before handing it to the waitress when she came back to their table. As they made their way toward the exit, Trinity noticed how many of the patrons seemed to know Jackson. They smiled or waved at him, and he returned their greetings with a curt nod. She wanted to roll her eyes and tell him to relax, but she figured she should wait a little before trying to get him to loosen up.

When a man called out to Jackson, they detoured over to a table where three men and a woman were enjoying some drinks. The woman was beautiful, with long brown hair and dark brown eyes, and all three of the men were handsome. Two of the men looked similar enough that Trinity figured that they had to be related.

"Hey, Stone. Do you guys want to join us?" one of the men asked.

Jackson shook his head. "Sorry, Brody. Maybe next time. We were just leaving. Katrina Cross, this is Brody Collins and Adam and Ford West. We work together at the police department. And this is their girlfriend, Olivia Abbas."

Ford's blue eyes sparkled with humor. "Do my eyes deceive me, or is Jackson Stone out on a date? Has the world officially ended?"

Trinity couldn't help but laugh as Adam reached out and slapped his brother on the back of the head. She could practically hear Jackson's teeth grinding again.

"This isn't a date," he denied. "Katrina ran into some trouble earlier, and we were talking about the details over a meal."

The four sitting at the table glanced at one another, then Ford said, "So, a date."

"It is," Trinity confirmed before Jackson could deny it again. Playing it up, she hooked her arm through his and grinned at the group. "Sorry, Jackson's still a little put out that I pulled my gun on him earlier."

The group gawked at her.

"You...pulled a gun on the Lieutenant?" Adam asked slowly in disbelief.

"Well, yeah, but it was a mistake. Okay, so not really a mistake since I meant to do it. But you know, a girl has to be careful when a man creeps up on her on a deserted road."

"I did not creep up on you," Jackson growled.

"Sure, honey."

She batted her eyelashes at him, then smiled at the group again. She winked at Olivia, who choked back a laugh. The men watched her warily as if not quite sure what to think of her. Good thing she was used to that, or she might develop a complex.

"I don't think I've seen you around before. Are you new in town, Katrina?" Olivia asked with a warm smile.

“Call me Trinity. And yeah, just arrived on the island today. I’m staying at the resort.”

“The Palace? I love that place. They have a wonderful restaurant and spa there. You should stop by my store if you get a chance the next time you’re in town. I just opened a clothing and lingerie store a block over called Temptations,” Olivia said with a proud grin.

Trinity smiled. “Great name. I’ll definitely stop by. I think I’ll need to buy something sexy that a man can rip off me.”

Olivia laughed. “I think I have exactly what you need.”

“Excuse us, we’re leaving,” Jackson said stiffly as he grabbed hold of Trinity’s arm.

She turned to wave at the others over her shoulder as Jackson pulled her toward the entrance. She was pleased to see that his eyes had gone the color of a storm at sea but was sorry it was partly anger mixing with the lust she’d been hoping for.

When the door opened, they almost ran right into a tall blond man. The man all but snapped to attention as soon he saw Jackson.

“Sir.”

“Noah. I thought you were on duty tonight,” Jackson snapped out, making the other man straighten even more.

“I was. I am,” Noah said as he eyed Jackson warily. “I’m just stopping by to pick up some food for me and Carlos.”

Jackson blew out a breath. Damn it, there was no reason for him to be snapping at

one of the men he worked with. Noah Diaz was a good cop and a good friend, but Katrina Cross had his dick going to stone in his pants, making it impossible to think clearly. He had to get them the hell out of the bar before he did something stupid. Like throw her onto one of the tabletops and yank her jeans down to see if her ass was really as perfect as it seemed.

They all turned when an older woman called out from behind the bar. “Noah, where is Carlos? Don’t think I don’t know my son is hiding from me!”

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“Shit...” Noah muttered.

“That’s all you,” Jackson muttered. “See you tomorrow.”

“Umm, yeah. Night, Lieutenant.”

As Noah hurried away from them, Trinity frowned up at Jackson.

He used his anger to push the lust down. “Don’t say it.”

“Say what?”

“Anything,” he growled as he pushed the door open and led them outside. “Don’t say anything at all.”

Chapter Five

Jackson pushed through the door and gulped in the fresh sea air like a man drowning. There was something about Katrina Cross that got under his skin. He opened his mouth to vent some of his anger when he felt her small hand slip into his. Shocked, he stared down at the woman who had his emotions tied in knots. Surprisingly, the tension instantly eased from his body as if it had never been, and that left him feeling even more confused.

“What the hell am I going to do with you, Katrina Cross?”

She smiled at him. “You can buy me some ice cream.”

A startled laugh slipped free. “You just ate a cheeseburger as big as your head. Now, you want ice cream?”

“What can I say, I have a sweet tooth. I saw the ice cream parlor earlier when we parked. How can I resist a place called Creamy Delights?”

Shaking his head, Jackson strolled down the street with her at a leisurely pace that was completely foreign to him. He was also acutely aware that their hands were still linked together. Thinking back over his life, he couldn’t remember the last time he’d done something as simple as holding a woman’s hand on a soft spring night.

While they had been inside the pub, the day had faded into night. Stars were scattered across the dark sky overhead, and the sounds of laughter filled the air as people enjoyed the beautiful night.

She had been right.

This was turning out to be a date.

Jackson didn’t do relationships. Sure, he had sex, but he usually kept things simple. Straight-up sex, no emotional entanglements allowed. He made damn sure the women he hooked up with knew the score before the affair began, and if and when they started to push for more, he immediately called it quits.

He liked to keep things uncomplicated, which meant no messy emotional spillage or backlash that would ruin his quiet, organized life. But as he looked back over at the gorgeous woman walking next to him, a part of him knew that he could kiss the quiet goodbye. That was if he wanted to risk getting involved with her.

Hell, who was he kidding?

Jackson was already involved with her, whether he wanted to admit it or not.

He was usually attracted to pretty women who were just on the side of submissive. He liked them quiet, polite, and uncomplicated. Katrina Cross was the exact opposite of that. He'd bet a month's pay that there wasn't a submissive bone in her entire body. She was bold, brazen, and a little brash.

And dangerous.

Damn it, the truth was she fucking fascinated him.

"What's your favorite?"

Her question startled him out of his musings. "Favorite what?"

She swung their arms playfully. "Ice cream flavor, silly."

"I don't really...I guess chocolate chip mint."

"Mmm, good choice."

He waited a few heartbeats, then asked, "What's yours?"

“Chocolate anything.”

That made him chuckle. “That’s easy enough.”

They walked down the street in the direction they’d both found parking spaces, and she pulled him to a stop in front of the ice cream parlor, Creamy Delights. The shop was owned and run by an old friend of his, Elodie Simmons.

He’d met her when she’d first moved to the island to live with her aunt, Adeline, who was the current major of the island. He and Elodie had attended school together from middle school until they had graduated high school. The pretty blonde had always been shy and kind of quiet, but she’d been coming out of her shell since she had recently started dating Noah Diaz and Carlos Sanchez.

The shop owner was heading toward the front door, presumably to flip the sign, when Trinity pushed it open. With a sigh of resignation, Jackson followed her inside.

“Elodie Simmons, this is Katrina Cross. She just arrived on the island.”

Despite the last-minute intrusion, Elodie smiled. “Nice to meet you, Katrina. Welcome to Creamy Delights.”

Trinity breathed in the scent of sugar, vanilla, and waffle cones that filled the shop. “I’m sorry to barge in on you last minute, but I have an emergency. Must have chocolate, or all men within ten feet of me might be in grave peril.”

“Well, we can’t have that, now, can we? Let’s see what we can do about your

emergency,” Elodie said with a laugh as she flipped the sign on the door, signaling the shop was closed for the night.

“Bless you,” Trinity said it with such sincerity that Elodie laughed again.

Trinity followed her back toward the counter and looked at the display case. There were several different ice cream flavors available, and she had to chuckle as she read the suggestive names given to each of the offerings like Butter Up My Pecans and French Kiss Vanilla.

“A scoop of Chocolate Bourbon Ecstasy.”

She turned her head to ask what he wanted and smiled when she saw Jackson was too busy looking at her ass to care about ice cream. She waited until his eyes met hers and was pleased when she saw the heat in his green gaze. He watched her like a predator eyeing his prey, but the poor guy didn’t understand that she was the real hunter in this game between them.

Glancing back at the display case, her lips twitched when she found the one she wanted. “And one scoop of Mint to Be Mine.”

How very appropriate.

“Two scoops?” Jackson stepped closer to her. “Do you really have room for that?”

“Don’t you know that women have a whole different stomach specifically for dessert?”

“I can attest to that,” Elodie readily agreed as she scooped up very generous servings of each ice cream flavor and put them in waffle cones that had been molded into colorful plastic cups. Trinity took both cups, then held one out to Jackson.

“I don’t want ice cream.”

“Sure, you do. Everyone likes ice cream. And this way I can try both without feeling like a total pig.”

“Ah...okay.”

“You guys can hang out in here if you want,” Elodie offered. “I’m just going to be cleaning up.”

“Thanks.”

Trinity started to protest when Jackson pulled his wallet out to pay at the counter, then shrugged it off and carried both ice cream cups over to one of the small tables set up in the front of the parlor. Since she paid for dinner earlier, it was fair that he treated her to dessert.

The shop had a retro feel to it and was decorated with pastel colors that were pleasing to the eye. As was habit, she took a seat with a view of the entrance. The shop was obviously in a good location since there was a decent amount of foot traffic walking by. There were a few disappointed faces that glanced at the ice cream parlor’s closed sign, but most of the shops in the area besides the bars and restaurants were already closed.

The ice cream parlor probably could have done brisk business if they stayed open a little later, but she knew businesses on islands ran on their own schedules. Trinity saw a tall, older woman approaching the shop carrying a purse the size of Texas, and she pushed the door open, completely disregarding the closed sign.

The woman was wearing a denim dress with a wide white belt that had a huge silver buckle in the front. Her soft gray hair was fashioned into an elegant chignon, and she

had a pair of bright red glasses hanging from a beaded lanyard around her neck.

“Hello!”

Jackson had turned at the sound of the door opening, and he nodded at the newcomer.

“Good evening, Madam Mayor.”

She scoffed as she shut the door. “Jackson, I changed your diapers. As I’ve told you a million times, I think you know me well enough to call me Addie.”

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Trinity wanted to laugh at the resigned look that settled across his face before he turned back to pay for their ice cream. Addie's sharp eyes met hers across the room. If she were made of weaker stuff, she might have squirmed under the intense scrutiny. Instead, she simply met the mayor's gaze and smiled.

"Well, now, who do we have here?" Without hesitation, Addie walked over and held her hand out. "Hello. I'm Adeline Carrington."

Trinity approved of the woman's firm grip as she shook her hand. "Katrina Cross."

"Welcome to Crescent Island, Katrina."

Whether the mayor knew enough of the locals to distinguish Trinity was a visitor or if it was simply a guess, it was on the mark. "Thank you, ma'am."

"Please, don't you start that, too. Call me Addie."

"But you never changed my diapers," Trinity quipped.

Addie threw her head back as she roared with laughter, and Jackson's lips twitched with amusement as he took a seat across the table from Trinity.

"So, what brings you to our island, Katrina?" Addie asked sweetly, her gaze bouncing between them. "Are you staying long? I must say, you two make a striking couple."

"Addie..." Jackson said in warning.

“Okay, okay, I’ll behave. I just stopped by to coerce my niece into having dinner with me. My men are bowling tonight, so I need to find something else to do to say I’m busy.” She held up one perfectly manicured hand. “If I break another damn nail like the last time they dragged me to the bowling alley, one of them will die.”

Elodie chuckled as she continued cleaning the counter. “Auntie, I don’t think you should be casually speaking about murder in front of our good lieutenant.”

“It would be justified.”

“You’re a menace, Addie,” Jackson muttered.

“Why, thank you, Lieutenant Stone.” She patted his shoulder. “Okay, I will stop interrupting your date. It’s so rare to see you out and about with a companion that I had to witness it with my own eyes, though.”

“It’s not a date,” Jackson protested automatically, but even he didn’t sound very convinced by his own words.

“Sure, it’s not,” Addie said placatingly. Then, she turned to whisper loudly to Trinity. “Don’t mind him. The poor boy never dates, so he’s forgotten how it’s done.”

Trinity flashed her a grin. “I really like you, Addie.”

“Jackson, it’s nice to see you with such a charming young woman. Don’t mess it up. Katrina, it was lovely meeting you, and I hope to see you around town. We have a lot to offer, and I’m sure you will enjoy yourself while you are here. Now, I’ll leave you two alone to enjoy your ice cream. Elodie, I’m in the mood for a margarita. How about La Cocina? I know your boyfriends are working tonight, so I won’t take no for an answer.”

“I’m always up for margaritas,” Elodie told her aunt. “But I still need to clean up and finish closing.”

“Don’t worry. I’ll head over there now, and you can join me when you are done.” She gave them all a cheerful wave, then left the shop, taking her whirlwind of energy with her.

Trinity leaned forward and whispered, “Who was that masked woman?”

He grunted in amusement, then shoved a spoonful of ice cream into his mouth.

“I’ll be in the back if you need me,” Elodie called out before disappearing into the back of the shop.

“You probably have questions,” Jackson said once he and Trinity were alone.

“Questions?” Trinity asked as she studied the chocolate treat in front of her. There were chocolate-covered nuts, caramel ribbons, and tiny pieces of chocolate cookies mixed into the rich, chocolate bourbon ice cream. There was so much good stuff packed into that one little cup that she wasn’t sure where to start.

“I’m not sure what you’ve heard about the island, but Addie mentioned her men and Elodie’s boyfriends earlier—”

“Oh, you mean the poly thing? Yeah, I heard about that.”

Lifting her spoon, she took her first taste of the ice cream. Moaning, she closed her eyes as the sugary treat sang on her tongue. The bourbon mixed with the chocolate almost made it taste like a frozen malt, and the salted caramel ribbon was the perfect compliment.

Jackson froze with his own spoon halfway to his lips at the sound of her moan. Son of a bitch, that was the sound he imagined she'd make in bed. His cock surged to life, pressing against the zipper of his jeans so he had to shift in his seat or else suffer permanent damage. When her eyes opened again, he could see they were dazed with the pleasure of the chocolate delicacy. He felt a surge of lust shoot through him like a jolt of electricity.

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He wanted to be the one to put that look on her face.

“Here.”

Jackson’s voice was a rough growl of need as he offered her his own spoon. He watched as she slowly leaned forward, never taking her eyes off his as she wrapped her lush lips around his offering. His pulse sped up as she moaned again.

Her eyelashes fluttered with the pleasure of the flavors she was experiencing, but she kept her gaze locked with his. Damn her, she was seeping into him and overwhelming his senses like the scent of vanilla and sugar in the air.

This whole damn evening had been foreplay.

Since the first moment he’d met her, she had challenged him, teased him, pushed him until he was on the edge of madness.

Hard and aching, he finally lost it as he watched her little pink tongue peek out to swipe at a stray bit of cream on her lip. He surged to his feet, taking her with him as he stalked to the door. Pulling her outside, he barely remembered to shut the door behind them as he took a cursory glance around. He dragged her into the dark alley next to the shop, away from prying eyes, and drew to a stop behind two large garbage bins.

“Jackson! I wasn’t finish with my ice cream! What are you—” Trinity argued but was cut off by a fierce snarl from him as he pushed her back against the brick wall, caging her body in with his much larger frame.

“I want you. Damn it, I shouldn’t want you like this.”

His lips crushed down on hers, voraciously feeding off of hers as he sought to sate the lust roaring through him. Instead of dulling it, the fire of desire burned brighter at the first taste of her.

The flavor of her burst on his tongue as he shoved inside her mouth, stroking and dueling with hers. She tasted of chocolate and mint with a hint of some addictive natural flavor that he knew was all her. Unable to help himself he shoved against her, rubbing his jean-covered engorged cock into the apex of her thigh.

He let out another growl of need and jerked her up, both of his hands cupping that perfect ass of hers. Feeling those long legs wrap around his waist, he began rocking his hips against her, driving them both crazy with need.

But it wasn’t enough.

He needed more.

He wanted to pull her shirt off and feast on her bare breasts like a ravenous beast. He needed to feel her tight little pussy clasped around his cock so damn bad he was close to ripping off her jeans and taking her right there.

Christ, what was he doing?

This was crazy.

They were in a fucking alley, and he was acting like a randy schoolboy letting his libido rule his judgment. He tore his mouth away from hers, gasping for breath. Bracing his forehead against hers, he struggled to regain some semblance of control.

Only she wasn't helping...at all.

Trinity had practically soaked her jeans as soon as he'd shoved her up against the wall. God, she loved a man with moves. When he pulled back, she gave no quarter, knowing if she gave him time to think that would be the end of this hot little display of caveman antics.

Reaching between them she quickly undid his belt, unbuckled his jeans, and shoved her hand into his beneath his boxers to grab hold of his thick cock, swirling her thumb over the head leaking with pre-cum.

"Sweet Jesus, Jackson. How the hell do you pack this thing away in your jeans? You're fucking huge!"

"Fuck!" He let out a laugh, then he groaned in pleasure. "We can't do this here."

"Why not?" she asked, nipping at his lower lip. "There's no one here. People can't see us from the street. God, you're big. So hot and hard. I want this inside of me."

He took her lips in another scorching kiss as she used her legs to help shove his jeans down over his hips, the weight of his gun on his belt helping them to slide lower. "Katrina..."

"I want you, Jackson. Right here, right now."

Breathing hard, Jackson tried to reengage his brain. He couldn't fucking think with her small hand wrapped around his cock. "God, I want you, too. But I don't have anything with me to protect you. I just had my mandatory checkup two weeks ago and I'm clean. I haven't been with anyone since, but—"

Her hand had paused mid-stroke, but she began moving her hand up and down his

thick cock again. “I’m on medical leave for an injury I sustained a month ago and I’m on the shot. I checked out clean and I haven’t had sex in months. I’m protected.”

Jackson’s breath hissed out as his cock jerked in her hand at what she was saying. He’d never fucked without a rubber before, and he was tempted, truly tempted for the first time.

It wasn’t smart. He knew that.

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He'd just met this woman, but he wanted her with a vengeance that stole his breath and made his heart pound, not to mention his dick. Before he could really think about it, he found himself pushing her legs down so she was back on her own two feet. He paused for a heartbeat, then he ripped at the zipper of her jeans.

Wild elation filled Trinity as Jackson went to work on her clothes. His face was set in with such determination that he looked like a warrior preparing for battle. If it was a battle he wanted, it was a battle he was going to get. But their sensual clash of wills would only lead to both of them ending up victors.

They were in an alley, only steps away from the people strolling on the sidewalk who were enjoying the night air, but she didn't give a damn. It was so deliciously naughty, and the thought of getting caught only turned her on even more.

She yanked the gun out of the back of her jeans a second before he pulled them down past her hips. She slapped her weapon on the top of the garbage bin next to her so it was still within reach, and started to turn around to face the wall, only to have Jackson stop her.

"No. I want to see you. If we're going to do this, I want to watch you come while I'm inside you."

His voice was a low rumble of sound that sent a shiver racing through her entire body. Trinity toed off one of her shoes and shoved her jeans and panties down off that leg. With a small jump she was back in his arms, their mouths fused together, her legs wrapped around his waist again.

“Then do it. Come inside of me, Jackson. I want to feel you.”

He cursed as she positioned herself over the bulbous head of his cock and pushed down, sliding the thick shaft into her hot, wet pussy. He was so hard it was like seating herself on a spear. Her head fell back against the wall as she let out a low moan, relishing in the exquisite feeling of her muscles parting to let him inside her.

“God, you’re so fucking tight!”

He let out a low moan that brought a smile to her lips. She wanted to slam herself down on his massive cock and ride him until they were both found their release, but he was just too damn big.

She felt his hands gripping her ass as he began pumping himself inside of her using a slow, measured rhythm. He pushed in a little, then pulled out again, each time gaining more depth into her tight sheath. She lowered her mouth to his neck and licked at the skin above the collar of his shirt, then bit down lightly. She hissed in pleasure as he shoved hard, spearing her completely on his thick cock until he was balls deep.

“You okay?” he panted out.

“Oh, yeah. Give me more, Jackson.”

She ran a hand over the shorn head and leaned back to stare into his eyes. They were partially hidden by the darkness in the alley, but enough dim light reached them from the streetlights to allow them to see one another.

Jackson’s hips pulled back, then he pushed forward again, never looking away from her. There was something about his intense gaze that made her feel exposed. Like he could see more of her than she normally allowed people to see. Pushing those troubling thoughts aside, she flexed the muscles of her pussy on his invading cock

and was rewarded with a low growl from him.

“Give it to me, Jackson. Give me your big cock. Pound me into the wall.”

“Jesus Christ! The mouth on you...”

“You like it.”

“Fuck, yeah, I do.”

Jackson’s hands dug into her ass, holding her in a bruising grip as he did exactly as she’d asked. Fusing his mouth to hers, he began pounding into her with a hard, punishing rhythm. His thick shaft rubbed against the sensitive walls of her pussy and his pelvis hit her clit with every thrust, making her moan with pleasure.

“More, more...” she demanded as he continued to thrust inside her.

She tightened her grip around his neck and began rocking her hips to meet his. The sound of their flesh slapping together thrilled her, adding to her sensory overload. They were two shadows, moving as one in the darkness. The ecstasy they chased waited just out of reach, and as they drew closer, she felt like a stick of dynamite that was about to explode.

Her eyes drifted closed as she gave into the pleasure, simply wanting to feel.

“No,” he hissed out. “Look at me. Keep your eyes on me, baby. I want to see what I do to you, how I make you feel.”

“So good,” she moaned. “You make me feel so fucking good.”

Her back scraped against the wall as he continued to pummel her with the full force

of his strong body, but she didn't care. That bite of pain only added to her pleasure.

"This is what you get, Katrina. Pushing me, teasing me. Naughty girls get fucked, hard and fast. Hold on, baby."

His nostrils flared and his jaw clenched as he jerked his hips faster. He increased the tempo of his thrusts to a hard, driving beat. Her swollen clit was hard and aching, and she felt her body tighten with her impending release.

"Harder, Jackson. Make me come. Fuck me harder, and I'm going to come all over your big cock."

"Do it," he commanded. "Come, baby. Let me feel you clench around me."

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She gasped as the pressure increased until it was too much to contain. When she finally exploded, her pussy clenched down hard on his pistoning shaft.

“Oh god, oh god...” she chanted as she shook with the pulsing waves of her climax.

Jackson watched her face as the ecstasy tore through her. He had never seen anything more beautiful, and that was enough to send him spiraling toward his own release. He thrust once, twice more, then buried his face into the crook of her neck. He bit down on her shoulder to muffle his loud groan, hips jerking as he spilled himself inside her.

A door opening in the alley had Trinity reaching for her gun. She held it down out of sight as she saw Elodie come into view, highlighted by the lights from inside the shop.

Jackson let out a vicious curse as the light spilled out, exposing where they'd been concealed in the dark alley. Elodie's mouth fell open as she stood frozen in the doorway with a bag of garbage in her hand.

“Oh, shit! Sorry...I, umm, I'll just...later.” She spun around and slammed the door shut, once again leaving them hidden in the shadows.

Trinity couldn't help it. She burst out laughing at the horrified look on Jackson's face.

“You think this is funny?” he asked, incredulously.

“Yeah. I do.”

“Well, I don’t.”

“Jesus, Jackson. Don’t worry. The jeans on my ankle were covering your ass if you’re worried she saw anything.” She sobered as she realized that he really was angry.

“That doesn’t change the fact that she knows what we were doing. That’s my goddamn boss’s niece. How the hell am I going to explain this? I’m a cop, for Christ’s sake. I have a reputation to protect, and you’re—”

“You’re going to want to be very careful finishing that sentence,” she warned softly.

She lowered her legs from around his waist so she was once again standing on her own two feet. She pushed him back a step so his semi-hard cock slid from her pussy, followed by a trail of his cum.

“Who I am is the woman who has your cum dripping down her leg.”

“Jesus, Katrina.”

“What? You can do it, but can’t talk about it?”

“I didn’t mean it like that.” He paused. “Aren’t you worried she saw us?”

“Actually, no I wasn’t. Not until you freaked out, that is.”

“I didn’t freak,” he snapped as he pulled his jeans back up and buttoned them.

He sounded insulted, but that was too damn bad.

She was insulted, too.

Trinity reached down and pulled her panties and jeans back up her legs. She slid her shoe back on as she fastened her jeans. Silently, she picked her gun up off the bin and slid it back into place in the waistband at the small of her back. Disappointment flooded her. He had just taken a very erotic experience and left her feeling cold and slightly regretful.

That in itself would have been enough to piss her off, but the pang of hurt he had also caused was something she had never experienced before. Since she didn't know what to do with the feelings careening inside of her, she chose to retreat until she could get a better handle on her emotions.

Finally, she looked at him, her face void of expression. "Obviously, this was a mistake."

"I didn't say that."

"You didn't have to."

Jackson rubbed a hand over his head. "Look, I'm sorry. This isn't the way I wanted this to go."

"Clearly. You started this. You pulled me back here, so if your virginal sensibilities are all atwitter now, get over it."

"Katrina, you are taking everything I say the wrong way."

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She held up a hand to stop him from saying any more. And to stop herself from punching him in his fucking face. Since that wouldn't be fair of her simply because she was hurting, the restraint was necessary. That didn't mean he got to walk away without taking some of the blame.

“I've never done something like this before, Jackson. It was wild and exciting, and I loved it, until you ruined it. So, maybe we should just leave it as an experience for us to remember and go our separate ways.”

His brows furrowed in frustration. “I'm not done with you, Katrina.”

“Well, I'm done for now. Call me when you get your head out of your ass.” She walked a few steps, then turned to glance over her shoulder at him. “You know, for a guy that lives on an island known for its kinky shit, you seem to have some very rigid rules you follow. Be careful, or it just might end up biting you in the ass.”

With that, she turned and walked out into the night, leaving him behind.

Chapter Six

Trinity sighed in contentment as she leaned back in the lounge chair on the deck of her suite, propping her feet up on another chair as she enjoyed the view of the setting sun. As the fiery ball began to disappear into the sparkling water, it cast a brilliant display of vibrant colors shooting across the sky.

Despite the relaxing setting, troubling thoughts invaded her mind. It had been three days since she'd last seen Jackson. Though she had just met him, she'd felt an

inextricable connection with him. She had thought they had started something exciting and special, but apparently, she'd been wrong since she hadn't heard from him since she'd walked out of that alley.

Three days equaled three strikes in her book.

So, clearly, they were done.

She had driven back to the resort after leaving him behind in the alley and had taken a hot shower, cleansing his scent and seed from her body. She only wished it was that easy to simply wipe him from her mind. Before crawling into bed, she'd left the light in the bathroom on so she wouldn't wake in the dark.

That was something she'd started doing ever since her last mission. At first, she'd had to leave every light in her bedroom on just to be able to close her eyes without panicking, but she had gradually reduced it to a nightlight. It was a weakness she was working on completely breaking a habit of, but she wasn't sure if or when that would actually happen.

When she'd woken the morning after her interlude with Jackson, her shitty mood from the night before had followed her into the daylight. Determined to shake it off, she had put on her bikini and made her way down to the beach where she had spent most of the day soaking in the rays and turning her skin an eye-catching deep, golden bronze.

The resort catered to the wealthy and famous, so she wasn't surprised to see a few well-known actors and other celebrities enjoying the beach along with her. She had garnered her share of attention from men of all ages, both single and married. She had been asked out for drinks by a beautiful woman with striking red hair and had even gotten a dinner invitation from a lesser member of the Saudi Arabian royal family.

Alas, none of them had interested her, so she'd had to pass. Amusing herself with a little light flirting at the hotel bar had helped pass the time, but she had gone back to her suite alone.

When she arrived back in her room, she'd taken a hot shower, then indulged in a nap. After she'd woken, she checked her secured email to find that Tara had sent all the files on the original construction of the Palace Resort and Spa along with all the updated files on the new construction site that she'd requested. She had rolled her eyes when she noted that Tara had also attached a file on Jackson Stone.

Leave it to T-rex. She was better than a Google search.

Unable to help herself, Trinity had read the file on Jackson first. He had grown up on the island in an alternative household with his mother and two fathers, then he'd joined the army once he had turned eighteen.

The file included information on his time in the military and about his years on the Crescent Island Police Force. What she'd surmised from the information in his file was that he was a good cop with an almost spotless record. Normally, that would have made her suspicious, but since he was such a tight ass about the rules, she figured that was simply due to his dedication to his work.

He had an eye for detail and a meticulous nature that ensured he closed cases and saw that justice was served.

She noted that the men and women under his command seemed to slightly fear him, even though they deeply respected him. From everything she read about him, she surmised that Jackson was a decent man, a dedicated cop, and had very little personal life. It didn't surprise her, since he seemed to suck at relationships.

Not that she was an expert.

When she was done reading the file, she closed it and moved on to look at the information on the two different construction projects. Halfway through the information, she took a quick break and ordered room service from the resort's main restaurant, Sinful, and was unsurprised when the food had been excellent. After several more hours of work, she decided to sleep on the data she had gathered to see if the puzzle pieces of information fit themselves together overnight.

The next day, she continued studying all of the construction materials. To help her sort out her thoughts, she connected her laptop to the printer in the office located in the suite and printed out several key documents. Back in the living room, she had taped up several papers so she could compare them side by side.

She'd gone to bed with sorrow in her heart when she hadn't heard from Jackson. Determined to forget about him, she had gone to sleep early. She'd tossed and turned for a few hours then gotten up to take a swim in her private pool to work off the annoyance she was feeling. She swam laps until she was completely exhausted, took another shower, then fell into bed.

But thoughts of Jackson had followed her into her dreams.

When she woke, she was shocked that half the day was already gone. Once again, she ordered room service and got back to work. After several more hours, she finally found what she was looking for. Now, she had a basic idea of what was going on with the new construction site, but she would need to take a closer look to make sure she was right.

If she was right, it was going to take some more digging to figure out exactly what the problem was and who was involved. Deciding that could wait until tomorrow, she took a swim in the pool, then placed another order with room service. She promised herself that she would quit hiding out in her hotel room and go enjoy herself on the island the following day.

The sun had almost faded into the horizon when she heard her phone signal. From the specific tone, she knew that it was the alarm she had rigged on the entrance to her suite. It was too soon for room service, and they wouldn't come in without knocking anyway.

No, this was someone entering without permission.

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Unconcerned that she was sitting there naked, she picked up the gun she'd left on the patio table, swiveled around in her chair, and trained her weapon at the front door of the suite through the opened balcony door. She silently watched as a man in a suit walked through the door. Since he was cast in shadows, she couldn't see him very clearly. Chastising herself for not leaving the entrance hallway light on, she made a mental note to do so in the future.

“You might as well come out here,” Trinity called out conversationally.

He froze as soon as she'd spoken. His gaze shot toward the balcony as the front door closed quietly behind him so he was trapped inside the suite with her.

That was his mistake.

“If you try to run now, I'm just going to shoot you in the leg.”

His face had turned to stone at the threat, but his expression shifted again and he blinked in surprise when he noticed that she was sitting there naked. She could feel the heat of his gaze moving over her body. Obviously, he wasn't an operator or an assassin. Or at least he wasn't a very good one if he let himself be distracted by a pair of naked tits instead of focusing on the weapon trained on him.

He released the handle of his large suitcase and cautiously moved forward, crossing the room as he made his way toward the balcony door. He held his hands out, arms spread to show he wasn't holding anything, but that didn't change the fact that he had trespassed into her domain.

He'd better have a damn good reason for it before she let him go unscathed.

"I'm unarmed."

She could hear the slight British accent coloring his deep voice. Boy, did she love a good accent. As he stepped out onto the balcony, she got her first good look at him. His handsome face bathed in the light from the setting sun was truly a spectacular view...and familiar.

So, this was Maxwell King, her friend Julian's little brother.

Only, he wasn't so little.

Around six-one with short, stylish, dark-blond hair and the thick build of a man with some serious muscle, Maxwell was gorgeous. There was no doubt about that, but he knew it, too. She assumed at first glance that he was around her age, give or take a few years. He looked slightly different than the pictures she'd seen of him, but there was no mistaking those brilliant sapphire blue eyes.

She had read up on the entire King family on her way to the island. IAD had comprehensive files on them from previous dealings and since Tara had gotten engaged to Julian. Maxwell King's main home was in London, but he spent a lot of time traveling between all the European hotels within the Palace Hotel network as well as several of their US properties on the East Coast.

The epitome of the corporate shark, he was handsome, wealthy, and pretty damn ruthless. While he was known as a popular playboy who was often photographed at events with models, singers, and other female celebrities, the actual details about his life were mostly kept private. She'd spent some time scrolling through his feeds during the flight to the island to get a better sense of him, but all of his posts were work-related and crafted to draw attention toward the Palace Hotel brand.

Dressed in a bespoke suit, Maxwell did not look like a man on vacation. He seemed like a man on a mission. From the information she had read earlier, Trinity knew that the Palace Resort and Spa on Crescent Island was his personal pet project, and he was obviously there to find out what the hell was going on with the build.

She felt her nipples tighten as his gaze strayed down to her bare breasts, then lower to her crossed legs. It was a shame she hadn't met him before she had bumped into Jackson. Already burned once during her little pseudo-vacation, she wasn't about to jump back into the fire. And certainly not with someone like Maxwell King, no matter how his heated gaze stirred her blood.

Talk about an awkward first meeting.

"What are you doing in my suite?"

He raised an arrogant brow. "Actually, this is my suite. Of course, I'm not going to complain about having a beautiful woman greet me naked upon my arrival. However, I would be a whole lot happier without having a gun pointed at me."

She wasn't letting him off the hook that easily. Gesturing toward a chair with her gun, she said, "Have a seat, Max."

Those sapphire eyes frosted over as he slowly sat down across the table from her, his backbone ramrod straight. "So, you know who I am," he said, his voice clipped with controlled fury. "The name is Maxwell, not Max. What do you want? Money?"

"Actually, I'm here doing you a favor, Max," she said, stressing the nickname just to piss him off again. "So, get over yourself, hotshot. You know Tara Toshi, right?"

If it was possible, Maxwell's body tensed even more. "If you're here looking for information on my sister, you can bugger off. I won't tell you anything."

She cocked her head to the side as she studied his handsome face. He looked at her with cold indifference now, but there was no mistaking the seething fury in his tone or the anger lighting his eyes to blue flames. Damn, that simple statement made her like him a whole lot. Loyalty. He had it in spades. She believed if she'd been here for nefarious reasons, Maxwell would have protected her friend, even if it meant his death.

“She’s not your sister...yet.”

“Semantics.”

She finally smiled at him, lowering her weapon. “Damn good answer. But what I meant was Tara and Julian asked me to come here.”

“You could have bloody well said that to begin with,” he said blandly, but there was relief in his gaze.

“True, but this was more fun, and you kind of deserved it after walking in on me.”

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She set the gun down on the table out of his reach and leaned over to pick up her robe from where it was draped over the back of another chair.

“You don’t have to put on that robe on my account.” His voice lowered to a seductive murmur. “I am thoroughly appreciating the view.”

“You’re a funny guy, Max,” she said as she put the robe on without getting up. She was all right with flashing a little boob to a stranger, but she’d rather not give him full frontal if she could help it. “My initial question is still valid, though. What are you doing in my suite?”

He sighed and leaned back in his chair, more relaxed now. “It’s the owner’s suite. Being the owner and all, this is still my suite, love.”

She shrugged. “This is where Julian and Tara put me for the duration of my stay. I’m Katrina Cross, by the way. You can call me Trinity. I work with Tara, so you can contact her to verify. You’re welcome to the other bedroom, or you can find somewhere else to stay, but I’m not moving. I’m having a love affair with this place, and I’m not giving it up.”

His brows furrowed in surprise “You...don’t mind if I stay here with you?”

Sexual hunger fired to life in his eyes, causing a responding flutter to stir in her belly that she ruthlessly ignored. Damn it, had something in the water down there turned her into a sex-starved maniac? Or was this simply a sign that she needed to date more? Either way, she needed to get her hormones in check.

“Not at all,” she told him. “I’m offering you a room to sleep in, not a blow job. As long as you remember I sleep with a gun next to my bed, we’re all good. Besides, this might make more sense since I think I’m here for the same reason you are.”

“And that would be?”

“You’re totally getting screwed on your new renovation.”

“Bloody hell, I knew it!” He slapped his hand down on the table, rattling her gun and phone.

“Relax. I’m here to help you figure out what’s going on.” She paused as the doorbell to the suite sounded. “That should be room service.”

Maxwell frowned as he stood and gestured for her to stay where she was. “You are not answering the door wearing a robe. I’ll get it.”

After issuing the command, he strode back into the suite, missing the way she rolled her eyes at him. She approved when he stopped to check the monitor by the door before opening it. When her cell phone rang, she glanced at the display and smiled when she saw a name pop up on screen that she hadn’t seen in a while.

Nikita “Flame” Nuria had been one of the best agents Trinity had ever worked with, but even she had started to worry that her friend had become too desensitized to everything. Sure, every agent had to learn how to compartmentalize. Seeing what they did and doing the things that they were required to do meant they couldn’t get emotional over things like normal people, but retaining some humanity was essential.

However, Nikita had been different.

Trinity had jokingly called her friend a sociopath a few times in the past, but she

understood that in reality she really wasn't too far off the mark. That wasn't necessarily a bad thing, though. At least, not to her. She found Nikita's blunt way of speaking refreshing, though not everyone could handle that kind of brutal honesty.

Since Nikita had officially retired, she was now on the periphery of the agency, but Trinity knew that no IAD agent ever truly left the life completely. The only way to do that was if they stopped breathing.

She answered the call, but before she could say anything, Nikita said, "You got shot again. What are you, a fucking bullet magnet?"

"It was only a graze this time," Trinity clarified. "But I did get stabbed a few times, and that definitely fucking sucked."

"At least they didn't hit anything vital, or you wouldn't be answering my call."

She wanted to chuckle at her friend's casual tone but held it in. Leave it to Nikita to make getting stabbed sound trivial. "So, I heard hell froze over. Did you really get married?"

"Yeah, that happened."

Trinity laughed at her impassive tone. "Congrats and all that. I'll send a gift soon since I didn't get to attend the wedding."

"I only found out about the damn wedding right before it happened," Nikita explained. "I think Ash figured there was a better chance I'd say yes if he rushed me into it."

As the owner of Rough & Tough Sports Apparel and Equipment, Ashton Marks was known for being a smart, innovative businessman. Running a corporate empire was

undoubtedly notable, but it was even more impressive that he'd managed to convince Nikita to marry him.

"I'd say your new hubby must be a very astute man."

"He's certainly something," Nikita muttered. "Anyway, getting to the point of my call. Sin contacted me a few days ago about possibly running a training facility here in Breakers. Since I heard you are considering retirement, I wanted to talk to you about possibly coming down here to help me run things. That is, if I decide to do it."

Sinclair "Sin" Hamilton was one of the commanders in charge of coordinating all of the different IAD agency branches around the world. He was mainly responsible for the divisions in America, though he seemed to pop up everywhere, especially if there was trouble brewing in the area.

Normally, if Sin wanted something, he wouldn't stop until he got it. However, that kind of pressure didn't work on someone like Nikita. Still, if she was reaching out to Trinity, her friend was most likely already planning on moving ahead with the plan to run the new IAD training facility.

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“I’m intrigued. Tell me more.”

“There isn’t much to tell since I’m still floating the idea around.”

She was glad her friend couldn’t see her roll her eyes at that. “You’ve already decided to do it, whether you want to admit it or not. I think it’s a solid idea. Even if I don’t retire, I still want in. I can travel to Breakers between assignments, or plan to be there for a few months here or there whenever I can clear my schedule.”

Trinity watched Maxwell lock the door after retrieving the cart of food from room service. He’d spent a few minutes talking and laughing with the delivery person, making it clear that he knew whoever had come to the door. Since she had also ordered several bottles of water, beer, soda, and other drinks to replenish what she’d used from the stocked fridge over the last few days, they’d brought a loaded cart instead of a simple tray.

Pushing the cart through the living room, he left it near the open kitchen. He lifted a large tray with a covered plate, an ice bucket, and two stemless flutes on it from the top of the cart and carried it out to the balcony.

“Why the bloody hell did you—?”

He stopped talking when he noticed that she was on the phone. Setting the tray down on the table, he silently began to open the bottle of champagne she’d ordered.

“Actually, that might work better. Have a bunch of different agents come down on rotation to teach their own specialties. Although, I told Sin I don’t want to deal with

new recruits since I might kill one of them if they get on my nerves.”

“The new recruits are the ones who need the training the most,” Trinity pointed out.

“Fucking hell,” Nikita muttered, then she let out a resigned sigh. “I guess you’re right. Anyway, I was considering making this sort of a retreat for active agents as well as a training facility. You know, somewhere quiet and secure people can come to if they need to get away for a little while. A friend of mine runs a boarding house for veterans and people doing rehab here in town, which gave me the idea.”

“I like it. It’s a good location since it’s almost in the middle of nowhere. No offense.”

Chuckling, Nikita said, “It’s all right. It is pretty off the grid which is one of the reasons why I live here. I think it would be ideal for anyone needing a little peace and quiet. It would also come in handy to have a location down here with an official stockpile of weapons and other equipment agents in the area might need.”

“That’s an excellent point. Speaking of, I know you probably already have a shit ton of weapons stashed away because, well, you’re you. I might need to make a quick trip over to borrow some things since I’m close by.”

That earned a sharp-eyed look from Maxwell that she chose to ignore. She gifted him with a grateful smile when he offered her a flute of bubbly liquid, and she lifted the glass in a silent toast before taking a sip.

“Where the hell are you? Aren’t you still on medical leave? Don’t you have an off button?”

“I’m on an island off the coast of Florida called Crescent Island.”

“Fantasy Island would be a more accurate name for that place,” Nikita said with a

snort of laughter. “I’ve never been there, but I’ve heard enough crazy shit about that place to be curious. It doesn’t sound like you’re down there for fun, though.”

Trinity considered how much to share, then simply said, “I’m doing T-rex a favor.”

“Aw, hell. Those can get you killed.”

She snorted out a laugh. “Don’t I know it.”

“You need backup?”

That simple offer made Trinity’s heart swell with pride. It was one of the reasons she loved being an IAD agent so much. They might have been a hardcore group of badass that were scary as fuck, but they were also damn loyal and would do anything to help one another.

“I think I’ve got it for now. It’s not an official mission, but I will let you know if I need anything.”

“Send me the details just in case.”

Before she could respond, Nikita ended the call.

While that amused Trinity, it wasn’t unexpected. Now, she just hoped she wouldn’t actually have to call in for help because the last time she and Nikita had worked together, a lot of shit had blown up and they’d almost died. Luckily, they had survived so it had been worth a little destruction of property.

Thinking it over, she decided it might actually be good if Nikita decided to join her on the island. It would be fun for her, and a nightmare for everyone else.

And that would definitely be entertaining as hell.

Chapter Seven

Trinity started to put the phone down, but it rang in her hand. She was just going to send it to voicemail, but Maxwell waved her to it as he headed back inside.

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Curious, she watched as he started restocking the fridge with the drinks from the cart. He was either being considerate and giving her some privacy to speak to whoever was calling, or he was a little OCD and needed to put the drinks away because he couldn't help himself. Either way, the space was appreciated even if it wasn't necessary.

Watching him do such a mundane task shouldn't have turned her on, but strangely, it did. Knowing who he was and the money and power he wielded, it seemed odd to see him acting so domesticated.

She liked it...a lot.

And that was completely unexpected.

It had never been something she'd cared about before, but she guessed Maxwell was an anomaly. Damn, she would probably have a heart attack if he ever cooked her breakfast wearing an apron. Just thinking about that made her temperature rise. Pushing those pervy thoughts aside, she gulped down some champagne as she glanced down at her phone.

Smiling, she answered the call. "Hey."

"Trinity, my love! I heard someone tried to run you off the road the other day. Tell me what funeral parlor to send the fucker's flowers to."

She laughed at Anthony Moretti's words. Her friend had a twisted sense of humor similar to her own. "Unfortunately, the fucker got away."

“That’s...surprising.”

“What can I say? I’m a little off my game since I’m supposed to be on fucking vacation. I wasn’t expecting someone would try to kill me on my first day here,” she admitted dryly.

“You need some company down there? I can rub lotion on your back for you.”

She was used to his harmless flirting and was usually game to return the banter, but she seemed to be lacking witty retorts at the moment. “Keep your imaginary hands to yourself.”

“And another dream dies,” Tony joked. “I just got back to Chicago and was planning on convincing you to go to Buffalo Joe’s with me for some wings when I heard you’d left town. How’s the weather down there? It’s gloomy and raining here.”

“It’s beautiful here. And damn it, now, I want some wings. I swear, that sauce is freaking addicting. What are you doing back in Chicago already? I thought you were planning on staying in Colorado for a few more weeks to help Lynx get the new medical center and training facility up and running.”

“The construction was completed ahead of schedule, so we were able to finish the tech upgrades early. She’s got enough help so I didn’t need to stay. Besides, hanging around the med center was starting to give me the creeps, especially with the two docs constantly talking about drug research and testing phases.”

Chuckling, she said, “That’s why I checked my ass out of there as fast as I could. I swear, just hanging out in any medical facility makes me feel like I’m jinxing myself.”

“Yeah, would you fucking stop getting shot and stabbed? You’re making us worry

about you.”

“I’ll certainly try.”

When Maxwell came to the doorway again, he hesitated, but Trinity gestured for him to come back outside. Before he stepped out, he pressed a button and the double sconces on the balcony wall shot beams of light in two directions. He poured himself a glass of champagne and took a seat across the table from her.

She shot him a smile before turning away to watch as the last bit of sun disappeared into the water. The moon wasn’t visible yet, but the dark sky overhead lit up with a blanket of tiny stars.

“Oh, get this. I just heard from Flame, and Sin asked her to set up a training facility down in Breakers, Texas,” she told Tony.

“No shit? Did she agree?”

“I know she’s interested. If she decides to do it, it’s probably going to end up being more of a retreat than an actual training center since she doesn’t have the patience to deal with new recruits. But it’s still a good idea.”

“Yeah, it is. She trying to recruit you?”

“She asked, but nothing is confirmed.”

“If you need my help, just let me know,” he offered. Since computers and tech were Tony’s specialty, he would definitely come in handy.

“Will do. I’m cutting this short since my food is getting cold. Later.”

“Hey! Take some pictures in your bikini for us back in Chicago.”

She laughed. “I’m hanging up now, perv.”

Maxwell King leaned back and sipped his glass of champagne as he stared at the intriguing woman across the table from him. After the day he’d had, he could have used a stiff glass of whiskey, but apparently, it was ladies’ choice this evening. He tried to give her a little privacy to finish her call, but like a siren’s call, he’d been lured back out to the balcony.

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Surprise didn't even begin to describe what he'd been feeling when he'd walked into the suite. He'd been prepared to head straight to bed as soon as he'd gotten there, but Katrina Cross had changed that. She had shown no nerves as she'd sat there naked, holding a gun trained on him. At first, he'd thought he was imagining her due to sleep deprivation, and it had taken him several seconds to understand she was really there and threatening him.

Earlier this morning, he'd been in Morocco, handling a sensitive negotiation for a poker tournament that was going to be hosted at their casino in the fall. He never had a doubt that he would close the deal. It had only been a matter of time until he got what he wanted.

He usually did.

Hopping in his jet minutes after the negotiations concluded, he'd made the trip to Crescent Island, working on several other business matters during the long flight. The expansion problem at the Palace Resort and Spa infuriated him. The resort was smaller than a lot of his family's other hotels, but it was special to him. The secluded island was the place he came to when he needed to get away from everything and everyone. Not even his family knew that it was his preferred retreat.

Because of that, he took whatever problems were happening there personally.

When Julian had gotten engaged to Tara Toshi, Maxwell had done his homework on the new woman in his brother's life. It had taken calling in some serious favors with some very well-connected individuals to discover information on Tara and who she worked for. It didn't surprise him that it had taken a ball-busting secret agent to

change his brother's mind on matrimony.

In that respect, Maxwell and Julian were a lot alike. It would take someone very special to bring him to his knees. And how very interesting that a woman similar to the one who had captured his brother's heart would be sharing his suite with him.

He knew he had a reputation for being a player, but the truth was he had a very difficult time finding a woman who held his interest for longer than a few dates. He knew it was his own fault for having impossibly high standards. He enjoyed puzzles, the subtleties of depth and layers that made up a person's character. Unfortunately, most of the women he dated were as transparent as glass or they couldn't hold a stimulating conversation for more than a few minutes.

It didn't bother him since he was far too busy to put the time in that was needed to cultivate a real relationship anyway. At least, that was what he had thought before he'd walked into his suite to see a naked beauty pointing a gun at him. Suddenly, he realized he'd make time for a fascinating woman.

While he waited for her to finish her phone call, he'd shot off a quick text to his brother Julian. He got confirmation back that he and his fiancée had asked Trinity to come check out the situation on the island. Satisfied with the answer, he'd been content just watching the fascinating woman before him. He had a feeling that he could spend years trying to figure Trinity out and still be left guessing.

Trinity's body was exceptional, but her face was truly a masterpiece. She might look like a goddess with lush lips, high cheekbones, and her long brown hair spilling down past her shoulders, though her sharp hazel eyes were all agent. Even when she smiled, those eyes still gave away how dangerous she was.

When she set her phone down on the table and pulled the cover off the plate she had ordered, he grimaced. "What in the world is that?"

“It’s homemade potato chips with blue cheese and chives.”

“That’s...disgusting.”

She chuckled. “Don’t knock it until you try it. Go on.”

He was going to refuse until she lifted a brow in challenge. Reaching out, he cautiously selected a single chip. After tasting it, he had to admit it wasn’t as vile as he’d feared, but it still wasn’t something that he’d put on his top ten list.

“This isn’t on our menu at Sinful or even at the Lagoon, our casual dining restaurant.”

“It should be,” Trinity said around a mouthful. She finished chewing, then took a sip of her champagne. “Your staff at Sinful love me. I went down to the kitchen to gush a few days ago, and now, they make me whatever I want.”

Maxwell couldn’t blame his chefs. If she flashed her smile, there was very little any man would deny her. Truthfully, he was a little worried he was going to have to add himself to that list.

“This isn’t a suitable dinner.”

His pulse quickened when she shrugged and the robe slightly parted, one side falling down to expose her shoulder. Just imagining seeing all of her beautiful golden skin unveiled again had his cock surging to life...again. He’d hoped like hell that she hadn’t noticed the erection that had been straining his pants when he had first walked out on the balcony. Unfortunately, he was pretty sure there was very little that she missed.

She had looked damn gorgeous and dangerous.

A very deadly, alluring combination.

“I was treating myself to something sinful after a day of studying blueprints, papers, and financial fuckwhats.”

“The what? Never mind.” He glanced down at the plate skeptically. “That’s considered a treat?”

“Hey, I love this stuff. Homemade chips are always good. Plus, the champagne. I love champagne. It makes me happy.”

“Then I’ll make sure you have it every day you’re here with me.”

She shot him a sexy grin. “You’re just imagining getting me tipsy so I’ll sleep with you. Although I’m sure the sex would be great, I’m not looking for a hookup. I’m here to help you figure out what’s going on with your hotel expansion and to enjoy a little vacation. We’re connected through friends and family, and I don’t want to worry about seeing you again after I leave here. That kind of shit can get really awkward.”

He studied her as she went back to eating, surprised that she’d been so direct. Unfortunately, her words did nothing to cool his ardor. In fact, it made him want her even more. Content to back off a bit until he could gauge the battlefield better, he pulled out his cell phone and scrolled through the numbers.

“What are you doing?”

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He simply smiled and waited for the other end to pick up. “George? Yes, I’m upstairs in the suite. I’d like dinner for two sent up as soon as possible. The filet mignon with sautéed spinach and twice-baked potatoes. And two slices of the key lime pie. Add in another bottle of champagne.” He paused for a moment, then smiled ruefully. “She is still here. Yes, she is lovely. Thank you.”

Trinity mouthed the words, “See? They love me.”

Maxwell hung up the phone and placed it on the table. “There. We can have a real meal after you finish your appetizer.”

She studied him for a long moment. “Are you taking care of me, Max?”

He certainly was, but there was no way in hell he was going to tell her that.

Chapter Eight

Trinity was caught off guard by the warm gesture. She was used to her friends caring about her, but Maxwell King was a stranger. She eyed him suspiciously, trying to figure out exactly what his game was.

Smiling, he said, “As you said, we’re connected through friends and family. I’d like to have dinner with you and get to know you better.”

She rolled her eyes as she continued eating. If he wanted to keep her company, she was fine with that. Besides, that meant she could have a little fun. She held back a grin when he groaned softly as she sucked some cheese off of one of her fingers.

Then, she did it again with another finger, sucking slowly.

He cleared his throat. “May I ask you a question?”

“Fire away.”

“I heard you mention Breakers. Are you really considering moving to Texas?”

“I might be spending a few months there off and on.”

“We just opened a new hotel in the neighboring town, Ever After.”

“I heard about that,” she said. “I’ve never been down there, but some of my friends recently attended a wedding at your new hotel.”

“Jared Caufield and Kali Redford’s wedding, right?” After she nodded, he said, “I heard it was a blast. Technically, I’m still in charge of the property there, but my sister, Rachel, is managing it right now. She recently graduated, so we’re still supervising before we let her take over a few of the properties on her own. So, who do you know who lives in Breakers?”

She eyed him for a heartbeat or two, trying to figure out if he was just curious or digging for information. Determining it was a little of both, she still decided to answer. “Nikita Nuria. She owns the tattoo parlor in town.”

“I’ve met her. And now what I know about her makes a whole lot more sense. So, this new training facility you were talking about would be for IAD agents?”

She grimaced. “I guess I shouldn’t have said that in front of you.” She paused as she reconsidered. “Then again, considering your new sister-in-law is the co-director of a division of IAD, I guess you are already privy to this type of information.”

He just smiled again, neither confirming nor denying.

“My friend Dare also moved to Breakers recently,” she told him.

“Daryk Nyght?”

She raised a brow. “You know him, too?”

“I’ve heard about the good doctor, but I haven’t had the pleasure of meeting him yet.”

He paused before adding, “He’s engaged to a friend of mine, Evelyn Beaumont.”

“The owner of a rescue center.” She smiled. “Got to love small towns. Everyone seems to know everyone.”

“Did you grow up in a small town?”

“Hell, no,” she said with a laugh. “I’ve lived in Chicago for most of my life.”

“Is your family still there?”

Her smile slowly faded. “I grew up in the foster system, so I don’t really have any family.” When the doorbell to the suite rang, she said, “That must be our dinner.”

“I’ll get it.”

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She was relieved when he got up again and went to retrieve their meal. Talking about her past wasn't difficult, but it wasn't pleasant either. When he brought back the dinner he'd ordered for them, she had to admit that he had been right. The steaks were perfectly cooked, and as they ate, the conversation turned to a safer subject concerning what she had found out about the hotel expansion project.

"Basically what you have is a project that is over cost and behind schedule on the surface. I know they claimed they would be back on schedule by the end of the week, but I don't think that's going to solve the problem. In fact, I know it won't. I have a few theories right now, but I'd really like a closer look at the site before I make up my mind."

"We can tour the site tomorrow. But in the interim, what are those theories?" he asked as he refilled both of their glasses again.

"Well, for one. Something is seriously wrong with this build if someone is willing to kill to keep it covered up."

He froze with his glass halfway to his lips. Then, he set the glass down slowly, giving her his full attention. "Explain."

Trinity explained what had happened when she'd gone to the construction site the day she'd arrived on the island. As she did, she watched the fury burn bright in his blue eyes and found herself comforted by how pissed and worried he looked.

"You're all right? He didn't hurt you?"

“I’m fine, but we weren’t able to catch him. Still, I’ve tried to get ahold of the security guard, Billy, that I met on-site, but he’s been on the mainland for the last few days. They said he should be back in a few days, so I plan to go talk to him to see if he knows anything.”

“We. We will go speak to him. I don’t like the fact that he was the only one who saw you there, then you were practically run off the road right after you left. No, I don’t like that at all.”

“Neither do I. Which is why I want to get a better look at the construction site from another perspective tomorrow, too.”

Finished with his meal, Maxwell leaned back in his chair. He was amazed by the amount of food Trinity packed away, but he guessed it was understandable for someone as active as she was. He loved watching her eat since it was like she was savoring every bite. He couldn’t remember ever seeing someone appreciate a good meal like she did, and he felt a strange surge of satisfaction knowing he was the one who had provided it for her.

He wanted to groan when she moved on to dessert. Watching her eat her piece of key lime pie was borderline obscene. God, that woman had a wicked tongue. Imagining what it would feel like on his body made his cock swell, and he shifted in his seat to relieve the pressure so he didn’t permanently damage himself.

Bloody hell, everything about her fascinated him.

He could stare at her beautiful face for hours, and her throaty laughter sent shivers down his spine. When she smiled, he imagined pressing his lips to hers, and the way she licked at her fork made him ache to grab her and sink into her heat.

Forcing himself to focus back on their conversation, he ignored his growing attraction

to her. For now. He would have time for that later. But at the moment, dealing with the clusterfuck of a construction project took precedence. He was furious that someone was messing with his hotel, and he was determined to figure out exactly who to blame.

And then he would make them pay.

“Another perspective? What exactly does that mean?”

“It means that I called the marina today and arranged for a boat rental tomorrow. Damn, this is really good pie. Actually, everything was good.”

“I’m glad you enjoyed it.” Unwilling to let her distract him, he asked, “Why do you need a boat?”

“I want to see how people react after I show up and stir up some shit, but I want to see it when they don’t know I’m watching.”

“Smart.” He paused, then added, “I hope you know that I’ll be going with you.”

Sighing, she said, “I thought you were going to say that.”

Chapter Nine

Trinity woke the moment she heard the alarm beeping on her phone signaling that someone was at the front door to the suite. Again. Turning her head, she saw that the readout on the clock said it was barely four in the morning.

If it was Maxwell, she was going to kill him.

But no, it couldn’t be him.

She'd shown him the alarm she had placed on the front entrance after they'd finished their meal and warned him about it again before she'd gone to bed. They had both retreated to their separate bedrooms not that long ago, but neither of them had wanted to go to bed alone.

The magnetism between them was almost unbearable.

Maxwell had brushed his lips lightly over hers as he'd wished her goodnight. The move had surprised her. She could have avoided the contact but had decided to let it play out instead. He'd kept the kiss light so it was barely a whisper of a touch. It hadn't been enough. She'd wanted to grab hold of him and deepen the kiss, letting the lust take over, but she had restrained herself.

Maxwell wasn't the type to creep around in the middle of the night, especially since he had a sense of what she was capable of. Trying to surprise her was a really bad idea and would definitely be hazardous to his health.

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She heard movement coming from the hallway outside of her room and slid silently from the bed, grabbing her Sig Sauer as she did. She pulled a pillow into place where she had been lying minutes before and threw the cover over it so it looked like someone was still sleeping there.

With her weapon trained on the closed door, she moved to the partially opened bathroom door and turned off the light she'd left on, enclosing her in the darkness. Heart thundering in her chest, she fought a vicious battle within herself to contain the fear that tried to immobilize her.

She fucking hated being in the dark.

Someone tried to turn the doorknob but found it was locked. A few seconds later, she heard a soft clicking sound as whoever it was went to work on picking the lock. Her fear of the dark turned to anger that someone would dare try to sneak into her room while she was sleeping.

Obviously, whoever it was had a death wish.

And she was more than willing to grant it.

The lock clicked open and the door opened slowly, admitting a large man dressed completely in black. As the man approached the bed, she saw the moonlight glisten off of a knife he held in his hand. Her anger surged to pure rage when she caught sight of a loaded syringe in his other hand.

The son of a bitch thought he was going to drug her?

Hell fucking no.

Pissed now, Trinity took aim at his knee and pulled the trigger. He fell to the floor with a howl and she reached into the bathroom and flicked the switch back on, flooding the room with light. Scowling down at the man on her floor, she pointed the gun at his stupid head.

“Oh, you think that hurts? Just wait till I put another one in you. Maybe I’ll shoot you in the nuts next. Fucker.”

The door to the bedroom bounced open as Maxwell rushed into the room, his dark-blond hair disheveled from sleep and his muscular body covered only by a pair of dark blue silk pajama pants. His blue eyes narrowed as he took in the injured man lying on the floor, then they went wide with shock as he got a good look at Trinity.

She looked down at herself and swore.

Christ, was everyone going to see her naked?

Maxwell’s jaw tightened as he saw the various scars marring her golden skin and struggled to contain his anger. This woman, this warrior, had led a difficult life, and the map of her experiences was right there for him to see. He felt an unfamiliar wave of tenderness flow through him as he studied her. Those marks did nothing to detract from her beauty, but they made him want to wrap her in his arms and shelter her from anything that would harm her.

Mixed in with the scars were several tattoos he hadn’t seen earlier. She had a wicked tribal design on her outer right thigh that stretched up and wrapped around her hip. As she turned, he also saw a large intricate cross between her shoulder blades. He had never been one to get turned on by ink before, but surprisingly enough, he felt the desire to trace each line on her body with his tongue.

“Well, I guess you were telling the truth about sleeping with a gun next to you,” he said, trying for levity. He slowly walked further into the room and picked up the discarded robe she had left on the upholstered bench at the end of the bed. He held it out to her, trying his very best not to stare at her gorgeous body.

“Thanks,” she muttered as she took the robe and put it on.

“I need help! Call an ambulance!” the man moaned.

Maxwell glanced back at the man bleeding on the floor and his eyes narrowed with fury. He saw the knife on the floor, along with the syringe filled with liquid. This sorry excuse for a human being had snuck in there with the intent to take Trinity or put more scars on her precious body. He swore he would kill the man himself before he gave him a chance to touch her.

Not that she needed the help.

He sighed. “That blood is going to stain the carpet.”

A snort of laughter escaped from Trinity’s lips. “You’re ice, blue eyes. I like a man that has a sense of humor in a situation like this. Sorry, my stunner is in my bag. I’ll try and use that next time.”

He grinned back at her, then sobered as the man on the floor continued to scream and moan. “If you don’t stop screaming, she’s going to shoot you again.”

The man’s eyes widened with terror as his pain-filled gaze tracked back over to Trinity. “Keep that crazy bitch away from me.”

She raised an eyebrow as she stared down at the man. “Max?”

“Yes, love?”

“Do me a favor, go call the police from your bedroom.”

“Trinity...”

Her eyes met his and she sent him a small smile. “Plausible deniability, baby. Take your time. I should be done by the time you get back.”

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He hesitated for a moment, then gave in with a nod and left the room.

Trinity grinned down at the man writhing on the floor. “Now, then. You and I are going to have a little chat...”

Unsurprisingly, it didn’t take long to make him spill.

In the short time she was alone with the asshole, she discovered that he had been paid five thousand dollars to sneak into her room and kidnap her. The man didn’t know who had hired him since the transaction had been brokered over the phone.

The man, John Alvarez, had been paid half of the fee in cash. It had been left for him in a paper bag that was taped under a seat on the ferry that had brought him over to the island earlier. He was supposed to leave her at a motel on the mainland where the second half of his payment would be waiting.

Trinity was always irritated by the procedures she had to deal with after shooting someone, though she understood the dance well enough not to argue. Thankfully, Jackson wasn’t one of the cops who showed up after Maxwell had made the call to 911.

Even though she was technically the victim, the cops had given her the hard eye until she had made a call to Tara. They had arranged for the prisoner to be taken to the hospital to be treated under guard. In the morning, he would be escorted to the mainland, where an agent would be waiting to take him into custody.

John Alvarez would be interrogated again, then locked away, quick and quiet. Trying

to kidnap an IAD agent, even one on medical leave, came with a heavy price. Although he hadn't known exactly who he had been coming after, ignorance was not a defense.

Basically, that dude's life was now totally fucked.

When the cops left, Trinity closed the door behind them and Maxwell ended a call on his cell phone, placing it on the buffet table in the living room.

"Your room will be fixed tomorrow afternoon. I've arranged for it to be dealt with while we're out touring the renovations. We can move your stuff into my room. I'll sleep on the couch."

She studied him for a moment. "Or I could just get a new room."

"You could," he said carefully. "But I don't want you to. I want you here with me. I want you, Trinity. But I won't push for anything more than having you where I can hold you for the night. Will you let me?"

She considered it for a long minute. It probably wasn't wise, but she realized she really didn't give a fuck about that.

Answering honestly, she said, "I'd like that."

In a matter of minutes, they moved all of her stuff into his bedroom. Not that she had much. She'd been impressed when he had barely raised an eyebrow at what had occurred earlier but found herself being a little apprehensive when he didn't blink at the arsenal she scattered around his bedroom.

The man was too damn calm, and it was weirding her out. Turning around with her hands on her hips, she scowled at him after she finished storing her suitcase in the

large walk-in closet.

“What’s the deal?”

That arrogant brow rose. “What’s what deal?”

“This—” She gestured her hands in the air in circular motions. “All of this tonight. How can you want me here with you when I just hid four guns and six knives around the suite?”

“Was it six? I only saw three. Perhaps you should show me where you put them again so I don’t accidentally cut myself.”

“See! That’s what I mean. How can you act like this is all normal to you?”

Maxwell sat down on the bed. Before the cops had arrived, they had both dressed in shirts and jeans. Those jeans were now constricting his burgeoning erection as he valiantly tried to focus on her question instead of the fact that she would be in his bed in a few minutes.

“Nothing about this situation is normal, Trinity. Am I pissed about what happened tonight? You’re damn right I am. That fucker could have hurt you! This is my hotel. Mine. You were attacked while I was only a few feet away. I find that intolerable. I’ve upgraded security in the hotel, but until we know who is after you, there is very little we can do to ensure your safety. So, no, I’m not worried that you’ve taken precautions that will make it easier for you to defend yourself here.”

She stared at him silently, and he wondered what was going through that fascinating head of hers. Her hazel eyes looked almost golden in the dim light and her beautiful hair lay loose around her shoulders and spilled down her back. She was like a temptress luring him to his doom, but he realized that he would gladly follow

wherever she led him.

The sexual tension was there between them, so thick he could almost taste it. A part of him knew that this could be a huge mistake, though it didn't feel like it. Lust was the obvious choice of excuse, but there was something more between them now. Something inside him that had lain dormant had awakened as he had gotten to know her over dinner. She was bold and bright, like a glowing star in an otherwise pitch-black night.

And he wanted that light.

He wanted, no, he needed the vibrancy of her in his dull life.

The silence while he waited for her to respond was almost unbearable. His muscles strained as he fought to stay where he was and not jump up and grab her. But when she did speak, he grew even more rigid with tension.

“I slept with someone a few nights ago.”

“Fuck.”

She let out a self-deprecating laugh. “Yeah, actually that would be more accurate. Normally, I wouldn’t be telling you this. But in the scope of full disclosure, I needed to tell you since this thing between us is leading to us doing the same if I stay here with you tonight.”

He found her honesty refreshing even though her words infuriated him. “Was it someone on the island?”

“Does it make a difference?”

His teeth clenched as he fought to keep calm. “Yes, it does.”

She sighed as she sat down on the bed beside him. She told him about meeting Jackson after she’d almost been run off the road and briskly glossed over the rest of the evening with him.

“I know I can be...annoyingly outspoken at times, but I’ve found honesty and getting to the point makes my life a whole lot easier. I live and work in a world of shadows and need clarity when it comes to my personal life. Jackson was...uncomfortable with what happened between us. Where it happened, to be more specific. But this isn’t the first time I’ve made a man run scared.”

“I know Jackson. I’ve met him several times when I’ve visited the island before. So, it’s over?”

“Yes. No. I don’t know. He never called, so I guess so.”

“Then, he’s a fool.”

He could tell that startled her by the way her eyes widened as she glanced back at him. His heart melted when he saw the uncertainty there in her beautiful hazel eyes.

“I’m not exactly the normal type you go for, Max.”

“No, you’re not. What you are is brilliant, both in mind and heart. My brother and Tara said you were injured recently working a case, but you never hesitated to jump right into another to help your friends out. Then, when you have barely recovered from that, you come down here because a friend asked you to. Yes, I called them before I went to sleep,” he admitted before she could ask. “I thought it was only fair since I’m sure you’ve read all about me as well.”

She smiled at that. “True.”

“Someone tried to kill you, twice now, and yet, here you are. Tell me, have you considered leaving the island even once?”

“No. Well, yes, briefly, to go get more weapons. But I would come back after I stocked up.”

He smiled at her quick reply. “Your loyalty and dedication to your job and your friends speaks volumes of you. Yes, I’ve noticed that you tend to speak your mind, but honestly, I find it refreshing. Although it isn’t quite the same as your world, mine is also filled with individuals who lie and try to prevaricate instead of just telling the truth. I like knowing that you will tell me what you’re thinking. I find I like it quite a lot.”

Trinity's breath caught in her throat at the gentle smile he gifted her with. Could it be possible that Maxwell could want her just the way she was? The real her? Over the years, she had gotten used to being rejected for her outspoken ways. She found comfort and acceptance with her friends and fellow agents and told herself that was all she needed.

But the truth was, she was looking for love.

Jackson's rejection of her had hurt her more than she'd fully admitted to herself. It was something that a small part of her had been expecting. If you expected it, then it couldn't hurt as much.

Or so she tried to believe.

Wanting to be completely clear, she bolstered her courage and said, "I'm not looking to be one of many, Max. You say that you want me, all of me, but if we do this and then you bail before we see where it goes, you're going to make me hate you."

"I think we could have something great between us, but we won't know until we try. Are you willing to try, Trinity?"

"Yes."

Her breath quickened as his gaze heated and his blue eyes darkened with hunger.

For her.

Only for her.

"Did Jackson taste that sweet pussy of yours, Trinity?"

Oh, damn. He got right to the point.

“No. No, he didn’t.” She felt her pussy grow instantly wet at his slow, sensual smile.

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“Well, then. I will have that pleasure first. I’m going to eat your pussy until you beg me to stop, and then I am going to make you mine.”

“I don’t beg easily.”

“I certainly hope not. Take off your clothes, love. Take them off and lie down on the bed for me, spread wide.”

Uncertainty tainted the moment for her. “Max, I really wasn’t kidding. I really don’t take orders well.”

“Try for me, love.”

Some of her pleasure dimmed as she felt slightly cheated. Men saw her as a sexual creature. They always had. However, she hated being treated like a pretty face with a pussy, and that was exactly how he was making her feel.

She was a sensual woman who enjoyed sex. That wasn’t something she was ashamed of. But she needed respect and to be treated like an equal in order to keep her interested in more than just a night or two. Some women loved when a man took total control in the bedroom, but she wasn’t one of them.

That didn’t make it right or wrong.

It just wasn’t her thing.

She sighed as she stood up, pulling her T-shirt off, baring her breasts to his gaze. Her

nipples should have tightened as the cool air hit her bare skin, but they remained slightly soft, the dark quarter-sized areolas barely puckering. She took off her jeans, kicking them aside, not liking the feeling of being on display.

She knew she had a good body, with full breasts, a slim waist, and a bare mound that she got waxed so it was completely clear of hair. She'd always like the feeling of a bare pussy, even though getting a Brazilian hurt like a motherfucker. She moved back toward the bed, only to be stopped by Maxwell as he stood.

"You're so beautiful you take my breath away."

"Thanks." She flashed him a smile, covering what she was feeling.

His brows furrowed as his gaze deepened, searching for something. "This isn't right."

Her smile disappeared as her own eyes narrowed in embarrassment and a healthy dose of anger. "You could have fucking said something before I got naked."

"I meant, I was wrong. This is not the way to begin this. To begin us." His arms came around her waist, drawing her closer to him so her nipples brushed against the material of his shirt. She could feel his hard cock constrained in his jeans rubbing up against the bare flesh of her pussy. "I haven't even kissed you yet, and I tell you to get naked and spread for me? Forgive me. My only defense is that I want you so much that it's difficult for me to think straight."

"That's okay."

He shook his head slowly. Holding her gaze, he leaned in to brush his lips against hers. "No, it's not. You deserve more. You deserve this to be special. For me to show you that I want more than just a night of passion with you."

“Don’t worry about it.”

“Trinity,” he said softly. “I want there to only be truth between us.”

“Fine.” She took a deep breath. “How could you tell?”

“I’m an observant man, Trinity. I can read your body’s reactions, and surprisingly, I seem to be able to read your eyes.”

“And what did my eyes tell you?”

“That I messed up. I’m used to being in control in the bedroom. But sex with you is more than just a power play. Plus, knowing you could kick my ass also changes things a bit. If that’s not what turns you on, I will try to dampen that part down. I don’t need it with you. It’s just what I’m used to.” He paused, then asked, “Did I miss something?”

She was about to let it go but opted for honesty instead. “I have some bad stuff in my past, Max. We, all of us agents, have to see someone after a mission to make sure we’ve got our heads right, but some stuff stays with you. I’ve got triggers, you could say. If you treat me like I’m just a pretty pussy to screw, that’s all this will be. I’ll shut down. I can’t help it. Most men like the way I look, but they don’t see the real me.”

“I see you, Trinity.”

She nodded slowly. “I think you do. But try to get lucky without even kissing me again, and I might just have to knee-cap you.”

He smiled. “I’ll definitely remember that.”

“Now, why don’t you get naked, too? I’m feeling a little underdressed here.”

Chapter Ten

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Maxwell knew he'd fucked up as soon as the words had left his mouth. She had warned him that she didn't take orders well, and what did he do? Pushed her more. And in a way that was sure to make her feel like he was only interested in fucking her, nothing more.

His arrogance had almost cost him. He'd felt it in the way she had pulled back from him. It was like something precious had been slipping from his hands, and that panicked feeling made him want to hold onto her even tighter.

He pulled back a little so he could yank off his shirt, desperate for the need to feel her breasts against his bare skin. He tossed the shirt aside and wound her long hair around one of his hands, pulling her head back slightly so he could take her lips in a scorching kiss. She parted for him instantly, allowing him to plunder and taste her to his heart's content.

It made him feel like a fucking king.

He let out a groan as her hands moved between them and she undid his jeans, pulling them down along with his boxers so the hard column of his cock slapped against the bare flesh of her stomach. He kicked the offending clothes off his legs and tried to pull her closer, but she braced a hand on his chest to hold him back and her eyes went wide as she looked down between them.

“Holy shit, Max! That's not a dick, that's a tree trunk!”

Just thinking about feeling that monster cock inside her had her creaming so much she could feel her juice dripping down her thighs.

He laughed a little at that. “Don’t worry, love. I’ve never had any complaints.”

Trinity bet he didn’t. There really had to be something in the water down there. Otherwise, she’d simply been lucky enough to somehow find two men with the biggest dicks she’d ever encountered.

Talk about winning the jackpot.

Where Jackson was longer in length, that extra inch or so seemed to be added to the girth of Maxwell’s shaft. She pushed aside thoughts of Jackson so she could completely focus on the man in front of her. That wasn’t difficult since Maxwell was seriously impressive. Not only did he have a dazzling face, he had a lean, rock hard body ripped from workouts and healthy living.

His skin was a few shades lighter than hers, but that was to be expected since she’d been sunbathing and he practically lived in a suit and tie most of the time. She traced her fingertips down his broad chest, then lower to the ridges of his abdomen. He grabbed her wrist to stop her before she could reach his cock, bringing her hand up to kiss her knuckles.

The old-fashioned, gallant gesture had her heart skipping a beat.

“I want to feel your hands on me, but if you touch me right now, I might lose control. First, I want to show you how good I can make you feel.”

She wanted him to lose control but let him have his way for the moment. “Kiss me again, Max. I love how you kiss me.”

“Then, I’ll never stop.”

Trinity welcomed the feel of his mouth on hers again. The tender way he kissed her

did something to her insides. It made her want to curl into his warmth and never let go. With a casual display of strength, Maxwell picked her up and lay her down gently in the center of the large bed, their lips never parting. She pulled him down over her, wrapping her arms around him so he covered her completely.

She enjoyed the heavy weight of his muscular body on her, and she stroked her hands over his back, loving the feel of his warm skin beneath her palms. Wrapping her ankles around the backs of his calves, she spread his legs a bit so they were pressed core to core, his long, thick shaft rubbing against her soaking wet pussy making them both groan.

He finally broke the kiss, trailing his hot mouth down her neck and moving lower until he reached her aching breasts. He glanced up at her, and her breath caught at the impact of his hungry gaze.

“My mouth is watering just looking at these dark, sweet little berries.”

“Suck them, Max. They ache...”

He gave her a wicked smile, then did just that. She moaned as his mouth latched onto one of her nipples. He sucked hard, sending pleasure shooting through her that reverberated straight down to her throbbing clit. He palmed her other breast in his large hand, rolling her other nipple between his thumb and forefinger.

He switched, making sure to taste her other breast before moving down. He pressed hot, wet kisses over her flat stomach, only pausing when he reached the puckered scars she received on her last mission. His head jerked up, blue eyes searing into hers with an uncontrollable fury she'd never seen the likes of before.

“Bloody hell, these are stab wounds!”

“Well, yeah they are. I told you I was on medical leave, right?”

“But I didn’t realize...”

Trinity reached down and cupped his face in her hands. “What I do is dangerous, Max. Things don’t always go according to plans. I survived.”

His jaw clenched and released, then he spoke softly. “I don’t like thinking of you being hurt. You could be killed doing what you do.”

“People get killed doing regular jobs every day,” she pointed out.

He frowned. “But someone tried to kill you tonight.”

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“Oh yeah. That...” She shrugged. “Many have tried, but I’m still alive. Trust me when I say that I’m a hard woman to get rid of.”

“I can believe that. Still, you deserve to live a life away from danger. Where you are pampered and cherished and can have anything and everything you want at your fingertips.”

She smiled. “I’d be bored to death within a week.”

He opened his mouth, then closed it again. His gaze lowered again, his hand stroking over the tattoo on her hip, trailing his fingertips down the lines over her thigh. “Now this is a little bit wicked. I guess I have a bad girl in bed with me.”

“Do you have any ink?”

He shook his head. “I’m not exactly the type.”

She grinned. “Oh, I don’t know. I bet you have a little bad boy in you.”

“Sweetheart, you have no idea.” His blue eyes sparkled with amusement as he moved his body lower, spreading her thighs wide. “I guess I’ll just have to show you that you won’t be bored with me.”

Without warning his head lowered, diving down to lap and suck at the juices dripping from her pussy. She let out a strangled cry and her thighs tightened around his head in a reflective move. His hands came up to push her legs apart again, spreading her wide so he wouldn’t be denied what he wanted. His tongue swirled over her sensitive clit,

and two fingers pushed inside her clenching hole, making her hips jerk off the bed.

“This is mine.” His voice was a rough, low whisper of need. Of ownership. He fucked his fingers into her hard, spreading the tight walls of her pussy getting her ready for his large cock. “Say it, Trinity. Say that you want me here, in you. That you need it as much as I do.”

“God, yes!”

She cried out as he buried his head against her pussy again, sucking on her clit as his fingers jabbed into her, working her ruthlessly to a fever pitch so that her entire body shook as she came.

“Max!”

Before her orgasm faded, he covered her body with his. He took her lips in a brutal kiss as he shoved his massive cock into her still spasming pussy, filling her completely. Her back arched at the satisfying burn of being shoved full of his thick shaft. Her hands grabbed hold of his biceps, desperately needing something to hold onto as the pleasure overwhelmed her. She tore her mouth away from his, gasping for air as she remembered something she should have mentioned before.

“Fucking hell. Condom. We forgot. I’m clean, but I was with Jackson a few nights ago, and even though he said he was too—”

His nostrils flared as he thrust into her hard. “Don’t say his fucking name while I’m inside you. I’m clean. I know he wouldn’t have been with you if he wasn’t clean, as well. Did you let him fuck you like this? Without anything between you?”

“Yes.”

He pulled his hips back, then surged forward again, impaling her on his thick cock so her tight muscles spasmed and gripped at his entire shaft.

“Then I am just going to have to make damn sure you forget about him, aren’t I?” he growled.

Not waiting for her to respond, he began pounding into her. His hips pistoned against her in a punishing rhythm that took her breath away. Never one to lie there and take it, she hooked a leg around his and flipped them so she was on top. He was so deep that she felt like she was sitting on a pole.

She swiveled her hips and hummed at the pleasure it gave her. When his hands gripped her hips, she began rocking on him slowly. She started moving faster, undulating her hip like she was performing an erotic dance on him.

Maxwell was completely mesmerized by her. She was like a pagan goddess taking what she wanted from him. He watched as her hands traveled up her torso to her breasts, holding the full globes steady as she rode him hard. When she tweaked her nipples to heighten her own pleasure, he swore as he felt her pussy tighten around his cock.

With a snarl, he flipped them again. Hearing her throaty laughter had his blood heating, and his cock grew impossibly thicker until he felt like he would burst.

Damn her, she was driving him insane.

Knees braced on the bed for leverage, he jerked her hands up so they were braced next to her head, held in place by his own. He felt something shift inside his chest as she laced their fingers together. Somehow that act seemed more intimate than having his cock shoved inside her pussy.

It made him want her even more.

They came together like two combatants fighting for supremacy, mouths fused, tongues dueling as they raced toward the ecstasy awaiting them. He felt her pussy fluttering around his cock and pulled back, wanting to see the pleasure on her face as she came.

What was between them needed no words.

Their eyes met and held as her body tightened around him, squeezing his cock almost to the point of pain. His balls drew up tight as he jerked against her, thrusting deep and hard, riding out her orgasm to prolong her pleasure. He groaned when he could no longer hold back and shudders wracked his body. His release exploded from the tip of his cock, filling her with his seed until his body felt completely empty.

Depleted of energy, he collapsed, remembering at the last second to shift sideways so he didn't crush her with his full weight. His eyes closed, contentment seeping into every pore as her arms came around him. She held him close to her, one of her hands stroking softly through his hair as the other caressed his back.

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And then she whispered his name.

Only his name.

The soft sound was filled with such warmth and wonder that he snuggled her in closer to him, not wanting them to be separated even by a few inches.

She was his now.

And he swore that he would do everything within his power to keep her.

Chapter Eleven

“Son of a bitch...”

Jackson was seething with jealousy and anger as he pulled up to the front entrance of the Palace Resort and Spa on his motorcycle. He was just in time to watch Trinity get into her sporty little convertible with none other than the resort’s owner himself, Maxwell King.

The last few days had been brutal.

After Trinity had left him standing in the alley, he had gone home to find that sleep had eluded him. He had no clue how things had gotten so screwed up after the mind-blowing sex they’d shared. Okay, so he could see how she had a point that he had gotten a little uptight after they had gotten caught, but still.

He hadn't freaked out.

Exactly.

He'd finally fallen into a fitful sleep around five in the morning and woke back up a few hours later when his alarm had gone off. He'd spent the following day immersed in work, trying not to think about her, but it had been nearly impossible. He had finally given in and had planned to call her that night but had found himself involved in a clusterfuck of epic proportions instead.

A bunch of teenagers had taken advantage of the beautiful weather and arranged a party out on the beach. There had been the usual fare of underage drinking and smoking, but a recent flood of a new designer drug on the island had made this particular party a deadly one.

The drug was called Euphoria, a small blue pill with a stylized "4" stamped on it. The drug had appeared a few months ago in Miami and was quickly spreading throughout the rest of the state. Like ecstasy, Euphoria had a dreamlike effect that made it attractive for stupid teens to use.

A boy named Terry Clark had been the host of the party while his parents had been on the mainland for the night, and he had bought a large quantity of drugs from another kid, George Timmins. Terry had distributed the drugs around to the partygoers, with fatal consequences. Several teens had overdosed, and one poor girl, Amanda Murray, had died.

The island community was in an uproar about the death of the young girl, and there were still a few other teens in the hospital that they hoped would still see graduation in a few months.

He had spent the last few days dealing with the fallout of that party. There were

meetings with the chief of police and the mayor, who happened to be husband and wife. Jackson would rather have a hot poker shoved into his eye than be stuck in a meeting when his chief and the mayor had a difference of opinions, so it had not been a fun way to spend his time.

The mayor wanted to give the community full disclosure about the drug because she felt more people were at risk. The Chief had demanded to keep key information private since their goal was to track down whoever was bringing the shit on the island and put an end to the whole business.

Ass still sore from the kicking he received from his chief, Jackson had gone back to the station after the meeting and had lit a fire under the detectives in charge of the case. He had two of his best detectives in charge of the case and knew that Carlos and Noah would track down the supplier.

He just hoped there were no more fatalities until they did.

Jackson was fucking tired which wasn't surprising since he'd only gotten a few hours of sleep over the past few days. Besides the drug case, several others were active in their department. He helped his detectives and officers out whenever they needed it, but sometimes he felt overwhelmed by their inquiries and requests.

He'd just managed to clear enough work off his desk to leave the office when he'd overheard a few of his officers talking about the attempt on Trinity's life last night. Before he knew what was happening, he'd had the officer up against a wall, demanding the details about what had happened to her.

Cursing, he'd rushed out of the station and jumped on his motorcycle, needing to see for himself that she was all right. What he didn't expect was to find her going for a fucking joyride with the playboy millionaire hotel owner.

“Katrina!” Jackson called out as he pulled up behind her.

Her head turned, but a big pair of sunglasses hid her eyes from view. That didn’t stop him from getting her message when the little hellcat raised her hand and shot up her middle finger at him, wordlessly telling him to fuck off. He sat there in a momentary stupor as she put the car in gear and took off.

What the fuck?

He revved his engine and took off, following them all the way to the marina while he silently seethed. When he pulled into the parking lot, Trinity and Maxwell were already out of the car. For a brief moment, he had the desire to shoot Maxwell as he saw the man wrap his arm around her waist and kiss her before heading into the office, leaving her alone outside.

Trinity stood with her legs braced apart, holding her elongated black case in her hand while she waited for Jackson to stomp over. His eyes practically burned her alive with the fury in them. So, he was pissed. Good. Although a traitorous part of her was glad to see him again, she was furious that he had disappeared on her.

Speaking of...what the fuck did he have to be pissed about?

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“Why the hell did you take off like that?”

She smiled sweetly. “I have plans today. Thanks for stopping by, but I have shit to do now.” She turned away and her smile slowly faded when he grabbed her arm. “Do you want to sing soprano, Jackson?”

“Stop that. I just found out someone tried to kill you last night. Again. Why the hell didn’t you call me?”

“Why would I?” she shot back. “You poofed, Jackson.”

“I did not poof!”

“You did, and because you did, I’m moving on. Now, I have things to—”

“The hell you are,” he growled. His narrowed eyes swung over to Maxwell as he exited the office with the manager.

The knowing smile on Maxwell’s face made Trinity sigh.

This was not going to go well.

“Him? You’re throwing me over for him?” Jackson asked incredulously.

Instead of answering, she walked away to join Maxwell and the slightly creepy manager, aware that Jackson was right on her heels.

“Ms. Cross? It’s a pleasure to meet you. My name is Simon Johnson. Welcome to Blue Horizon Marina.”

Trinity took Simon in at a glance as they shook hands. She deemed him to be in his early thirties with the tanned skin of a true man of the sea. He would be considered attractive to some, with his brown hair artfully swept back from his face and his smiling brown eyes, but something about him had her ick factor radar pinging. She had to pull her hand away from his grasp as he tried to hold on and hid a smirk as both Jackson and Maxwell glared at him, making Simon take a cautious step back.

He cleared his throat. “We have your boat all set up and ready for you.”

“Thanks. Just point me at her and give me the keys.”

“Ah, since Mr. King signed...”

Maxwell took the keys from Simon, and the man was smart enough to just point at the speedboat they had chartered for the day. He trotted away quickly, retreating back into the office and leaving them to their business.

“Mate, we have a schedule to keep, so if you would excuse us,” Maxwell said with a slight “fuck off” tone of voice.

“You aren’t going anywhere until you tell me what the fuck is going on,” Jackson snapped.

Trinity sighed. “We really do have a schedule, so if you want to know, then you can come with us.”

“Well, now, is that really necessary?” Maxwell asked.

“It’s easier.”

She walked down the pier toward their boat and climbed aboard. Setting her bag down, she took a seat and watched Maxwell start the boat up after Jackson undid the ropes tying them to the pier.

Turning to glance at her, Maxwell said, “Ready, love?”

“Let’s go, blue eyes.”

She pointedly ignored Jackson as Maxwell maneuvered the boat out of the marina. They headed down the coast toward the resort on the west side of the island at a leisurely pace. She leaned her head back, enjoying the sea air blowing across her face as they moved across the calm water, absently wishing for more waves. Then again, they weren’t going for speed at the moment. She could practically hear Jackson grinding his teeth from where he was seated next to her.

“Explain.”

Her moment of peace over, she turned to focus on the furious man glaring at her. She told him what happened the night before in a short, concise explanation. She watched as the fury in his green eyes burned brighter as she told him about the knife and what had been a sedative in the syringe that the intruder had been carrying.

“Son of a bitch! He tried to fucking kidnap you?”

“Yeah, but he failed. He was supposed to take me to some drop-off spot on the mainland, but he didn’t know who was actually paying him.”

“He could have been lying.”

“Nope. I got pissed off and shot him in the knee. If he lied, I would have capped the other one. He was telling the truth.”

“You...” Jackson shook his head as if he couldn’t believe what he was hearing.

“She did,” Maxwell called out over his shoulder. “Naked.”

“You could have left that part out,” she shouted back.

He laughed. “But how could I forget that part, love?”

Jackson looked so pissed, Trinity was surprised steam wasn’t coming out of his ears. She quickly finished telling the story, wanting to get it done before his head exploded. When she was done, he just sat there watching her silently.

After a long pause, he asked, “Where did you sleep last night, Katrina?”

“With me,” Maxwell answered loudly as he turned the boat off. He had stopped them out in the water overlooking the construction site of the new resort, exactly where they needed to be.

“Is that fucking so?” Jackson said softly.

“Yes, it is,” Trinity answered, her voice loud and clear, her gaze unabashed. “Maybe you’re waiting for me to say I was scared about someone trying to kill me, but I

wasn't. Not really. I'm attracted to Max. It was almost instantaneous, like it was with you. It's never happened to me like that before, so this is all pretty strange for me. And to be honest, I probably wouldn't have acted on it if you hadn't bailed."

"I did not bail!"

"You freaked out the night we were together, and I haven't heard from you since" she snapped, out of patience. "So, you don't get to judge me, Jackson. Now, I have work to do, so don't fucking bother me."

Lifting her black matte case from where she'd secured it, she set it down on the side row of seats next to her and opened it. As she began to expertly assemble her sniper's rifle, she heard Jackson suck in his breath.

"You will not shoot anyone!"

She turned toward him and took her sunglasses off so he could see the full impact of her irritation. Pulling her hair back in a ponytail, she said, "Duh. I need it to see into the construction site. We stopped there before we came here and stirred shit up. Now, stop talking to me, asshole. I'm working."

Chapter Twelve

Maxwell sat down on the seat next to where Trinity now crouched, the barrel of her rifle on the edge of the boat, staring out at the hotel renovations. Instead of looking at the hotel, he was content to look over at the other man who had captured his woman's interest.

He saw the fire burning in the lieutenant's eyes as he stroked a lazy hand over her ponytail. Yes, Jackson was still interested, but he had fucked up and left an open path for Maxwell to step in. That was something he wholeheartedly appreciated, even if it

hadn't been intentional.

Still, he had no intention of stepping back.

Holding her through the night had been an experience for him. He rarely spent the entire night with a woman, and when he did, he never slept peacefully. But with her, he had. After they had finished making love, they'd had another round of sex in the shower before they drifted off to sleep wrapped around one another.

When he'd woken hours later, he was surprised by how well he had rested. He'd been thrilled to find her cuddled up against him and had woken her with soft kisses. He'd made love to her slowly in the early morning light. Being with her had just felt right. And it wasn't something he would give up without a fight.

The walk through the construction site earlier had gotten the reaction they had thought it would. No one could say no to the big boss coming in to ask questions when they would have given her the boot if she'd showed up alone.

Or, at least, they would have tried.

A lot of the crew was local. It had been one of the stipulations he had put in place when he'd taken bids on the project. However, he had gone with a construction company based out of Miami to head up the development and most of the management was from the mainland. It had taken a great deal of time and money to ship over the necessary equipment and materials for the build, not that any of it had been worth it now that he saw with his own eyes what was going on at the site.

He had immediately put a halt on construction and sent everyone home until further notice until he could speak to the construction company's owner. Not only were they way behind schedule, the material they were using wasn't what he was supposedly paying for. Someone was skimming off his project, and they were willing to kill or

kidnap to protect their secret.

He needed to find out who was behind it and end them...permanently.

Maxwell had no doubt that Trinity would find out who was behind all of it, but he'd made a few calls of his own to see what he could discover. And he had special plans in the works for anyone within the company that was part of the scheme. Depending on how far up the chain it went, he was prepared to take the construction company apart, piece by fucking piece until nothing was left but a useless pile of rubble.

Just like his new resort.

They would learn the hard way just why no one cheated a King.

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Maxwell leaned back casually, eyeing Jackson with an air of superiority that he knew would piss the other man off. “It seems to me that a man who gives up a treasure like Trinity doesn’t deserve to have her in the first place.”

“I didn’t give her up.”

Maxwell raised an eyebrow at that in a mocking gesture.

Jackson had been waiting for Trinity to finish what she was doing to have this out, but he had seen the hurt in her eyes that she had tried to hide when she had told him off earlier. She was right. He should have called her. He could see how she had taken his silence as a rejection, and he was sorry for that. But he wasn’t willing to walk away from her now, even if she had found someone new.

He sighed. “I’ve been working since we were together that night, Katrina.”

She made a humming sound in her throat that didn’t bode well for him, so he decided to be as honest as he could. Leaning forward, he braced his elbows on his knees as he stared at the back of her head, ignoring Maxwell.

“A kid died the other night. I—it was rough. I know her parents.”

Trinity turned her head and stared back at him. “I’m sorry.”

He could see that she was and took that as a good sign. “Here’s the truth. You fucking confused me the other night, Katrina. One second, we were sighting down each other with our weapons, then we were on a date. And then...yeah, I freaked a

little. I wasn't prepared for someone to walk out and see us. Not that I was ashamed to be with you, but it was the chief's niece for Christ's sake. He's my boss!"

"Do you really think your friend was going to run and tell your boss she saw you having sex in an alley?"

"No, probably not," he admitted. "But I just don't do stuff like that. Ever."

"Noted."

He took a deep breath before continuing. "Once I got my head out of my ass, I was going to contact you, but I got called into a shit storm. They were just stupid kids having a party on the beach while one of the kid's parents were out of town for the night. But someone had distributed this new drug called Euphoria to the partygoers. It's a little blue pill with a fancy "4" marked on it. We ended up with sick kids all over the place. One of them was gone by the time the EMTs arrived."

Trinity had turned around during the telling, and it irked Jackson that she was leaning against Maxwell's leg as she sat on the floor of the boat, her rifle across her lap. They looked like a unit and he felt apart from them...like he didn't belong. The familiar feeling had never really bothered him so much before.

He had always felt like an outsider in his family while he was growing up. In the army, he had deliberately separated himself from his men when he had become a lieutenant, just like he was on the police force. They needed that distance to learn how to depend on him while respecting the chain of command.

But with Trinity, he had felt like she had been there with him.

And with her, he hadn't felt so alone.

Trinity couldn't bear the sadness in Jackson's eyes. She wanted to go to him, but she was in a difficult position in between two of the most possessive men she'd ever met. She looked up at Maxwell as he squeezed her shoulder and saw his understanding smile. Relief flooded her that he understood. They were going to have to talk about this, but for now, the need to give comfort overwhelmed everything else.

She placed her rifle safely to the side and got up, moving the short distance to Jackson. He'd been lost in thought and looked up at her, surprised to see her standing there before him. She reached down, moved his arms out of the way, and sat down on his lap, putting her arms around him. She felt his shuddering breath as his arms wrapped around her, holding her in a tight grip as he buried his face in her neck.

"I'm sorry I didn't call you."

His voice was muffled, but she still heard him. She stroked his head with her hand, enjoying the fuzzy feeling of his almost bare skull.

"You should be, but I understand that you were dealing with a whole shitload of crap. I could have helped if you told me, though."

He raised his head to stare at her with stark eyes. "Am I too late? Did I lose you?"

She sighed. "That is a complicated question with an even more complicated answer. Max and I have something just as special as you and I do. I don't know what that means for us."

"Actually, I think it means that we should remember where we are and embrace it," Maxwell said casually.

Jackson's entire body went rigid beneath her. Curious now, she asked, "What do you mean?"

Maxwell smiled at her. “It means I have no intention of stepping back to let Jackson have you just because you met him first. As you said, we have just as strong of a connection as you do with him. This island caters to couples in ménage and poly relationships. Perhaps we should see if that would work for us. All three of us.”

Trinity was speechless for a moment. Sure, she had fantasized about the idea, but actually having a relationship with two men at once was, well, complicated. She moved to sit next to Jackson on the bench, pulling away when he tried to hold her in place on his lap. She needed space to think it over and didn’t want to get distracted by him.

“I don’t want to share her with you,” Jackson said to Max with a scowl. “And I don’t do guys.”

“I’m not hitting on you, you bloody git! I don’t like men that way. And you don’t have much choice about sharing. I’m not going to let Trinity go. Unless you’d like to give up now.”

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“I’m not giving up shit. And I wouldn’t have to worry about sharing if I tossed your ass overboard right now!” Jackson stood up, and Maxwell did the same.

“Try it!”

“Don’t think I won’t.”

The men faced off, both of them furiously. They stumbled as the boat roared to life and Trinity sped off, heading north, taking them away from the hotel. Feeling the sea breeze on her face with the wind whipping her hair around her was better than pushing both of her men overboard.

Or shooting them.

She already thought of both of them as hers, but she was damn tired of them talking about her like she wasn’t there. As she sped across the turquoise water, she made a note to go back to the Blue Horizon Marina to rent a jet ski at some point during her trip.

She stopped the boat when she’d reached a quiet part of the bay just past the cliffs, somewhere in between where the resort was located and where the private villas started. She didn’t want to chance getting closer to the beach and stayed just under a half mile out when she turned the boat off.

The afternoon had heated up enough that she wished she had thought ahead to wear her bathing suit. It didn’t matter, though. She still wanted to take a dip in the cool, clear water of the bay.

She'd just have to do it naked.

She turned around to find both Jackson and Maxwell watching her from where they were seated. Moving past them, she quickly began disassembling her sniper rifle.

"Three things," she said briskly. "First, all but two people cleared out of the construction site after our little visit today. The foreman, Alan Browning, and one of the security guys. Not the one I met the other day—it was the older guy, Javier Vega."

Maxwell nodded. "I remember seeing both of them earlier."

He watched her quick, economical movements as she broke down the parts of her gun, cleaned them, then packed them back into the specialized case. He remembered Browning specifically since it had taken all his willpower not to punch the man in the face when he handed over copies of the paperwork and material receipts that Maxwell had demanded.

"Okay, then. Secondly, if we try to do this ménage thing, we all have to agree. I'm the one who is benefiting from this the most, but I have a feeling dealing with the two of you is going to be a big pain in the ass, and I'm not just talking anal sex. Dealing with one man is hard enough, but two...well, that's something I'm going to have to think about. Even so, I don't think I can choose between you two. So, you both have to be sure that you want to try this out before anything else happens. And all of us need to think."

Jackson's hands were going numb from clenching them so hard. He was pissed on so many levels now. He had never wanted a ménage relationship, yet here he was. When Maxwell suggested it, Jackson had wanted to kill the man, then toss his body overboard. The truth was he already thought of Katrina Cross as his, and it infuriated him that another man was trying to claim her.

He scrubbed his hands over his face, then gaped when he saw she had moved to the far side of the boat and had started stripping.

“What the hell are you doing?”

She turned to glance at him over her shoulder. “I’m going for a swim. I need to think.”

Lust nearly burned Jackson alive as she finished stripping and he finally saw her nude body. His eyes narrowed as he took in the various scars marring her otherwise perfect form. Christ, she had more than he did, but somehow seeing them on her made them so much worse. He noted the artistry of the cross on her back and the tribal tattoo that covered her right hip and thigh. Jesus, it made him hard and pissed him off that some tattoo artist had been working on her so intimately.

She turned once more to scowl at both men. “Oh, yeah. The last thing I wanted to tell you guys. Talk about me again like I’m not right fucking in front of you and I might shoot you both.”

With that, she stepped up onto the bench seat and made a clean dive into the crystal-clear water.

Chapter Thirteen

Jackson blew out the breath he had been holding and shook his head.

Fucking hell, what was he going to do with that woman?

Love her.

His heart nearly stopped beating at that thought. He just met her, how the hell could

he be falling in love with her? Plus, she'd just told him she had slept with someone else. Shouldn't he be pissed? Common sense was telling him to walk away now, but his heart and his throbbing cock were telling him there was no way in hell that he was going anywhere.

“Well, shall we talk now that our lady has told us both to piss off for the moment?”

Jackson glanced at Maxwell and noted that even though he was talking to him, the other man hadn't looked away from where Trinity was swimming toward shore.

A small smile curved Maxwell's lips. “She swims like a fish.”

“More like a shark.” It was time Jackson got to the point. “Listen up, King. I know about you and the women you date. You're not good for Katrina.”

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Maxwell's blue eyes frosted over as he finally met Jackson's gaze. "And you are? Please, Lieutenant. I'm here on the island enough to know about the broken hearts you've left behind. Can't let a woman get too close to that fucking ice-cold heart of yours."

"Like that's any worse than you? I've seen you with the women you've brought with you to the island. They call you the playboy king for a reason."

"You say that like you're any different," Maxwell scoffed. "No matter how quiet you've tried to keep your extracurricular activities, I've heard all about the bedroom games you like to play."

Jackson cursed viciously.

"I know firsthand that Trinity won't play how you like it. So, you may want to think about that."

"I know she's not submissive."

"Not a single bloody bone in her body." Maxwell's gaze was serious. "Be sure. I mean it, Jackson. She won't do it. We went through this last night, and she made it clear. She'll shut down if you try to push her into something she doesn't want or try to change her to be what you need."

That made Jackson angry. "I'm not looking to change her. I want her just the way she is. You're just saying this so you can have her all to yourself. She's not just some vacation fuck for me."

Maxwell's fists clenched, then he relaxed his hands again. "This is getting us nowhere. My past relationships have nothing to do with how I feel for Trinity. Being with her...it feels right. She gets me, and I'm guessing it's the same for you."

Jackson nodded. "So, are we really going to try this?"

"I won't give her up. I'm already falling for her. She's already mine."

"The hell she is!" Jackson snarled. "She's mine!"

Maxwell let out an impatient breath. "We can't come at her arguing like this. She's likely to give us both the boot."

"Or a swift kick to the nuts."

Maxwell snorted at that. He got up and threw the anchor into the water to make sure the boat stayed in place. "Damn right. If we're sure, we have to show her that we are in this together. That both of us want her, and we're both going to try and make this work. For all of her bravado, she's been hurt in the past."

Jackson's jaw clenched as he thought about the scars that he'd seen. "I noticed."

"I'm not just talking physically. It's like..." Maxwell turned away from where he had been watching the shoreline and searched for a way to explain what he sensed. "It's like she's waiting for us to reject her. To let her down."

"Well, she'll be waiting a long time because that won't happen." Jackson sighed. "Look, I know I fucked up by not calling, but I've been thinking about her every fucking second since I last saw her. She makes me feel. It's like...before I met her, I was seeing in black-and-white and I didn't even know it. She's brought color into my life. Vibrant, sometimes painful to see color, but I can't go back to the dark."

“I feel the same,” Maxwell admitted. “Listen, I know you’re a good man and a good cop. Once we get to know each other better, I’m sure we’ll end up being the best of friends, especially if this situation works out. I want to be honest, though. One of the reasons I’m agreeing to this...partnership is because of her job. Even if she cuts back on her intrigues, she will still be in danger. I think knowing there are two of us watching out for her will help me sleep at night.”

Jackson thought about that for a moment and couldn’t help but agree. “You’re right. She needs the two of us to watch out for her. And if you ever say that to her, I’m going to fucking deny it.”

Maxwell laughed. “I’m not that stupid, mate.”

“So, let’s go claim our woman.” Jackson stood up and gaped as he looked toward the beach. “Fuck me, she’s laying there fucking naked!”

“Doesn’t look like anyone is around,” Maxwell commented as he pulled off his shirt. “Lighten up, Jackson. She’s a grown woman. Scolding her for the small shit is just going to make her rebel more, and drive you crazy.”

Jackson knew he was right. He quickly stripped off his own clothes and turned with a questioning glance as Maxwell made a noise in his throat.

“Looks like you two have that in common.”

At Maxwell’s gesture, Jackson glanced down at the various tattoos that were on his own body. He had been inordinately pleased when he had realized that the tribal tattoo on Trinity’s leg practically matched the one he had on his own right arm and shoulder. On his left shoulder was a dragonhead breathing fire. The flames curled around his pectoral muscle and the body of the dragon covered his entire back, with the tail curling around his left hipbone.

“You ever think of getting one?” Jackson asked as he studied the other man’s flawless body with a dispassionate glance.

“I haven’t, but I have a feeling I may have to change that.”

Jackson knew that he had an intimidating cock because of his length, but it seemed like Maxwell was packing his own weapon of mass. “You’re going to need to be careful with that thing. Katrina isn’t exactly a big woman.”

Maxwell’s grin was razor-sharp. “I didn’t get any complaints from her last night.”

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So much for their truce, Jackson thought, and was only seconds behind Maxwell as he dove into the water.

Maxwell was amused that they swam the short distance almost side by side, both pushing to match the other's speed. During the quiet of the swim, he gave careful consideration to everything that had happened earlier. Now, he was even more determined to make sure that they made this work.

He had been serious when he'd said that he couldn't lose Trinity. She had come into his life like a bolt of lightning and changed everything.

And he never wanted to go back.

When the water was shallow enough, he stood and walked naked onto the beach, hiding his smile as the lieutenant paused to ensure they were alone on the beach before following. He stood over Trinity's prone form, drinking in her beauty as the sun warmed his bare skin. He waited for the punch to the gut as her eyes opened.

Yes, she was already his.

He felt it in his soul.

"You're blocking my sun, blue eyes."

Maxwell settled himself next to her on the sand. "My apologies, love."

Trinity glanced over at Jackson when he stalked over and his nude body cast her in

his shadow. He looked like a sea god come to life, with his tattoos and cut, muscular body. Her eyes followed a particular droplet of water that cascaded down his bare chest, changing direction as it slid down the angles and planes of his rock-hard abs. She wanted to follow the water droplets dripping down his golden skin with her tongue.

Looking lower, her breath sucked in harshly as she took in the thick erection straining from his groin. She wanted to reach out and trace the hard lines of his pelvic bones with her hands as she licked the water off of his cock like an ice cream cone, but she refused to move.

It was weird seeing Jackson standing before her naked while Maxwell lay next to her, gently playing with strands of her hair. This ménage shit was going to take a lot more work to adjust to than she originally thought.

She had been lying there soaking in the warmth from the sun, fantasizing about what it would be like to have two men in her life. The sex would be amazing. There was no doubt about that. It wasn't the sexual nature of the relationship she was worried about, though.

It was everything else.

Jackson slowly lowered himself over her, his knees bracketing the outside of hers. She kept her curious eyes on his as he leaned down and placed a soft, gentle kiss on her lips. She felt the shiver race through her body and loved the way her nipples puckered the instant his chilled flesh came into contact with hers. She wanted to deepen the kiss, but it was over before she could.

She sighed as Jackson lifted off of her and moved to the side.

But she wasn't disappointed for long.

Her mind went blank as Maxwell's mouth came down on hers in a heated kiss as soon as Jackson moved away. This was not the light, gentle kiss that Jackson had given her.

This was a scorching kiss meant to heat her blood.

She moaned into Maxwell's mouth and arched her back as she felt Jackson's hand slowly stroked between her thighs, parting them so his fingers could trace circles over her distended clit. She pulled her mouth away and gasped for breath.

"We...we're supposed to be thinking about this."

Maxwell's lips trailed down to her breasts, licking at the water droplets on them as Jackson leaned in closer so he could look into her eyes. "You can think all you want, baby. But Max and I have come to an understanding."

Her eyes narrowed.

This should be interesting.

She wanted to ask questions, but she was having a hard time concentrating as Maxwell's mouth closed over one of her breasts, sucking hard on her nipple, while Jackson's finger slid into her wet pussy, testing, teasing.

"Shit!" she moaned. "Can't think when you do that."

"Good. Then, you can just listen for now. Max and I have decided that we aren't going to make you choose between us. You want both of us, and we both want you. So, we'll make this work. Together we'll make this work."

"Wait, Max," Trinity said as she pulled lightly at his hair so he was no longer

touching her. “Are you serious?”

He smiled. “Yes, love. We want to make this work.”

“There are obviously going to need to be some rules put in place,” Jackson said seriously, his finger stilling inside her. “Relationships like this take work...lots of work.”

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“I know. That’s why I think we should think about this more before we jump into anything.”

“Or you can let us pleasure you, then you can think after,” Maxwell said, lowering his head so he could kiss her again.

While Maxwell was busy distracting her, Jackson moved between her legs, sliding them open so his large body could fit between them.

Maxwell took advantage of Trinity’s gasp and plunged his tongue deep into her mouth, swallowing her moan of pleasure as Jackson sucked hard on her clit. Her legs shook as he continued sucking, pushing two of his large fingers into her tight hole.

“Damn, she’s tight,” Jackson said softly, almost reverently.

Maxwell’s head came up and his eyes gleamed like brilliant sapphires as he watched her while he plucked at her aching nipples with strong fingers. “I know. And her juice is so sweet, I could feast on her all day.”

“Now, it’s my turn,” Jackson growled as he went to work, licking and sucking at her pussy while he finger-fucked her hard.

“That’s right, love. Jackson is going to eat your sweet little pussy until you come,” Maxwell whispered. “You’d like that, wouldn’t you?”

“Fuck, yes,” she moaned. “Eat me, Jackson. Lick my pussy.”

She writhed in ecstasy, the back of her head burying into the soft sand as Jackson continued to fuck her with his fingers and his mouth went to work. Maxwell moved back down, suckling both of her nipples in turn. When Jackson sucked hard on her clit again, and a scream tore from her throat as she came.

Jackson went to work licking up her release as he continued to work his fingers inside of her, stroking her G-spot until her body went limp beneath him. He levered up, breathing hard. “Fuck, I can’t wait. There is a lagoon just inside that cave over there—”

“Here,” she panted. “Right now. I want you now, Jackson.”

He cursed under his breath. “Let’s at least clean this sand off first. I plan to fuck you raw and don’t want the sand hurting you when I do.”

Jackson jerked Trinity’s body up into his arms, pulling her away from Maxwell. He carried her into the water, letting the waves clean the sand off of both of them. Trinity looked over to see Maxwell storm after them, seeing the anger in his eyes, and was quick to counter it. She pushed out of Jackson’s arms, going to her knees in the shallow water.

“Max, I want to suck you. Give me your cock.”

Maxwell’s eyes flared with lust as he went to his knees in front of her, and he held her hair back so it was out of her face. She shot him a sultry look as she gripped his cock in her hand. She gave his large shaft a few testing strokes, then leaned down to use her tongue to swipe at the pre-cum leaking from the head of his bulbous cock.

“Fuck! Your mouth should be illegal, love.”

His hips jerked forward, and she gladly accepted the hard flesh further into her

mouth, sucking it deeper. His grip on her hair tightened, and she welcomed the little bite of pain it brought.

Unable to wait any longer, Jackson dropped to his knees behind her. He pulled her thighs apart, then lodged the head of his large cock against the opening of her pussy. Without warning, he shoved hard, pushing through her tight muscles and making her moan around Maxwell's cock in her mouth.

“Ah, god, you feel so good, baby. Let me in. Let me all the way inside you.”

He pulled back, then thrust deeper, using her cream to ease his way in. He worked his cock back and forth until he was balls deep, then paused to let her get used to being filled by him. Savoring the pleasure of being inside her, he swiveled his hips to ensure she was open and ready. His hands gripped her hips hard, holding her steady.

“Get ready, Katrina...”

In response, she clenched her muscles around his shaft, making him curse. He pulled back, then surged forward, pounding his hard cock deep inside her tight pussy in a punishing rhythm.

Trinity tightened her mouth around Maxwell's huge cock, working her tongue on the underside of the shaft as she took the pleasure Jackson was giving her. They worked in tandem, pushing and pulling her body so she was a sea of sensation. Maxwell held her head still as he fucked her mouth, making sure not to choke her while Jackson continued to pound into her from behind. The power of his thrusts had the water frothing around them, his hips hitting the soft flesh of her ass with each stroke.

“You're so tight, baby. I love fucking your sweet little pussy.”

Jackson's hand reached between her thighs to flick at her clit, making her moan in

pleasure. Maxwell groaned every time Jackson's fingers played with the tight little bud. It told Jackson that she was sucking the life out of Maxwell every time he did, and it gave him a powerful feeling that he was controlling both their pleasure.

"I want to feel you come on me, Katrina. Come on my cock while you suck Max's cum down your throat. Come for me, Katrina. Come for me now!"

Trinity's body tightened as her impending release raced through her body. Jackson sped up his thrusts and pinched her clit, throwing her over the cliff of ecstasy. Her back arched as she came, her body exploding around his shaft. Her slick cream made it easier for him to drive into her as wave after wave of bliss battered her body.

"God, she's clamping on me so fucking tight I can barely move," Jackson groaned. His thumb stroked over the tight rosette of her ass, making her shiver with pleasure. "I can't wait to see this tight ass filled, baby. Maybe I'll spank it so it's nice and red first. I'll get you ready with one of my plugs, then I'll fuck it for you while Max fucks your sweet pussy."

"God, I can't wait until we both fuck her like that," Maxwell agreed. "Fuck, I'm going to come. Here it comes, Trinity. Drink me down, pet. Drink every drop."

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Trinity was glad she already came because her body tensed up with anger at their words. Maxwell groaned as his cock began spurting his release into her mouth. She drank down reflexively when what she really wanted to do was put him on his ass.

Actually, he was damn lucky she didn't just bite him.

She felt Jackson's hands tighten on her hips as he thrust one, twice more, then spilled himself deep inside of her with a low groan. The second they were done coming, she pushed hard on Maxwell, so he did fall back on his ass. She jerked away from Jackson, who braced himself at the last second before he took a header into the water.

“What the—?”

Trinity stomped away from them, diving into the water. When she came up she spit water out of her mouth, trying to clean the taste of Maxwell from her mouth. She had loved the taste of him, sweet and salty with a hint of something special that was Maxwell alone, but he had ruined it.

And Jackson...he was lucky she didn't just drown his ass.

How in the world could two very intelligent men be so stupid?

“Trinity?” Concern filled Maxwell's voice as he said her name.

She opened her mouth to blast both of them but choked on her words. Her eyes went wide and she quickly lowered into the water, covering most of herself as she looked past where a very angry Jackson was scowling at her and a concerned Maxwell

watched her from where he sat in the water.

“Well, my dear. It seems like you’ve found yourself between a stone and another hard body.”

Trinity sighed. It certainly seemed like the whole fucking island was going to end up seeing her naked before her vacation was over.

Chapter Fourteen

No. This could not be happening.

Jackson turned his head slowly and closed his eyes. When he opened them, the two figures he had hoped he’d imagined were still walking toward them from the direction of the cave he had suggested they retreat to earlier.

“Jesus, son. Put that thing away!”

Maxwell jumped to his feet and surged into the water until he was waist-deep. After a mortifying second, Jackson quickly followed. When he turned back around, the mayor, Adeline Carrington, was grinning at them as one of her husbands, Judge Jethro Carrington, scowled by her side.

Addie shielded her hand over her eyes. “Good afternoon, Jackson. Why, hello there, Mr. King! Welcome back to the island.” Before he could respond, she turned her head and waved cheerfully at where Trinity was in the water up to her neck. “Hello, Katrina! It’s so nice to see you again.”

“Ah, yeah. Hi, Addie.”

Jackson turned to shoot Trinity an incredulous look, which she simply returned with a

shrug and a what the hell do you want me to say look.

“Sorry to barge in on you like this. We were just walking and thought it would be better if we announced ourselves rather than just sneaking by. This is my husband, Jethro. We both had the day off today so—”

“I’m not sure this is the time for introductions, and it’s not sneaking to mind our own damn business,” Jethro muttered. He looked at his wife’s smiling face, then scowled at Jackson and Maxwell when he noticed where she was looking. “You boys need to cover those muscles up before you give my Addie a heart attack. And that water is pretty damn clear so can you...” His voice trailed off as he waved a hand toward them.

Jackson and Maxwell quickly moved their hands to the front of their bodies and tried to cover up their large, rapidly deflating cocks behind their hands.

Unable to help it, Trinity burst out laughing. She was relieved when Addie joined her. Trinity glanced over to see both Jackson and Maxwell glaring at her. “What? Seriously, like your hands are supposed to cover those monsters?”

“You are a lucky woman, Katrina,” Addie said with a grin.

“That’s it. We’re leaving!” Jethro declared, pulling on his wife’s arm. “We’re going to forget this ever happened. Do you understand me?”

“Yes, sir,” Jackson replied along with Maxwell’s quick nod.

Trinity nodded as well, then couldn’t help but call out to the retreating couple. “Oh, Jethro? You may want to rebutton your shirt. It’s a little...off.”

She watched the older man blush as he looked down to see that his shirt was two

buttons off the mark. Addie's laughter trailed on the wind as the older couple walked away.

Trinity's grin faded as Jackson groaned.

“Just fucking drown me now, because I'm never going to live this down.”

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Without waiting for them, she dove into the water and quickly made her way back to the boat. The men caught up to her as she pulled herself onboard. Not caring she was still wet, she put her clothes back on, glancing over to see that Jackson and Maxwell were doing the same.

On her swim back to the boat, Trinity's anger had returned. She got up and moved to take the driver's seat, but Jackson stopped her with a hand on her arm.

“What the hell was that back at the beach, Katrina?”

Her eyes narrowed on him as she jerked her arm away. “Seriously? You really don't know why I'm pissed? Then I suggest you think really hard. You, too,” she added as she shot a glare at Maxwell as he sat down in the driver's seat.

She muttered to herself as she sat down, ignoring them. As soon as Jackson pulled up the anchor, Maxwell put the boat in motion, speeding back toward the marina. By the time they made the turn back into the Blue Horizon Marina, part of her fury had faded. She was still angry but realized that she wasn't helping the situation by not telling them why she was so pissed.

Before they got back to the dock, Trinity turned her head to glare at the two men. She saw Maxwell shooting her irritated glances every few seconds and could see the anger plain on Jackson's face.

Good. They were pissed now, too.

Fan-fucking-tastic.

She sighed. “You might think I’m being a bitch, and yeah, maybe I am, but the two of you really did piss me off.”

“Why?” The question burst out of Jackson like an accusation. “What the hell did we do?”

Could they really be that clueless?

“I usually find dirty talk pretty fucking hot, but not the way you were doing it. Do you know how shitty you made me feel back there?” She turned bitter eyes toward Maxwell. “And I fucking warned you about my triggers.”

“I know you did, Trinity. But I have no bloody idea what I did that pissed you off!”

She sighed again. Maybe this was just her being too sensitive, but damn it, she couldn’t help the way she felt.

“I know about your pampered little playthings you usually bring to the island, Max. So, you better think twice before you ever call me your fucking pet again.”

He cursed. “I didn’t realize—”

“Yeah, well, it’s a deal breaker for me. Calling me your fucking pet and ordering me to drink your cum is not the way to get me to blow you again. Ever. It might work for some people, but I am not one of them. And you—” She rounded on Jackson. “—don’t you even think about coming anywhere near my ass with some toy you’ve used on your countless other hookups. If you do, you may find it shoved up your own ass.”

Jackson cursed viciously as the boat drifted back into the spot where it had originally been parked. She got up from her seat and grabbed her black case before it came to a

complete stop.

Slipping her sunglasses back on, she said, “Look. I know this is new to all of us. I get that. But this isn’t easy for me either. Now, I need some time to think all of this over. I’ll see you later.”

She hopped the short distance onto the dock, leaving the men to finish tying the boat back up.

Maxwell cursed as he turned off the boat. “Trinity? Where are you going?”

“I said I need time to think,” she called back to him.

Striding quickly along the dock, her scowl turned into a grin when she caught sight of a familiar figure leaning against the side of a sleek little red Porsche. Nikita Nuria was dressed in a pair of black cargo pants with a plain white tank, leaving her tattooed arms on full display. Her glossy black hair was pulled up in a messy bun on the top of her head, and her unusual violet eyes looked darker than normal behind a pair of amber sunglasses.

Even with part of her face covered, it was easy to see that she was gorgeous. The creepy manager who had checked them in earlier was obviously trying to hit on her, but Nikita was blatantly ignoring his attempts. When Simon leaned in closer, whatever she said made him stumble back in fear.

“We’re done with the boat for the day,” Trinity said to him, taking pity on the poor soul. “Why don’t you go grab the keys from the guys?”

Simon was smart enough to listen to her and quickly trotted away.

“What did you say to him?” Trinity asked.

“Just warned him what would happen if he kept bothering me.” Nikita nodded toward the case Trinity was carrying. “You shoot anyone with that thing?”

“Not today.” Setting down her case, she rushed forward and wrapped her arms around her reluctant friend. “Nikita! I’m so happy to see you!”

“Fine. Good. Whatever. Can you stop hugging me now?”

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Laughing, Trinity pulled back. “How did you find me?”

“I hacked your phone for your location.”

“Of course, you did.” Trinity couldn’t even say she was surprised. “Let’s get the fuck out of here and go have a drink.”

“Sounds good.” Without asking, Nikita opened the trunk of the car so Trinity could store her case away. “But they might have something to say about it.”

“Damn it, Katrina! Where the hell are you going now?” Jackson called out.

“I’m going for a drink with my friend. And no, you aren’t invited. This is going to be a penis-free evening!” Pulling the keys to her convertible out of her pocket, she tossed them at him. “Give those to Max.”

Trinity climbed into the passenger seat as Nikita started the car. Her friend glanced through the window at the two men now glaring at their vehicle.

“Which one is yours?”

Trinity sighed. “I guess both of them.”

Nikita snorted delicately. “I see you really embraced the island spirit. Are you just going to start collecting hot men now like a harem?”

“Fuck all the way off.”

Nikita's laughter drifted in the wind as she revved the engine and took off.

Chapter Fifteen

It was early evening and the center of town was crowded with people, but they were lucky enough to find a parking spot close to Siren's Cove. As Trinity and Nikita got out of the car and made their way toward the entrance of the bar, the doors opened and a group of women walked out.

Trinity immediately recognized Olivia, the woman she had met last time she had been in Siren's Cove with Jackson. She was with another young woman and three older ladies who all seemed to be speaking over one another.

When Olivia glanced over, she gave a cheerful wave. "Hi, Trinity!"

"Olivia," she said with a nod. "Nice to see you again."

One of the older women linked her arm through Olivia's and beamed a bright smile at them. "Olivia, honey, who are your friends?"

"This is my mother, Rosie Abbas. Mom, this is Katrina Cross and..."

"Nikita Nuria."

"My, you two are certainly a striking pair. Are you both new to our little island?"

Trinity nodded. "Yes, ma'am."

"Oh, so polite! How long are you here for?"

"Not long," Nikita replied.

“That’s undetermined yet,” Trinity said at the same time her friend spoke.

“Are you beautiful girls married yet?”

Nikita held up her tattooed ring finger. “Yep.”

Trinity shook her head and didn’t like the speculative gleam that was in the older woman’s eyes. “Olivia, have you told them about our upcoming auction?”

“No, I just—”

“That’s okay. Now is as good a time as any.” Rosie smiled sweetly. “We are hosting a charity auction soon. I’ll have an invitation delivered to you with all the details. But while we have you here, we should talk about how you can participate.”

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“Participate?” Confused, Trinity said, “Um, ma’am, really I—”

“We have several business owners donating various items. My husbands I are donating a fabulous vintage Rolex, and Oliva is donating some things from her store. Now, what do you do?”

Trinity and Nikita glanced at one another.

“Rosie,” one of the older women said with a chuckle. “She means your job. What do you do for work?”

“Yes, of course,” Rosie agreed. “Are you employed? If not, that is totally fine as well.”

“I own a tattoo shop in Texas,” Nikita explained.

“Oh, that’s cool,” the young woman standing next to Olivia said. “I love your tattoos. Did you design the ones on your arms?”

Nikita nodded. “But I’m not sure I’ll be here for—”

“That’s fine, honey. We’ll work around your schedule,” Rosie said, rolling right over her. “And you, dear?”

Trinity fought the urge to fidget. “I’m a security specialist.”

Rosie’s brow creased at that. “Well, I don’t quite know what that means or what we

can do with that.”

“I work for a company that creates and implements security systems in some of the largest corporations in the world and other high-value targets,” Trinity clarified.

Olivia gasped. “Wow, that’s awesome!”

“That sounds dangerous,” the other older woman said, sounding thrilled by the idea.

“It...can be,” Trinity admitted.

Rosie’s eyes widened comically. “My, my. So, I assume you know how to shoot and defend yourself?”

Among other things. “Yes, ma’am.”

“Perfect!” Rosie clapped her hands together, jostling the giant purse she was carrying. “We can auction off a special personalized training session with you. I’m sure we can get permission for you to use the gun range and training facility that our police officers use. I bet all the single men at the auction will be willing to pay loads of money to be able to spend a little one-on-one time with you. Even some of the married ones, too, if their wives don’t murder them first!”

“Oh, no. I couldn’t—”

“Sure you can! Now, where are you staying? With friends? Did you rent a place?”

“I’m at the Palace Resort, but—”

“I simply love that place! I’ll have your auction items printed up on the list.”

“Items?” Nikita asked with a raised brow.

“Of course, we can’t forget about you, dear. You won’t mind using the shop here in town to complete a tattoo, right?” Before she could reply, Rosie said, “I’ll send your invitations to the resort with all the details. It was so wonderful to meet you both and can’t wait to see you again soon! Have a good night!”

With that parting shot, Rosie whisked the other ladies away, leaving Trinity and Nikita alone in front of the bar.

“What the fuck just happened?” Trinity asked, feeling slightly dazed.

Nikita sighed. “It’s a small-town thing. I guess I’m doing a tattoo for charity. Again.”

“Again?”

“It happens in Breakers every now and then. I’ve learned it’s easier not to argue with do-gooders who are determined to make me participate in things I would rather avoid. Especially if it’s for charity.”

Trinity laughed. “I guess that’s the price you pay for friendship.”

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Nikita muttered a curse. “Now, I really need that drink.”

They made their way inside the Siren’s Cove. Since it was the start of the dinner rush, it was pretty crowded already. When the hostess tried seating them near the windows, Trinity and Nikita chose an isolated table in a dark corner instead. Trinity removed her sunglasses and ignored the heads that turned their way as they made their way toward the table.

Once they were seated, a cheerful redhead bounced over to their table. Nikita ordered a bottle of scotch and a platter of appetizers to share before she even glanced at the menus the waitress had given them.

Trinity groaned. “A bottle? Is it going to be one of those nights?”

Nikita shrugged. “It’s easier.”

“True.” Besides being easier, it was also safer since no one could tamper with their drinks that way. Even if they wasted half a bottle, that precaution was worth it.

“So, you’re dating two guys. Interesting,” Nikita mused. “How’s the sex?”

“Amazing, but it’s weird, right? Me being with two guys?”

“You’re on an island that caters to poly relationships,” Nikita pointed out dryly.

“I know, I know. But fantasizing about what that would be like is different in reality. As I said, the sex is great...it’s everything else that is totally fucked up. They are both

dominant to the extreme and like sweet, submissive women, and I am—”

“Not,” her friend finished for her. “Definitely not.”

“Exactly.”

“If that’s their thing, why are they interested in you?”

Trinity opened her mouth to respond, then closed it again as she thought that over.

“That’s a damn good question.”

“Maybe you are worrying for nothing.” Nikita’s gaze frosted over. “Are they pushing you to do something you don’t want to do?”

“No, it’s, well…”

Unsure how to explain what she was feeling, she told her friend about what had happened earlier that afternoon. Their conversation paused when their bottle of scotch was delivered along with two glasses. Trinity opened the bottle and poured them both a generous amount, then they tapped the glasses together before taking their first sip.

Trinity welcomed the burn as she gulped down a large amount of the amber liquid. She really had no idea what to do about Jackson and Maxwell. The two of them were so damn alpha they set her teeth on edge. It was going to take some serious conversations before the three of them could make their new relationship work. It wasn’t like she was any good with normal relationships, and making it work between the three of them was going to be even more difficult.

When she was finished explaining, Nikita said, “Maybe I’m missing something, but I don’t see the problem. I would have been pissed, too. The only difference is, I would have taken the boat and left their asses in the water.”

“So, you don’t think I’m overreacting?”

“You feel the way you feel. You don’t have to justify it or defend your reasoning. You are simply setting your boundaries and telling them what upsets you. If they don’t like it or can’t comply with what you are asking of them, then they can just walk away.”

“I feel like I’m being judgmental or something by bringing this shit up to them,” Trinity admitted. “I don’t think there is a right or wrong when it comes to kink between consensual adults. But the whole Dom/sub thing is just not for me.”

“Nothing wrong with that. People are into all kinds of shit. Just like some people like to dress up in costumes, while others like to get spanked by their pretend daddy. It’s all a personal choice. The issue is finding someone who matches your kind of kink. And if you can’t discuss this shit with your guys, then what’s the point of trying to be with them?”

Trinity didn’t have an answer to that, so she just said, “Clown costumes would be a deal breaker.”

“I’d fucking hope so. That shit is just creepy.”

She chuckled, then let out a long sigh. “Maybe I’m just not good at normal relationships.”

“Of course, you aren’t. We aren’t fucking normal, Trin. We never will be. We’re more desensitized to some things like life or death situations, but you might have more triggers than other people because of your experiences. That’s your baseline. If you’re comparing yourself to an average person for anything, you’re always going to be disappointed.”

“You are spitting some facts today. It’s kind of weirding me out.”

Nikita lifted her glass in a silent toast. “Clearly, I’m not the best person to ask for advice about this kind of shit considering I lack empathy and don’t really understand emotions. But people seem to be falling in love all over the fucking place in Breakers, so I can’t help but observe the chaos.”

“You are married,” Trinity had to point out.

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“Yeah, well, that’s an anomaly.”

She snorted out a laugh. “That still means you have more experience with relationships than I do. From one abnormal chic to another, it’s helping to hear your take on things.”

“Then, my advice? Show them your worst now. The bad, the crazy. Whatever. Don’t hold back if they piss you off or do something you don’t like. Smack them in the face with it. This way, you won’t get more emotionally involved and waste your time if you guys can’t find a way to compromise.”

“Is that what you did with Ash?”

“Kind of. I mean, I told him I was an emotional void, but he didn’t really believe it until I killed a bunch of people in front of him. Since he still wanted to marry me after all that, I decided he was a keeper.”

Trinity chuckled as she shook her head. “I heard about what happened in Costa Rica. I’d say the fuckers who tried to kidnap you and Ash got what they deserved.”

Nikita and Ashton Marks had recently gone to Costa Rica to participate in a friendly survival competition with a few of his friends. The competition had turned deadly when one of those friends had set them up to be abducted for the kidnap and ransom insurance money. But that plan had been blown to hell since the bad guys never expected to go up against someone like Nikita.

“Speaking of, I figured Ash would have come with you to the island.”

“He had to fly back to New York for some meetings. If I’m on the island long enough, he said he would meet me here. By the way, I brought a bag of goodies for you. It’s stashed in my hotel room. I wasn’t sure what you would need, but it should cover you while you are here.”

“Appreciate it.”

“Any updates on who tried to run you off the road?”

Trinity explained what she’d discovered in the paperwork and during her visit to the construction site. Nikita’s brow lifted when she got to the part about the guy sneaking into her hotel room.

“It’s strange. Someone is willing to kill to keep whatever is going on here quiet, but they aren’t exactly hiding the fact that something is wrong with the project.”

“They clearly aren’t criminal masterminds.”

“No, they aren’t.” Trinity recalled what Jackson had told her earlier about the kids at the beach party. “Something else just came up that we might have to look into. Have you heard of a new designer drug called Euphoria?”

Nikita’s expression hardened. “No. What is it?”

Trinity gave her a brief rundown, but there weren’t many details to share. “Apparently, it has been showing up all over Florida over the last few months, and it’s made its way here to the island now. A kid just died at a beach party, and several others got sick. With new party drugs, you know it’s only a matter of time before it spreads everywhere.”

“Shit.”

The conversation paused as their appetizer platter was delivered. The waitress must have been smart enough to realize that small talk wouldn't be appreciated since she hurried away right after telling them to enjoy their food.

“Do you know who is creating the drug?” Nikita asked.

“Unknown at the moment. The kid bought the drugs on the mainland and brought them to the island. It's probably one of the cartels, but nothing is confirmed.”

Cartels could be ruthless. They didn't give a shit about who they hurt or how many lives were lost from using their products. The only thing they cared about was making money. Trinity didn't bother saying that out loud since Nikita already knew.

“I just heard about the incident this afternoon so I haven't had time to look into it any deeper yet.” She felt a little twinge of guilt about that. Right after Jackson had informed her about the new drug, she should have called it in. “The police are investigating, but...”

“Yeah, but...”

Trinity bit into a mozzarella stick, letting the steaming melted cheese hang in the air for a few seconds before she shoved the rest of it in her mouth.

Nikita used the jalapeno popper in her hand to point at her. “Since I'm here, I'll look into the drug case, while you deal with this construction business.”

Trinity raised her glass in a mocking toast. “So much for retirement.”

Chapter Sixteen

Several drinks later, the atmosphere in Siren's Cove changed when the lights

dimmed. Every table in the large space was occupied, mostly by the dinner crowd, but some people were there to drink and listen to the live band that was set up on the stage in the back.

Trinity swayed to the music. “They’re a pretty good cover band.”

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Nikita poured them both another drink. “They are.”

“Another round? Fuck it, why not? I’ve got a nice buzz going. Let’s stay and get drunk tonight.”

“I don’t mind staying, but your men might.”

“I’m surprised they haven’t shown up yet.” She felt a little disappointed that they hadn’t even tried to call her.

“They’ve been here for half an hour.”

Surprised, Trinity glanced around. Sure enough, Jackson and Maxwell were seated at the long bar chowing down on a couple of burgers. Even though a crowd was starting to gather around the bar, the other patrons gave the two men a wide berth, probably due to Jackson’s fierce frown.

“I recognize Maxwell King,” Nikita commented. “I met him when he came to scout the area before they opened the Palace Resort in Ever After. And the other guy must be Lieutenant Jackson Stone.”

“The one with the perpetual scowl on his face? Yeah, that’s him. I’ll be right back. I’m going to the bathroom.”

Her friend smirked and said, “Sure thing.”

As soon as she stood up, Trinity immediately felt two pairs of eyes sighting down on

her. Doing her best to ignore them, she made her way toward the bathroom. On her way back to the table, she got an idea. Detouring toward the opposite end of the bar from where Jackson and Maxwell were sitting, she made the deliberate choice to squeeze up to the bar next to Alan Browning, the foreman of the resort construction.

Browning was a lean man, but his body was packed with muscle from years of doing hard labor. He was ruggedly handsome, but there was something off about him that triggered Trinity's internal alarm. Because of that, she wanted to see if she could get any information from the creep. As she leaned on the bar, one of the male bartenders immediately came over to serve her.

"What can I get you?" he asked with a suggestive smile.

"I just need a couple of bottles of water. My friend and I already have a bottle of the hard stuff."

When she pointed toward the table behind her with her thumb, the bartender laughed. "Honey, I know what table you're at. I think everyone in the bar does. You sure are a pretty pair. I'll get those bottles for you."

"Thanks."

When he left to get her drinks, Alan Browning said, "Drinking some expensive stuff tonight."

So, he'd noticed what she and Nikita were drinking.

"Good stuff," Trinity corrected. Feigning surprise, she did a double take and smiled at him. "Oh, hey! I met you earlier. I'm sorry, I forgot your name..."

"Alan. Alan Browning. You were with Mr. King at the construction site today," he

said before taking a long pull of his draft beer.

“Yep.” She laughed lightly. “Not that I know much about building stuff.”

“Seemed like you did on your visit today. In fact, it seems like you played a big part in shutting us down today. We’ve got a schedule to keep and we’re already behind. My guys need to work. They’ve got families to feed.”

His eyes narrowed on her, and she could see his tiny little brain working behind those cold brown eyes. She wanted to roll her own when his gaze drifted lower to her cleavage.

The bartender came back with two bottles of water. “Here you go!”

Instead of charging the bottles to their tab, Trinity pulled a twenty out of her pocket and set it down on the bar.

“I’ll be right back with your change,” the bartender said.

“No need.”

“Thanks!”

“That’s generous of you,” Alan sneered, his creepy gaze still roaming over her body. “Must be nice to have money to spend. Or is it your boyfriend’s money?”

Oh man, she really wanted to hit him.

Well, if he wasn’t pulling punches, then neither would she. “Sorry, I don’t need a man to buy me things. And maybe your men would be working and getting paid if you guys hadn’t fucked up the build so bad.”

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Alan Browning gulped down the last of his beer and slammed the glass down on the bar. He took out his wallet and threw down some money. He stood up, pressing closer to her than necessary. “You’ve got a smart mouth. When you’re done with the suit and want to give a real man a try, give me a call.”

He stormed away as the bartender came back.

“Hey, if you aren’t busy, why don’t you stick around? I get off work at—”

“She’s busy.”

“And taken.”

The bartender’s face paled as he stared at the two men standing behind her. She felt the heat of their bodies pressing against her. She sighed as she watched the bartender book it to the other end of the bar as fast as he could. Lifting the bottles of water in one hand, she turned and saw Jackson and Maxwell scowling at her.

She chose to smile in the face of danger. “Funny meeting you here.”

“Damn it, Katrina. What the hell were you doing talking to Alan Browning? Max told me what happened at the construction site earlier. That guy has every reason to hate your guts for closing down the project.”

“I didn’t close it down, Max did. And it’s not like he could have done anything to me here in front of all these people.”

“If he touched you, I would have killed him,” Maxwell said softly.

“Christ, you can’t say shit like that,” Jackson snapped. “And who’s to say he isn’t the one behind the attacks. You shouldn’t have gotten in his face like that.”

“Please, if that asshole would have made a move, I would have put him down myself. And I got close to him so I could see if I learned anything, and I did.”

“What did you learn, besides he likes to leer at women who don’t belong to him?” Maxwell asked evenly, setting her teeth on edge again.

“What I learned is that Browning has a problem with people who have money, even though he has plenty of his own,” she said slowly as if neither man were too bright. “His wallet was full of cash, and he was sporting a nice new Rolex on his wrist.”

“It could have been a fake,” Jackson argued.

She scoffed at that. “I knew how to tell the difference between fake and real by the time I was twelve and picking pockets on the street.”

Jackson’s vicious curse was drowned out by Maxwell’s laughter. “You have a strange and varied array of talents, love.”

Trinity grinned. “You know it.”

“Enough of this,” Jackson growled, grabbing her arm. “We’re leaving.”

“I can’t leave. I’m here with a friend.”

“Nikita left while you were in the bathroom,” Maxwell informed her. “She said you wouldn’t mind that she gave the rest of the bottle of scotch to the table next to yours.

Although, the two of you drank most of it already.”

She glanced over, and sure enough, a party of four was already seated at the table Trinity and Nikita had been sitting at. She guessed she didn’t have that excuse anymore. Pulling her phone out of her back pocket, she saw the text Nikita had left her telling her she was heading back to the resort.

With that confirmed, she put her phone away and grinned. “Well, I guess I’m free then.”

Sighing, she allowed herself to be pulled along in Jackson’s wake as Maxwell grabbed hold of her other hand, holding it as if they were out for a casual stroll instead of them dragging her out of the bar.

Enjoying her slight buzz, Trinity leaned into Jackson’s hard body, pressing up against him suggestively as soon as they were outside. She felt him take a deep breath, pushing his solid chest against her breasts, making her nipples tighten and tingle. “So, Lieutenant Stone...now that you found me, what are you going to do with me?”

His nostrils flared and his green eyes darkened with lust. “What I should do is spank you, you little hellion.”

Trinity raised a brow at that. “Is that supposed to be a threat? That could be fun. But I should warn you, if you spank me that means I get my turn next.”

His eyes narrowed on her. “I don’t get spanked, baby. I dish it out.”

She leaned in closer. “Well, you better learn to take it.” She nipped at his lower lip with her teeth, sucking it lightly before releasing it with a saucy grin. “Because I give as good as I get.”

He cursed again as she pressed herself close enough to rub against the erection straining his jeans. She felt Max crowd against her back, the hard ridge of his shaft settling against the crease of her ass. No matter how annoyed she was with them, these men definitely made her hot. She felt her core heat as she imagined those hard cocks working inside her together, bringing her the ultimate pleasure.

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“Perhaps we should take this off the street before one of Jackson’s colleagues has to arrest us for indecent exposure.” Maxwell’s voice was a rough whisper of sound.

“We’ll go to my house. The three of us need privacy. Follow me there.” Jackson’s eyes gleamed with an unholy light. “Max will drive you since you’ve been drinking.”

Since the command in his voice irked her, she released him and wrapped herself around Max, who welcomed her into his embrace. “You going to take me for a ride, sugar?”

“I’d love to,” he said with a grin.

She loved looking into Maxwell’s sapphire blue eyes. Actually, she loved the way he looked at her. Like he was completely focused on her and her alone.

“Car. Now,” Jackson growled beside them.

Taking her hand again, Maxwell led her toward where he’d parked. She wasn’t surprised to see Jackson’s motorcycle squeezed up right behind her car. It figured. He was always on her ass. She snorted at her own joke, making both her guys glance at her. She shrugged, not bothering to explain.

Maybe they’d understand if they had a drink...or three.

She slid into the passenger seat of her convertible without opening the door and was glad the seat had already been moved all the way back so she could stretch her legs out. Maxwell got in and started the car as Jackson’s engine revved behind them. The

throbbing sound of his bike increased as he pulled out of his spot, and Maxwell shifted into gear and pulled out after him.

The cool wind blew Trinity's hair back, and she rested her head back, enjoying the perfect weather and the clear night sky. There was an air of seriousness that settled over them as they took the road out of town, headed toward the isolated side of the island where Jackson lived.

"I'm sorry about earlier, Trinity," Maxwell said sincerely, breaking the silence. "Believe me, I never meant to make you feel like I was using you in any way."

She sighed. "I know you didn't, but it still pissed me off. I mean, how would you like it if I acted like any man would do while you were inside me?"

She watched as his jaw clenched. Clearly, he didn't like that idea.

Warming to the discussion, she continued. "It's pretty obvious that the chemistry and sexual attraction is there between me and both of you, but I don't think you guys really know me. And that is the big fucking problem we have."

"You have to tell us then. You can't just walk away when we're having an argument."

"Honestly? I was too pissed to stick around and needed to walk away to think."

Maxwell was quiet as they continued to drive. When they got to the residential area, it was surprising to see how much land each of the properties had. All of the houses located in that area were far away from one another, ensuring privacy.

No, not houses.

They were big ass villas.

She was surprised. Even though she knew Jackson came from money, it was still a shock to see the large white mansion they pulled up to. The house was surrounded by palm trees, shielding part of the front of the building, and there were various levels with balconies that opened up to the sea in the back.

The structure itself was white, but the roof was a dark gray, giving it some contrast. There were a lot of wide windows, allowing a lot of light into each of the levels, but that made Trinity cringe since it was a serious security risk. There was a smaller house on the property off to the left side. By normal standards, it was a good-sized house. However, next to the main structure it looked tiny in comparison.

They pulled up in the circular drive in front of the house and got out of the car as Jackson got off his bike. When she glanced at the smaller house, she had to fight back a smile as he fidgeted.

“My...housekeepers live there. Rosa, Maria, and Hector have been with my family since I was a kid. Let’s go in.”

He unlocked the front door and led them through a wide-open foyer. Maxwell gripped her hand in his as they led her up a flight of wooden stairs, then turned toward the left wing of the house. She had a nagging feeling that she was being led to her doom. It was the same feeling she often got when approaching an ambush in the field.

It was killing her buzz quick, and she didn’t like it.

She didn’t like it one bit.

They led her down a wide hallway to an enormous bedroom that was done up in dark

colors, with deep, crimson-colored walls. The centerpiece of the room was a dark mahogany, four-poster bed that was as big as a lake. The bed was covered with a duvet a few shades lighter than the walls, with a dark gray throw folded at the end of the bed. There was also a large maroon couch and a few chairs in the room, but basically, that was it for furniture. It had a small balcony facing the back of the house and an opened doorway led to what she assumed was a bathroom.

It was a beautiful room, but somehow it felt...cold to her.

She frowned when Jackson moved a chair to the center of the room. When Maxwell led her to the wooden chair, she hesitated briefly until he tugged her forward lightly.

“Have a seat, love.”

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She had a feeling that would be a really bad idea, but the scotch she'd consumed made her override her warning system. Giving in, she sat down cautiously, wondering what they were up to. Then, she jerked in surprise as both Jackson and Maxwell pulled out the attached straps on the armrests that she hadn't seen.

"Have you two lost your fucking minds?" she asked softly, her voice a deadly whisper.

Both Jackson and Maxwell finished binding her to the chair and took a seat on the couch, facing her.

"No, but we've decided that we're sick of you running off when we're talking," Jackson bit out angrily.

"You said we didn't know you. So, we are going to talk. Here and now. This way you can't leave if you don't like what we have to say until this is done," Maxwell said it so casually, had she been free she knew she would have slapped his handsome face.

She struggled against the straps, testing their strength, then stopped. She glanced around the room as she tried to get control of her rage, but it wasn't working. This was the way they wanted to handle this? Like a fucking interrogation? The setup inside the room made her blood run cold as she finally realized what she'd been missing.

Her head whipped back so she could glare at Jackson. "This isn't your bedroom."

It was a statement, not a question.

He stilled. “Why do you say that?”

“Because it’s not. There are no personal items of any kind in here. Are you fucking kidding me? After what I told you today, you bring me into your fuck room in order to interrogate me?”

He cringed slightly at that, then narrowed his eyes at her. “I brought you in here because I knew I could make you stay put so we could finish a fucking conversation. I was going to blindfold your stubborn ass, too, but—”

“If you even try it, I promise you this will be the last time you ever see me.” She’d spoken in a voice so cold she wasn’t surprised when both men flinched. “This has got to be the most fucked-up thing any man has ever done who claims to be trying to have a relationship with me.”

“That’s just it,” Maxwell snapped. “We’re trying. This is so we can talk. If you need to tell us about yourself so we understand you better, then this is what we’re willing to do to make that happen. Trinity, we want you to tell us what you need—”

“What I need is to have my head examined for even considering having anything to do with either of you after you pull this shit. You want me to tell you about me? In here? Like this?”

Perhaps it was the liquid courage running through her system, or the advice that her friend had given her earlier that made her want to show them exactly why it was so dangerous to piss her off. Her breathing sped up despite her struggle to remain in control.

Fuck it, she was losing it fast.

They wanted the real her?

Then, she would give it to them.

“Want to know how my last mission went? I went undercover to help take down a pretty nasty human trafficking ring and had my hands tied behind my back before I was shoved into a cargo container with several other people who were just trying to buy their way to a new life. Then, imagine four men climbing into the back of the truck with you, and the only light is from one tiny little lamp that they’ve brought in so they can see what they’re doing. And what they’re trying to do is rape you and another young woman who is stuck in there with you.”

“My god...” Maxwell breathed out.

“Katrina—”

“No,” she barked out, aware that there were tears shimmering in her eyes now. She could see the regret on both of their faces, but she wasn’t backing down now.

She had things she had to say.

Things they needed to understand about her.

“You asked for it, so you’ll get it. I was able to grab the knife off of one of the men when he came for me and ended up slicing my own wrist trying to free my hands. I fought so damn hard, and when another came at me with a gun, I managed to take him out with just a graze instead of a bullet to my chest. I was finally able to free myself, but we broke the lamp in the process so it was pretty brutal and messy after that.”

She took a shuddering breath and forced herself to continue.

“I killed four men to save myself but was stuck there in the dark, bleeding from the

wrist and stab wounds to my side until my team could come for me. That's who I am. I'm not a woman who needs to be told what to do or will tolerate being fucking dictated to. I need control of myself and my actions. It's not a preference for me. It's survival. And this? Do you want to know what I really think of all this?"

Holding onto the arms of the chair, she shot to her feet and whirled around, slamming the chair against the bedpost. She was practically sobbing now, barely able to breathe, but pure rage was leading her actions now. She continued to slam the chair until the wood cracked into pieces and the bedpost snapped. Off balance, she fell to the ground.

Before she hit the floor, Jackson caught her to him, holding her tight. "Jesus Christ! I'm sorry, baby. I'm so fucking sorry."

He hurried to help Maxwell undo the straps still binding her arms to the slates of broken wood. Once she was free, she hauled her fist back and let it fly. Jackson's head snapped back as her fist connected with his pretty face.

“Son of a bitch!”

“That’s for being stupid,” she snarled at him, then slammed her mouth down on his in a brutal kiss. He gripped her hair in his hand, holding her still as he met her aggression head-on, feeding off of her as she did him, their tongues tangling together in wild fervor.

He pulled back with a curse and touched his lip. “You fucking wildcat.”

Her eyes narrowed on him at the new nickname, then she swung her head over to Maxwell as he laughed.

“Kat. It suits you,” he claimed. “One minute you’re purring and rubbing against us, and the next you’re spitting and swiping at us with your claws.”

“Oh, really? How about this?”

She reached up and got a good hold of Maxwell’s shirt, ripping it apart so the fabric was torn in half.

“Well, now...this shirt was expensive,” he said, his blue eyes practically glowing with lust and laughter.

“Bill me,” she retorted.

Maxwell growled as he yanked her into his arms. He took her lips in a searing kiss, sharing the same wild heat that she had with Jackson seconds earlier. She crawled

onto his lap, straddling him and rubbing against his rock-hard shaft like the cat he'd nicknamed her.

"Not in here," Jackson said, distracting them. "Not in this room."

"Why," she asked mockingly as she turned her head to glare at him. "Don't you fuck all your women in here?"

His eyes narrowed. "And you've made it clear how you feel about that when you broke the fucking chair into pieces."

"You're lucky that's all I did. I want to torch this damn room."

"Jealous much?" Jackson shot back with a smirk.

"Hell, yes, I am," she snapped. "If you're serious about making this work, then you're mine just as much as I'm yours. Do you want to hear about the last man I slept with before you two? How many times we did it and in what positions?"

"No!" both men shouted.

"Being in here is the equivalent of that. It's like a fucking slap to the face."

"Then, I'll tear the damn place apart myself tomorrow," Jackson swore as he hauled her into his arms as he stood. "But right now, I'm taking you to my room and we're going to fuck you on my bed where you belong."

He carried her out, taking her down the long hallway to the right wing of the house to his room at the end of the hallway. When they got to his room, he didn't stop until he tossed her onto his massive bed.

Where the other room had been cold, this room felt like his personal domain. It had the same mahogany wood furniture as the other one, but the walls were a soft, pale blue that matched the duvet covering the bed. Clothes were thrown over one of the chairs and scattered over the floor. There was an enormous TV over a gas fireplace and a set of French doors leading to a large balcony that overlooked the sea. The glass balcony doors and wide windows let the moonlight spill into the room, giving them enough light to see everything clearly.

Jackson realized that having her here in his space felt right. It felt like she belonged there. That thought should have freaked him out, but strangely, it didn't.

She had been right. The other room had been where he had taken women when he had them over. He never allowed anyone he was seeing into his own bedroom, his haven. And he had fucked up taking Trinity in there. She hadn't belonged in that room, and he'd known it. Having her in there had felt wrong, but he had been determined to get her to open up to him.

He'd gone with his default, using sexual persuasion to get what he wanted, but that had been a mistake. But he hadn't realized just how badly he'd miscalculated until she had started speaking.

She pushed him back when he tried to come down on top of her and shook her head. Without looking away from him, she reached out and pulled Maxwell down on the bed next to him.

"Uh uh, Jackson. You still need to be punished for pulling that shit in the other room."

"What?"

"I'll take care of you later. That's a promise. But as your punishment, this first round

you have to watch Max fuck my brains out.”

Maxwell suck in a sharp breath, then he grinned. “With pleasure.”

“Damn it, Katrina!” Jackson raged.

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“Sit back and relax, Jackson. Because, baby, this is going to be a pleasurable ride.”

Chapter Seventeen

Maxwell’s cock was so hard it was painful to move as he shifted on the bed next to Trinity. He knew she needed this to get some of her control back, and he was more than happy to comply. Jackson, however, was glaring at both of them as he stomped away. He flicked on the gas fireplace, setting the room aglow before he shoved himself into a chair a few feet away.

Getting back to the task at hand, Maxwell leaned in, bringing his lips a breath away from hers. “You are a handful, Kat.”

She raised his hands to cup her large breasts and grinned at him. “Two, actually.”

He choked back a laugh as he used his thumbs to flick over both of her nipples through her shirt and bra, making her moan. “More than a handful here, love. I think it’s time we take this off you.”

She sat up and he helped her remove her shirt and bra, sliding the straps down her arms slowly until her body was bare to his gaze. He was also acutely aware there was another man watching, so he made sure to put on a good show.

“You’re so beautiful, Kat. So golden and smooth...”

“The jeans. Take off her jeans so I can see our pussy,” Jackson demanded.

Trinity glanced over to see that he had undressed completely and was now slowly stroking his large cock with his hand.

“You said I had to watch, but you didn’t say I couldn’t touch myself while Max takes care of you, baby.”

“I didn’t, did I?”

“No, but don’t worry, Kat. I won’t make myself come. When I do, it will be with you,” he vowed as his voice lowered to a growl.

His promise thrilled her, and she felt her body heat and her pussy slicken at his words. She was so mesmerized at the sight of his hand moving up and down his cock that she barely noticed Maxwell taking off her jeans. As Jackson’s eyes trailed over her naked body, she could almost feel his gaze stroking over her like a phantom hand.

She yelped as Maxwell’s hand came down sharply on her ass as she lay on her side. Turning, she glared at him. “What was that for?”

“Pay attention to the man who is naked in bed with you, love.”

She slowly smiled. “Were you feeling neglected, blue eyes?”

Turning over, she crawled to him, enjoying the sight of his naked body on display for her. “I love your muscular body. You’re so strong, Max,” she whispered as she traced her fingertips lightly over his bulging biceps. “So strong and yet, you touch me so gently.”

“I want to pleasure you, Kat. You know I’d never hurt you.”

She kissed him lightly, nibbling on his lower lip as she did. “I love your quiet

strength and your control. But I also want to see how much you want me.”

“You know I want you,” he said between kisses.

“Then show me.” She cocked her head to the side. “I wonder, what would it take to make you lose control?”

“You don’t want me to lose control, love.”

“But I do, blue eyes. I want you to be wild for me. Crazy with need for me, Max.”

“I am, you little hellcat.”

He reached for her, but she countered, evading his grasp. She crouched on the large bed, grinning at him.

“Not enough,” she taunted playfully.

His nostrils flared. Like a predator after his prey, he studied her, eyes narrowed. “This is a dangerous game you’re playing, Kat.”

“I live for danger,” she whispered.

“You’re going to get spanked taunting him like that, baby,” Jackson swore from where he was sitting watching them play. It was torture watching them while he couldn’t join in. His hands ached from the desire to touch her, to stroke all of that golden skin and her lush breasts. He wanted to spank her perfect ass himself for daring to challenge him but didn’t know how he felt about her reciprocating.

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And he knew without a doubt she wouldn't hesitate to retaliate.

He squeezed the base of his cock, forcing himself not to come at that thought. This wild, wonderful woman had been able to wrap both him and Maxwell around her little finger, but he didn't regret it.

Jackson's heart had broken into pieces in the guest room, and he'd felt his soul shatter when she had used the rage inside her to break free of the bonds that he'd tried to put around her. He was a soldier, too. How could he have not seen the same pain and anguish in her that he'd experienced himself? That was partly why he held himself under such tight control.

Survival, she'd said. That was something he understood.

Watching her break had destroyed him in a way he'd never thought possible. Her pain had become his own. And knowing that he had been responsible for pushing her to react so violently was something he would never forgive himself for. But watching her now, so lively and playful made his heart ache in a different way.

This is how he always wanted to see her.

In his bed.

In his life.

Maxwell let out a laughing curse as she evaded him again. Then, he hissed out a breath when she took advantage of their bare skin and stroked his rock-hard shaft

with her hand before she moved out of his reach again. Violent lust vibrated through him, making him a volcano ready to explode.

She was making him work for it, and he was loving every second. She wanted him to prove how much he wanted her, and he gladly would.

“Fuck! You little hellcat, I swear to god, you are going to pay for this.”

“Promises, promises,” she taunted.

Maxwell reached for her again, and this time she let him catch her. They came together, both of them on their knees, teeth clicking as their mouths met in a brutal kiss. He used his strength to flip her over onto her back, coming down on top of her as she let out a wild laugh.

God, he loved her like this.

Wild, wanton, and vibrating with energy. Touching her was like grabbing hold of a live wire. If she needed a pleasurable escape to recover from her emotional explosion earlier, then he was ready and willing to help her.

His body was on fire for her, but it wasn't just that he wanted her. He needed her. Patience gone, his control simply snapped. He hoped to hell she was ready because he couldn't wait any longer. He used his own legs to part her strong thighs and shoved his rock-hard aching cock deep inside her with one fierce thrust.

Breathing heavy, Maxwell stayed completely still. “Ready, love?”

“God, yes!” she gasped. “Don't stop!”

“Hold on, Kat. This is going to be hard and fast.”

He yanked her hands overhead, weaving their fingers together as he kissed her again. Not holding back, Maxwell began fucking her with the full power of his strong body. Hips pumping like a steam engine, he thrust into her tight pussy over and over again, giving them both exactly what they needed.

“You like that, my little wildcat? You like knowing you make me want you to the point of madness? Like I’ll die if I don’t come inside you?” he bit out, punctuating his words with hard thrusts.

“Yes!”

She screamed as her body shook with her release, and Maxwell let out a shout of his own as she forced him to come when her body locked down around him. Fiery jets of semen tore from his cock, filling her as he ground his hips into hers.

Panting for breath, he lay over her and nuzzled the side of her neck. Their hearts pounded in sync until they heard the impatient growl coming from the other side of the room.

Trinity opened her eyes as Maxwell moved off of her. She kissed him again, lingering in the feeling of what they had just shared before getting up from the bed. She slowly walked toward Jackson, admiring him in all his glory. There before her was a predator, watching her with barely restrained hunger. He was sinfully sexy, sitting there with his powerful body gleaming in the firelight. His enormous erection was rock hard, and the bulbous head was an angry red. Every muscle in his body was tense as if he were ready to strike, but he remained still as he watched her approach him.

“Do you want this?” he asked, gripping that large cock in his hand.

“Yes.”

“Then, show me,” he ordered, spitting back the same words she had said to Maxwell earlier. “Show me that you want me, Kat. Show me that you need me, too, even though you have Max’s cum inside you.”

She saw the uncertainty in his beautiful green eyes even though he tried to hide it behind his rough facade. He had been punished enough. It had been unfair of her, but now this was their time together. Aware that Maxwell had propped himself on the bed to watch, Trinity moved forward. She slid one knee on the side of Jackson’s leg, then the other so she was straddling him on the large chair.

With a tenderness she didn’t know she had in her, she cupped his face between her hands. “I need you, too, Jackson. So much that it scares me. But I don’t know if I can be what you need.”

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“I need you, Katrina.” His voice was harsh as if the words were torn from him. “Just you, exactly as you are.”

She leaned forward, sharing a kiss with him that was filled with passion and longing. She rose up enough to move the head of his cock to the entrance of her pussy, then slid down until he was fully sheathed inside her. They both sighed in pleasure and his arms wrapped around her like steel bands, holding her in place. She began to rock against him in a slow, easy ride, breaking their kiss so she could look at him.

She stroked her hands over his face, then down his neck and broad chest. “I love feeling you inside me, so big and hard.”

“And I love being inside your hot, tight little pussy. But I need you to let me in.”

“I am,” she said on a breathless laugh. “Jackson, if you were any further in me you’d be in my throat right now.”

He shook his head, remaining serious. “No. Not here.” He punctuated his words with a thrust of his cock. “Here.”

He placed a hand on her heart, bringing tears to her eyes.

“I want to,” she whispered.

“Ah, god. Baby, please don’t cry.”

Jackson felt his heart melt. Nothing got to a man more than a strong woman with

tears sparkling in her eyes. He pulled her close so he could kiss her eyelids, his lips trailing down her face until he captured hers again, giving into the passion between them.

She sped up, rising and falling on his cock faster, swirling her hips in a way that had his toes curling every time she slid down on him. He gripped her hips hard as he thrust up inside her, their bodies moving as one, racing toward the ecstasy that awaited them.

“Kat, I’m going to come.”

“Come, Jackson. Give it to me, give it all to me,” she demanded.

“Not until you do. Come for me. Come on my cock, baby,” he ordered as he worked a hand between them so he could flick her clit with his thumb.

He watched as Trinity threw her head back, moaning as she came. She looked like a goddess, her hair trailing down her back so it brushed against his knees, her breasts thrust out toward him as she writhed on his cock in pleasure. Her pussy held his cock so tight he could barely move inside her, but it was her face that drew his own release from him.

He had never seen anything as beautiful as she was when she came.

ecstasy.

He gripped her hips with both hands, holding her down on him as his cum exploded from his cock. Ecstasy shot through him, making his entire body shake as he filled her with his release. His arms wrapped around her as she collapsed against him and he held her tight, never wanting to let go. A contentment that he had never known filled him. No matter their differences, or the fact he might have to share her with

another man.

She was his.

There was something special between him and Trinity. And now, he needed her to let him into her heart, because she had already worked her way into his.

Chapter Eighteen

After placing an order for pizza and a quick cleanup, the trio retreated to the back patio with their food and a few beers. Trinity also grabbed a bottle of whiskey from Jackson's bar and three shot glasses, which the men eyed warily.

"Haven't you drank enough of the strong stuff tonight?"

"Don't worry about me. I have an iron stomach, and I think we might need this for our discussion," she said as she set it down on the patio table by the pool.

Jackson lit the fire pit, a large brick and stone circle that was near the pool, adding some heat to chase away the slight chill in the night air. They sat down and made quick work at devouring the two extra-large pizzas they'd ordered, all of them seeming to agree to stay on safer subjects while they ate.

When she'd had her fill of pizza, Trinity leaned back in her chair holding her beer. "I like your house, Jackson. At first, it wasn't what I expected for you, but it's peaceful here."

Jackson shot Maxwell a look. He had wanted to bring this up, and now was the perfect opening. He just didn't know how she would react. "I'm glad you said that, Kat, because I want you to move in."

She froze with her bottle of beer at her lips, then she lowered it back to the table. “I’m sorry, what?”

“Jackson and I talked about this while you were busy with your friend earlier. You were attacked in my hotel. Even with the added security, I’m not willing to risk you,” Maxwell explained. “Neither of us are. Until we figure out exactly what is going on, I want you somewhere safe. If you are willing, both you and I will move in here with Jackson.”

She was quiet as she thought it over, and Jackson used that to push. “Hector used to be on the force with one of my dads. He’s retired now and watches over the property when I’m not here. Rosa and Maria also have sharp eyes and will tell us if they see anything out of the ordinary.”

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She reached for the bottle of whiskey and poured three shot glasses, filling them half-full. “This is important to you?”

“Yes,” both men said immediately.

“Fine. Drink.”

They took the glasses but gave her confused looks as they all drank the shots. Trinity enjoyed the burn as it went down. The idea had come to her that this was the perfect way to loosen them up in order to hash out some of the details of their relationship. And with the amount of shit they had to talk about, she was glad she was only pouring half shots, or else they would all be puking in the morning.

“We have a lot to discuss, and these shots are a way of saying we’re all in agreement.”

“Can’t we just say it instead of drinking ourselves to death?” Maxwell asked.

“Where is the fun in that?”

Jackson raised a brow. “So, you want to make rules for our relationship?”

“More like guidelines so we don’t walk into a clusterfuck like we did earlier,” she clarified. As both men flinched, she waved a hand in the air while she used her other to pour another small shot into each of their glasses. “I’m not angry. At least, not anymore. I’m just still worried that I’m not the right woman for you.”

“Why do you say that?” Jackson asked.

Thinking back to the advice Nikita had given her earlier, Trinity decided to lay it all out there for them.

“Clearly both of you are alpha to the core, but so am I. I’m guessing both of you usually go for women you can bend to your will. I like kink as much as the next girl. Hell, I bet I’m even more adventurous than most, but the domination, control, and the set stages of seduction are just not my thing.”

She huffed out a breath as she tried to find the right way to say what she was feeling.

“I know we don’t know each other well yet, but there are some things I think we need to establish before we can move forward. I would end up hating myself and you if I felt forced to do something that went against who I am. And if I’m not able to provide what you want or need, that’s not fair to you either.”

“What do you mean, Trinity? I want you just as you are,” Maxwell swore.

“We both want you, Katrina,” Jackson said firmly. “I thought we made that clear.”

She sighed. “I know, but I’m still a little worried. I’m not exactly normal, so any relationship I have is going to be extra complicated. I need someone who will stand with me, not behind and not in front. But that’s pretty difficult considering what I do for a living. And I have triggers. More than most people. Part of that has to do with my past, but some of them are based on recent experiences. Like being in the dark. I never used to have a problem with that, but ever since that storage container...”

“After what you went through, that is completely understandable,” Maxwell said.

“What do you mean about your past?” Jackson asked.

“I never knew my dad and my mom chose the bottle over me. And growing up in foster care, I was never wanted. Sure, some of the places were better than others, but mostly I was just another mouth to feed. And then there was the last place where the couple had seemed nice, until I realized the husband wanted me a little too much.”

Both men went dangerously still.

“Did that fucker touch you?” Jackson growled.

Trinity shook her head. “He would have, but I ran away before he got a chance.”

Maxwell grabbed the bottle and poured the liquor until it was to the brim of his and Jackson’s glasses. Both men quickly drank down the shots.

“Don’t worry, the story gets better from here,” she assured. “I was twelve when I ran away, and a few months later, I tried to boost a car and got caught. Turns out it was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. I met Ben Cross, an agent for Homeland Security, and he and his wife adopted me. I finally had a home, but still, a little part of me was always waiting for them to change their minds and boot me out on the street again. My adoptive parents were great. They still are. Now that they’ve both retired they’re traveling the world together, so I don’t see them much.”

“You followed in his footsteps,” Jackson said, encouraging her to continue.

“I did, but my disdain for authority got me in trouble time and time again.” She laughed a little. “If you bothered to check my file at Homeland, I think I might still hold the record for the most reprimands. So, that’s why when the opportunity came with IAD, I jumped at it. The point I’m trying to make is I need someone who wants me...for me.”

“No bullshit,” Jackson said seriously. “I want you. Thinking about you walking out of

here and leaving me is like...I can't do it. I can't lose you now that I've found you. I know that nothing about our relationship has been normal so far, but as you said, we aren't normal. Make no mistake, I want you. Maybe I needed all that extra shit because I've never found a woman I cared about enough to be with before you."

"But how can you be sure?"

"I know I'd do just about anything to keep you, Katrina." Jackson's green eyes burned into hers with conviction. "We'll learn as we go. You can never plan how this will turn out, but I'm willing to try."

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Trinity closed her eyes, unsure what to do. She felt someone lift her chin and opened her eyes to stare into Maxwell's brilliant blue. "I'm a dominant man, I admit that. But I've never really been into anything more than being commanding in bed. I've already told you, if you need me to work on dialing that back, then I will."

"I just won't listen to you," she said with a sassy smile.

Maxwell chuckled before pressing his lips against hers in a light kiss. "That doesn't surprise me. This isn't something that we can solve in one night, but we understand you better now." He glanced over at Jackson for confirmation, who nodded in return. "There are reasons for who you are and what you need. Just like each of us have reasons for who we are and what we need."

"But that's the thing. Sometimes chemistry isn't enough," she said. "If what you need isn't something I—"

"What I need is you, Trinity. It's as simple as that," Maxwell promised.

"Me, too. We can make this work," Jackson insisted. "Are you willing to try, Katrina? Just like you need us to respect what you need, I need you to be open and honest and not run when I do something you don't like. I'd rather you fight with me instead of walking away."

"I can try," she agreed.

"That's all we can ask," Maxwell said, refilling all of their shot glasses.

She raised it, and they tapped glasses. “Looks like we’re all in. God help you guys because I have a feeling I’m going to drive you crazy.”

“Baby, you already do.”

Chapter Nineteen

The fear was the first thing that crept through.

The darkness was like a living, breathing thing, trying to strangle everything in its wake. With it brought the horrible memories that left her weak with terror. Trinity’s eyes popped open, and a strangled cry left her raw throat as she struggled to breathe. The dark was everywhere, the moonlight no longer shining through Jackson’s bedroom windows, and it felt like she was trapped in a nightmare with no escape.

The three of them had stayed up until the early hours of the morning, drinking and talking, simply getting to know one another better. They had been open and candid, sharing their likes and dislikes with each other. She had learned that Jackson harbored fears of being in a trio because of the way his mother had behaved, and Trinity had promised to do her best never to pit the men against one another.

Maxwell was a workaholic and needed help loosening up. He also expressed concerns about her being an agent. He told her and Jackson that he felt better knowing there were two of them watching out for her, no matter how proficient she was at taking care of herself.

When their discussion was done, they retreated back to Jackson’s bedroom, where they had taken turns making love slowly. This time, Jackson had been first, then Maxwell. She had known that they would have been willing to take her at the same time, but she just wasn’t ready for that yet. When they had fallen asleep, she had felt happy and sated curled up between their big, powerful bodies.

But then the nightmare came...

She should have known the emotional rollercoaster from last night would have brought back the memories of her last mission. Sometime during the night, the curtains had been drawn across the windows, completely blocking out the morning light. Needing to break free from the nightmare, Trinity stumbled from the large bed where she had fallen asleep between Jackson and Maxwell.

Unable to breathe, she gasped for air. Knowing her jerking movements had woken both men up, she couldn't bring herself to care as she tumbled to the floor, trying to make her way to the door.

She needed out of the dark...right fucking now.

Suddenly she was surrounded, Jackson and Maxwell both holding her while she gasped for breath, emotionally torn to pieces. She fought them, but their tenderness overwhelmed her desire to break free and she ended up holding onto the safety they represented.

"Katrina! What is it? What's wrong?" Jackson asked, worried.

"I need to get out!" she gasped.

"Fuck! The lights! Why are the windows covered?" Maxwell snapped.

"Shit! I have automatic blinds." Jackson released her to race over to the nightstand where he used a remote to draw the curtains back from over the window, letting the early morning light spill into the room. He hurried back to where Max held her and pressed himself close, lending her his strength.

"Sorry, just give me a minute." Ashamed and embarrassed, she tried to curl into

herself, but they simply wrapped themselves around her.

Holding her, comforting her.

“You have nothing to apologize for,” Jackson snapped, fear making him irrational.

“We’ve got you, love. Please, don’t cry. You’re not alone in the dark. You’re not alone anymore. I’m here,” Maxwell whispered in her ear.

“We’re here,” Jackson corrected.

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“I hate that you’re seeing me break like this,” she said, her voice cracked.

Maxwell gripped her face in his hands, forcing her to look at him. “You did not break, Trinity. Never that. You are the strongest person I have ever met, and I’m sorry that we added to your pain last night.”

“Of course, you would have had a nightmare after we made you talk about what haunted you.” Jackson’s voice was rough with self-recrimination. “I’m sorry, baby.”

“I want to go outside. I can’t breathe in here.”

“Here, baby. We’ll go outside, then. Anything you want.” Jackson picked her up, grateful that she didn’t push him away or try to get him to release her. Honestly, he wasn’t sure if he could let her go.

He needed to hold her.

He needed it like he needed air.

Maxwell opened the door leading to the balcony as Jackson carried her outside. He sat down on a large wicker chaise with thick, soft cushions with her in his lap. Maxwell sat down next to them, rubbing her back as they both continued to comfort her. She had stopped crying and was simply quiet.

Somehow the quiet worried him more.

Trinity fought to get her emotions back under control. Embarrassed, she sat up,

wanting to put some distance between them. “I’m okay now.”

“Don’t. Please don’t pull away from us,” Maxwell said softly.

Allowing herself a few more seconds of comfort, she curled up on Jackson’s lap, letting herself enjoy the feeling of his arms wrapping around her as Maxwell rubbed his large hands up and down her legs that were lying across his lap. She took one of his hands and held it in hers, needing that added connection.

“Did you have a nightmare?” Jackson asked softly. “Was it about your last mission?”

She nodded. “Since then, I’ve had a problem with being in the dark. It’s why I’m still on medical leave. I can’t put my team at risk if I might freak out on an op. I’d put everyone in danger.” She sighed. “The problem is, I don’t know what else to do. I love my job and can’t imagine doing anything else.”

The men were quiet for a moment until Maxwell broke the silence. “Would you consider being my security expert?”

She looked up at him, stunned.

“I know this is pretty quick, and who knows, in a few months you may want to go back to being an agent. But until then, I could use someone with your expertise to look over my hotels and point out where we are deficient. You could travel with me.”

Jackson’s jaw tightened at that. He wanted to punch Maxwell in his rich fucking face for trying to lure her away from him. His life was on Crescent Island, and if she left with Maxwell, Jackson would lose her. Her small hand rubbed over the tense muscles of his chest, making him relax even when it took everything in him to keep his mouth shut.

“The offer is intriguing, but I don’t want to leave Jackson,” she said honestly. “His life is here on the island.”

“Understandable,” Maxwell said slowly. “I know this is soon, however, if we are going to make this relationship work, then maybe we should both consider moving here for the foreseeable future. What do you think of that, Jackson?”

“This is a lot of house for one person,” Jackson said softly, unsure how she would react.

Trinity was quiet as she thought it over. Her apartment back in Chicago wasn’t anything special. It was nice, but the real reason she liked it was because it was in the building that a lot of the IAD agents lived in, so she was closer to her friends. But that wasn’t enough to hold her there.

Her mind made up, she said, “I’ll have my stuff shipped out tomorrow.”

Pleased with her decision, she snuggled closer to Jackson, smiling when his arms tightened around her.

“Seriously?”

She raised her head to look at Jackson’s narrowed eyes. “Weren’t you serious?”

“Well, yeah. I just didn’t think it would be that easy.”

She smiled at him. “I have nothing holding me in Chicago. If I need to go back, I can always visit. And this way if I do some consulting for Max, we can both come back here when we aren’t traveling.”

Not wanting to push his luck, Jackson still had to ask, “Just how much traveling are

we talking about?”

“It would be simple to switch my headquarters to the resort here instead of my hotel in London. I oversee most of the hotels in Europe, and I do have to travel to at least one of the locations about once a month, but most of my work is done by video conference calls and phone,” Maxwell added. “I am also training my sister to take over managing some of the properties.”

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“I will also need to spend some time in Breakers, Texas helping Nikita get her new training facility up and running. Would you be able to travel with us?” Trinity asked Jackson, pleased that she had thought to ask when a smile lightened his expression.

“The guys at the station will shit when they hear about this since I rarely take a day off, but yeah I can talk to the chief. We have a fairly lenient work schedule. And it’s not like they have to pay me for the days I don’t work.”

“I would pay rent, of course,” Maxwell said, only to be met with Jackson’s fierce scowl.

“Absolutely not.”

Logistics were a bitch.

“We will have to come up with some sort of schedule for the bills, food, and even paying your housekeepers,” Trinity said firmly. “Max and I can’t just live off of you, Jackson.”

She wasn’t fazed by his dark expression, but she knew it was safer to change the subject. PDQ.

“I don’t need freaking rent money.”

“Then we can all put some into a communal fund for everything else. It’s not like any of us are hurting for money, so this shouldn’t be an issue. Oh, and I did promise my friend Mikayla that I’d run a training session at our facility in Colorado next month,

but both of you are welcome to come. You could either join in or play with her fiancé, Gage Stark.”

Maxwell blinked. “The movie star?”

“Former. Yeah. He’s a sweetie and so in love with Lynx that she gave up being a sniper to take over the training facility so they could be together.”

Jackson’s jaw dropped. “Holy shit! You mean the sniper Lynx is a woman?”

She smiled. “Yep. And one of my best friends. Oh, and Nikita? My friend from the bar yesterday? She’s kind of a sociopath, so remember that when you’re pissing me off.”

“You keep some interesting company,” Jackson commented.

Maxwell grinned. “And darling, you know you’d want the pleasure of shooting us yourself.”

She laughed. “I would. I really would.”

Maxwell stroked her cheek gently with the back of his hand. “Do you think you can sleep now?”

“Yes.” She sighed. “I’m sorry I woke you.”

“Don’t be. I know I’ll sleep better now knowing that you’ll turn to us if you need to. And I’m happy that I know you are going to stay. That both of you will stay,” Jackson amended. “Who knows, maybe you can even do some consulting for the CIPD. What are you doing that training on?”

“Hacking.”

“Shit, I knew you were going to be trouble.”

Trinity leaned in to brush her lips against his. “Only the best kind. Let’s go back to bed.”

As the dark sky gave way to the dawn, Trinity felt like this was the first day of her new life. Tucked safely between her two lovers, she fell back to sleep, safe from the nightmares that haunted her.

Chapter Twenty

“I was just thinking...” Maxwell began as they sat on Jackson’s back patio enjoying a delicious brunch that had been made for them by Rosa and Maria. “I have the owners of Riviera Construction coming to the island today in order to explain themselves, and I thought that it may be beneficial to have a cop present.”

“I’ll be there, too,” Trinity said after she finished chewing a large bite of her Belgium waffle. “And Jackson, I have to say, if I hadn’t already agreed to move in with you, I’d do it just for the waffles alone.”

Jackson surprised himself by reaching out to stroke a hand down her hair. He couldn’t seem to stop touching her whenever she was near. He smiled as she grinned around another mouthful of waffles, making her look like she had chipmunk cheeks. He realized that smiling came easier when she was around.

He glanced over at Maxwell and could tell by the other man’s smile that he understood what he was thinking. Something about Katrina Cross touched both men’s hearts when no one else had. She was a vibrant, passionate woman, and he feared it would take both of them to hold onto her.

“I can do that. The only thing I have planned for tonight is a monthly poker game with some guys from work, but I can cancel.”

“Why?” Trinity asked. “You shouldn’t bail on your buds just because you have a chick in your life now.”

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Jackson smiled. “I would invite you—”

“But I’m guessing I need a penis for this event,” she finished for him.

“It would help,” he said with a laugh.

“I’d say you can use mine, but that seems self-serving,” Maxwell added, making Trinity and Jackson laugh. “No worries, mate. The meeting is at three. After, I’ll help Kat pack up her stuff and take her out to dinner at Sinful.”

“Oh, like a date night?” she asked, sitting up in her chair with a grin. “Maybe I’ll get dressed up for you then, blue eyes.”

“That’s it. I’m canceling poker,” Jackson muttered.

She laughed. “No, you’re not. You and I can have a date night on Sunday.”

“Hey, I didn’t agree to that,” Maxwell protested as she got up and cleared their empty plates from the table.

“But you were going to,” she said with a wink.

“You can leave those,” Jackson called out.

“Or I can do this. I have to get my phone from inside anyway.”

Both Jackson and Maxwell watched as she disappeared back into the house, wearing

nothing but one of Jackson's old army T-shirts. Jackson's cock hardened at the thought of her naked body underneath that small scrap of cloth. He turned in time to catch the wadded-up napkin that Maxwell threw at him.

"Seriously? What are we, twelve?"

Maxwell grinned. "Had to get your attention somehow."

"You know you were thinking the same thing I was," Jackson muttered.

"I was. It surprises me. If any other man was looking at her like that, I'd want to gut him, slowly. But with you, it somehow seems...okay."

Jackson nodded slowly. "I never wanted a ménage relationship before. But I think that each of us gives her something she needs. And she has enough..."

He struggled to find the right word to describe it.

Was it love?

He wasn't sure yet, but it sure as hell felt like it when she looked at him.

"She loves us," Maxwell said softly, finishing Jackson's thought. "She might not be in love with us yet, but she is beginning to. She has so much love in her, but she's afraid to show it because she's never really been given it in return. I wanted to be upfront with you and tell you that I'm falling in love with her. Hell, I think I already am. You and I...I know that we will learn how to work this out over time, but I wanted to make sure you knew that I won't come between what you have with her, and I expect the same."

"Noted, and I agree. I don't think I could share her with anyone else," Jackson said

truthfully. “No matter what a hard-ass you are at business, you seem to calm her down. She needs that.”

“And she seems to heat you up. Damn, Jackson. You’re like a machine most of the time, but with her, you’re...almost normal.”

“Gee, thanks.”

Maxwell laughed, then sobered as he met Jackson’s eyes. “It seems fitting her nickname is Trinity. Man to man, if at some point this isn’t working for you anymore and you need to walk, I’ll take care of her.”

“That’s not going to happen, but I appreciate you saying it and I’ll return the sentiment,” Jackson said. “Now, before our little kitten gets back, I need to ask you to help me with something...”

Chapter Twenty-One

A few hours later, Trinity was sprawled out on a lounge chair by the pool. As she listened to the sound of the waves crashing on the beach, she tried to relax, but her busy brain wouldn’t stop working.

She’d had a lovely conversation with Rosa and Maria when she’d taken the dishes back into the kitchen. They had been warm and welcoming to her, and the two older women were swiftly becoming two of her favorite people. They were best friends who had fallen in love with the same man back in high school, and they’d been together ever since.

She felt a warmth and innate kindness coming from them that reminded her of Veronica Cross, the woman who had adopted her. Rosa had a sweet, motherly disposition, while Maria was sassy and had a snarky wit.

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The older women had expressed how happy they were that she was moving in with Jackson, saying they had been praying for him to find a nice woman to settle down with. They had asked her preferences on things, but Trinity had told them she was pretty easygoing and didn't need much. The women had fussed over her while they had coffee at the breakfast bar in the kitchen, then she had been shooed away so they could get back to work.

Since her men were nowhere to be found when she returned outside, she made a call to Tony Moretti back in Chicago to ask him to pack up her stuff and ship it to her. To say that her friend had been surprised when she had told him she was moving to Crescent Island was the understatement of the century.

At first, he had gone on alert, thinking that she was being held hostage or was being coerced into calling him. After she'd finished laughing, she told him about her relationship with Jackson and Maxwell, once again shocking him. In the end, he had agreed to pack up all her stuff and have it sent to her, but he had refused to get rid of her furniture, insisting on putting it in storage instead.

After she hung up with him, Maria surprised her by saying she had a visitor. course, Nikita had tracked down where Jackson lived to bring her the bag of weapons she'd brought to the island along with the case she had left in her car the night before.

Trinity had invited her to join her by the pool, but Nikita had declined. She had already followed up on the drug case with the local police and was planning to make a trip to the mainland to hunt down the dealer the kid had bought the pills from.

The unsuspecting dealer had no idea of the world of hurt heading his way.

Unsure where to store the weapons, she decided to temporarily leave the stash in Jackson's bedroom closet. Nikita had brought her enough guns and ammo to start her own little war, so that was one less thing she had to worry about.

Realizing how quiet it was, Trinity went back downstairs to search for her men. Instead of finding them, Maria shoved a glass of ice-cold pink lemonade at her and told her Jackson and Maxwell had requested she enjoy herself by the pool or at the beach while they took care of a few things.

Willing to do what they asked, she decided to skip the sand to hang out by the pool instead. Maria and Rosa had told her that Hector was on a fishing trip for the day, so Trinity felt safe sunbathing nude.

She alternated tanning her front and back while thinking about everything that had happened since she'd been on the island. She knew that she was on her way to falling in love with both her men. Even though she had only known them for a short time, she felt connected to them in a way she'd never felt before.

She'd learned to trust her gut, and it told her that she'd made the right decision to give their relationship a chance. Not to sound fatalistic, but life was too damn short in her line of work, so she figured she better grab hold of the happiness she'd found with two hands while she could.

The other issue plaguing her mind was the fact that someone was trying to kill her. Even though the attempts pissed her off, it was still a good way to figure out who was causing the problems on the construction project. Most criminals were pretty fucking stupid, and their mistakes would help her catch them. She thought she had a pretty good idea who was behind it, but to resolve the matter she needed to identify everyone involved and to collect more evidence.

She peeked at her phone and saw that it was close to one o'clock. They were due at

the meeting with the owners of the construction company at three, so she allowed herself fifteen more minutes before getting up and heading upstairs to take a shower.

She loved Jackson's master bath and smiled when she saw her toiletries lined up on the counter of the double sink vanity. The bathroom was decorated with white cabinetry that had frosted glass panels and chrome accents. The floor was a light-gray marble, and the sinks were raised rectangles with waterfall faucets that made the bathroom ultra-modern looking.

In the far corner of the room was a large walk-in open shower made of various shades of gray slate and several showerheads. Next to the shower was a large sunken bathtub that was styled like a Roman bath. It would have been heaven to soak in, but she opted for a shower.

She lingered in the hot water, making use of the brand-new bottles of shampoo, conditioner, and body wash that had been provided, and took the time to shave her legs. Once she stepped out, she smoothed on her favorite lotion that had hints of raspberries and vanilla in it. She dried her hair and styled it so the dark locks fell down her back in soft waves. For the first time since she'd met her men, she took the time to put makeup on. She did her eye makeup with a bold, smoky look and painted her lips with a shimmering gloss.

She wanted to make a statement today.

In fact, she wanted to knock their fucking socks off.

Taking one of two dresses that she had brought with her, she put on a white midi dress that floated around her thighs like a dream. The dress had a tank-style top with a low V-cut front that showed off a generous display of cleavage. She added a thick black belt that had two small knives hidden in the large buckle in front and a garrote enclosed in the lining, then selected a black suit-style jacket that cinched at the waist

to wear for the meeting. Finishing her look, she chose a pair of red high heels and did one final check in the mirror before walking back into the bedroom.

Maxwell's heart stopped as soon as Trinity walked into the room. She looked like a goddess, her golden skin almost glowing against the stark white of her dress. Her face was even more sultry than her normal sexy self, and the thick mass of brown hair she usually pulled back tumbled down her back in gentle waves. It was styled, but in a way that reminded him of a woman who had just gotten out of bed after a vigorous bout of bed play.

Basically, she was walking sex in red heels.

Her slow, seductive smile had his heart kicking into high gear so it pounded in his chest, hard enough that it almost hurt. "You look like a dream..."

"A good one I hope," she said in a low, smoky whisper.

"The best. A fucking fantasy," he amended. He was drawn toward her as if unconsciously answering her silent siren's call luring him to his doom. "You're gorgeous. I want you so much I hurt. I want to rip that dress off you and bury myself so deep that you will never feel normal again without me inside you."

"We'll be late for the meeting if you do that."

"Fuck the bloody meeting."

"Nope. You promised me a date night." She laughed, stopping him with a hand to his chest over the shirt he had borrowed from Jackson, and wrinkled her nose. "If you get any closer, you'll get me dirty...and not in a fun way. What in the hell have you been doing?"

He glanced down at himself and sighed.

“I think I’ll let Jackson tell you. I’m going to jump in the shower.” He leaned in to press a careful kiss to her lips, delighted when she sighed in pleasure. “I’ll take you on that date, love. Then, I hope you’ll let me do all kinds of naughty things to that gorgeous body of yours.”

She ran a finger down the column of his throat. “Only if I get to reciprocate.”

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He groaned. “This is going to be a very cold shower.”

“Or you could just beat off in the shower. I want you ready to last later,” she added with a saucy wink.

He groaned again as she brushed her hand over his burgeoning erection barely restrained by his jeans. “Christ, it’s not going to take me long to come. Going to shower. Jackson is down the hall.”

Trinity grinned as he hurried into the bathroom. She had gotten the reaction she wanted from one of her men. Now for the other. She strolled out of the bedroom carrying her jacket and peeked into the rooms down the hallway only to find them empty. Her steps slowed as she approached the left wing of the house and the room where she never wanted to go into again.

The smell of paint hit her as she approached the closed door. Taking a deep breath, she opened the door and found Jackson working in the empty room with all the windows wide open. She stared in shock at the white walls that had been a deep crimson only yesterday. The big bed that had once dominated the room was now gone. She took a step into the doorway, still not wanting to enter the room.

Jackson froze in his crouched position. He felt her more than heard her and slowly turned his head to look at her. All the blood in his body drained down to his cock, filling him to bursting. She was fucking glorious. Framed in the doorway was a vision of every fantasy, every wish, every dream that he had ever had of the perfect woman.

And she was his.

He surged to his feet, his only thought to claim her.

“Stop,” she ordered.

He stilled, his body practically vibrating with the need to touch her.

“Jackson, you’re covered with paint.”

He glanced down at himself and winced. Shit, she was right. Like a mortal standing in front of a goddess, he wasn’t worthy of touching her. Her eyes searched his face, and he could see the bright shimmer of tears in them.

“What did you do, Jackson?”

“I told you I’d take this room apart. This is your home now, Kat. I won’t have you uncomfortable here. I already threw out all my toys. If we ever want to use anything in our play, we can buy new ones together.”

Trinity felt it then. It wasn’t a slow slide into love. It was like a punch in the gut. She loved this man. Hell, she loved them both. How that was possible when she’d only known them for such a short amount of time, she didn’t know.

The simple truth was that she did.

“I fucking love you,” she whispered, then wanted to wince at how crass she had made her declaration sound. It didn’t seem to matter since the look on Jackson’s face was worth it. His green eyes burned with such intense emotion they looked like they were glowing. He stalked up to the doorway, grabbing onto the doorframe to anchor himself, his hold so tight his hands were white with the strain.

“Say it again,” he demanded.

“I love you,” she said breathlessly. “So much. And I know that sounds crazy, but—”

His mouth cut off her words as he leaned in and attacked. She swayed into him but kept enough control not to brush up against his paint-streaked body. When their kiss finally ended, they were both breathing hard, hearts racing. She looked away and pushed her hair behind one ear in a nervous gesture.

“Well, you should probably get ready for the meeting. I’m going to go downstairs and wait for you guys.”

Jackson watched as she turned and walked away. She’d only made it a few steps before he called out to her.

“Katrina?” He waited until their eyes met, the connection still smoldering between them. “I love you, too, baby.”

And he realized that he had never spoken truer words.

Chapter Twenty-Two

Sinful was the posh, fine-dining restaurant located in the Palace Resort and Spa. It was a favorite of guests and island natives alike, and patrons were encouraged to make reservations ahead of time to ensure they got in. With its curved fish tank separating the room into intimate sections and black leather chairs with contemporary embellishments, Sinful was just that.

Sinfully elegant.

Maxwell had put on a bespoke blue suit with a crisp white shirt for their date tonight, and Trinity had removed her jacket once they left the meeting, leaving her toned arms and back bare. They made a striking couple, and dozens of heads had turned their

way when they entered the restaurant. Because of Maxwell's status, they had been seated right away even though there were plenty of people in the bar area waiting for a table.

While the restaurant was packed with people, Trinity and Maxwell sat at a secluded booth that gave them a semblance of privacy. Music played softly over the hidden speakers, adding to the ambiance but not distracting enough to interfere with intimate conversations.

They sipped icy champagne and enjoyed delicate scallop appetizers as they discussed the meeting that had taken place earlier upstairs in one of the conference rooms. Joseph Riviera, the owner of Riviera Construction, had come to the meeting with his son Eric, the acting president, and daughter, Pamela, their VP of finance. The family had been all apologies, furious themselves at the damage done to their reputation by this type of screwup.

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Trinity suspected that Joseph was probably telling the truth. His company had been in business for over sixty years and had a good reputation and solid connections. A fuck up like this was enough to destroy all of that and it made no sense from a business perspective.

It had been obvious that the older and younger man had done their share of construction work over the years. Despite the suits and ties they wore, their hands had been those of men who worked hard. But something about the blonde ice princess had Trinity's radar going off. She had immediately pegged her as a spoiled bitch as soon as she had walked into the room. And it wasn't just because the skank had tried to make eyes with Maxwell.

The Rivas had ensured Maxwell that they would do everything in their power to figure out what happened. They also promised to replace all the materials with what had originally been agreed upon, at their expense. Overall, the meeting was brief and to the point, but Trinity wasn't satisfied.

"The daughter is involved somehow," she said as she lifted her champagne flute to take a sip.

He smiled. "You're just saying that because you didn't like the way she was flirting with me. Are you always going to glare at the women I do business with?"

"It wasn't all she wanted to do with you," she muttered, making him chuckle. "And you're one to talk. I seem to recall you growling at the son."

"Because the fucker had the gall to ask you to dinner right in front of us," he said, his

voice filled with outrage.

“And I think you and Jackson made it perfectly clear that wasn’t going to happen. I would have said no. You just didn’t give me the chance.”

They paused as the waiter came to whisk their empty appetizer plates away, and another man set down their entrees with a flourish. She moaned as she took the first bite of her steak.

“Jesus, Kat. Watching you eat is like watching you have sex.”

She smiled. “Well, when you enjoy something you should show it, right? You know, speaking of sex...I’ve been thinking. Maybe this is a good opportunity to rethink the construction of the new building.”

“What do you mean?”

“Well, they are going to have to redo a lot of the structure anyway. Why not change it up and do something different than another replica of what you have already? Maybe private villas or something.”

He seemed to consider it as he chewed. “It’s possible, but we can host more people in a larger structure.”

“Yeah, but do you really need that many more rooms? If you changed it up and made private villas, I bet you could hype them up as exclusive and charge more for them. And anyone having wild, crazy, monkey sex wouldn’t have to worry about the poor guy next door. You know what I mean.”

“Right. Villas it is. I had considered it before, but went with what was more cost-efficient. I have some concepts already drawn up. Maybe you’d like to take a look at

them and see if you like any of the other plans.”

She set her fork down and studied him. “Really? Just like that?”

“I value your opinion, love. Seriously though, what makes you say the daughter is involved?”

“She was good at hiding it, but she wasn’t just pissed about what this was doing to her company’s reputation. She didn’t like being questioned, period. I got the vibe from her.”

“The vibe?”

She waved her fork in the air as she explained. “The vibe. It’s like when you know something is off. My take is the father is pissed because he is proud of the company he built. It’s there when he talks about it. The son is the same because the company is his now, but the daughter? She could give two shits about the company. It’s all about her. And she’s irritated that they had to come here and answer our questions. Even more so, she was furious when her brother said they were going to do an internal audit. I don’t think he informed her about that before.”

Maxwell thought back to what had happened during the meeting and had to agree. They continued to talk about the new construction as they finished eating. He really was interested in her ideas for changing the strategy for the build and decided to take a walk down to the construction site after their meal was done so he could visualize the new plans.

As they strolled down to the pathway leading to the beach, they passed several other couples enjoying the night air. Once they reached the sand, they paused to remove their shoes and he helped her put her jacket back on. Carrying their shoes, they headed toward the more secluded section of the beach. The simple pleasure of

holding her hand was enough to make him happier than he'd been in years.

The cool breeze teased at the flowing skirt of her white dress making it flutter, giving him tantalizing glimpses of her long legs. He wanted to take her down to the sand and push the material up her legs for a better view, but he knew it wouldn't stop there.

"You have a special place here, Max. It's one of the nicest resorts I've ever seen."

He squeezed her hand and pulled her to a stop, wrapping his arms around her from behind as they both studied the dark form of the partially constructed building. He had been planning on building the new resort near the western cliffs, making it as if the very structure was part of the land itself. It would have been interesting, but individual villas did have some perks.

Privacy being one of them.

"I think you're right, though. If we made several private villas with a central structure to house the common areas like food services, a gym, and concierge staff to cater to the guests on this side, it could almost be like its own little resort."

"It's like renting a private home but still having access to all the amenities of a hotel. I think it will be awesome. Now, we just have to figure out why someone has been willing to kill me to cover up what's been going on with the build," she said lightly.

His arms tightened around her. Just thinking about anything happening to her had Maxwell feeling a fury the likes of which he had never felt before. This woman had become essential to his life in such a short amount of time. He couldn't imagine living without her now. Turning her slowly, he pushed the hair back so he could see her face bathed in the moonlight.

She was absolutely stunning.

So breathtaking it was difficult to imagine she was really his.

“I can’t joke about that. Just thinking about something happening to you fills me with rage...and fear. I just found you. I can’t lose you now. Finding you has been like discovering a piece of me that I never even knew was missing.”

Her hands came up, stroking under his suit jacket over his back.

“I feel the same way, Max. I know this is soon, but I love you. I feel like I’ve been waiting for you my whole life.”

He breathed out slowly, resting his forehead on hers. “I love you so much it would kill me if something happened to you.”

“Don’t worry. I’m pretty hard to kill.”

He kissed her, sharing all the emotions he was feeling. Her tongue tangled with his in a sensual dance, giving and taking at once. She was utterly and completely intoxicating, rushing to his head faster than the champagne they’d had with dinner.

Sounds of laughter trailed on the wind coming from a group of people sitting near one of the cabanas on the beach, breaking through the sexual haze. Maxwell breathed out and rested his forehead against hers.

“Hell of a time to tell me this, love. All I want to do is rip your panties off and drag

you down on the sand where I can make love to you.”

“I would have to be wearing panties for you to do that,” she whispered.

Maxwell groaned. “You mean to tell me that you went to the meeting and then dinner wearing nothing under this dress?”

A slow seductive smile had her lips turning up. “That’s exactly what I’m telling you. Watching you verbally bitch-slap the Rivas in the meeting had me so hot I was afraid you’d see a wet spot on my dress when I got up.”

“I would have bent you over the damn table and taken you right there,” he swore.

“I know. But Jackson had to go to his poker game, and we had a date,” she said, a mischievous gleam shimmering in her eyes. “But we have time now.”

“Here?”

His first instinct was to refuse, but somehow being with her made him more adventurous. It made him free. He took her hand and pulled her toward one of the darkened cabanas, stopping next to a hammock that was tied between two large palm trees. They could hear the sounds of talking and laughter coming from the cabana several yards away, but the shadows surrounding their own cabana gave them enough privacy for what he wanted to do.

He dropped his shoes and took off his jacket. Taking her shoes from her hand, he dropped them to the ground next to his, then sat down in the hammock with his feet on the sand.

“Are you wet, Kat?”

“God, yes,” she replied quickly.

Staring into her eyes, he slowly undid his pants and pulled out his thick, hard cock, freeing it into the night air. “Come here and sit on my cock, love.”

She surprised him when she turned her back to him and raised her dress up slowly, revealing a holster attached to her left thigh.

“Armed and dangerous?”

She turned her head and grinned at him. “Just the way you like me.” She raised her dress higher, showing him her perfect ass and glistening pussy. “You want this, Max?”

“Bloody hell, yes. Sit on my cock, Kat.”

Trinity couldn’t wait any longer. She straddled his legs and slowly lowered herself down. Maxwell held onto his cock, positioning the thick stalk at her entrance so she slide down the length, taking him deep inside her as she sat all the way down. She smoothed her dress down in the front, so anyone walking by would think she was simply sitting on his lap and wouldn’t know he was fucking her.

“God, you feel so good inside me, Max.”

She trusted him to hold her as he leaned back, taking her body with him, lodging his cock deeper.

“Your pussy hugs my cock like it was made for me, love. Just lean back and relax. This is going to be nice and slow.”

He pushed off with his feet then lifted them as the hammock rocked him gently inside

her. Her breath caught as the movement thrust him in and out of her pussy, in a slow, steady rhythm.

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“You like that, Kat? You like me making love to you right here on the beach with people only a few yards away from us?” Maxwell whispered into her ear.

“Yes,” she breathed.

His mouth worked down her neck, licking and biting on the smooth skin lightly. His hands came up to cup her breasts, then moved down her body. Pushing his hands under the material of her skirt, he reached down and touched where they were joined. He began rubbing her clit in a slow, circular motion making her hips rock under his ministrations.

“Quiet now,” Maxwell crooned as she let out a loud moan. “We don’t want anyone coming over here, do we?”

Trinity’s breath caught at his warning. No, she didn’t want anyone seeing them like this. But there was something so erotic about making love with him when they could hear people close by. She was approaching her orgasm fast and wanted to make sure he was right there with her when she came. Using her inner muscles on his cock, she squeezed and released in time with his thrusts. She was awarded with a low growl from him as she began undulating her hips on him.

“Damn it, love. You’re going to milk the cum right out of me if you keep that up.”

“I want it. Give it to me. I’m so close, Max. Rub my clit a little harder and I’m going to soak your cock when I come.”

His fingers sped up as he did what she asked, rubbing her clit faster and faster until

she was on the brink of ecstasy. He used his foot to give a big push and let their weight swing the hammock higher. The movement made her shatter around him, and she turned her head and bit down hard on the crook of his neck to still her scream as she came.

“Fuck,” he growled as his own release burst from his cock in violent spurts.

They lay together, breathing heavy with his arms wrapped around her holding her to him. Even after one of the most explosive orgasms he’d ever had, he was still hard inside her snug heat.

“We are totally getting a hammock at home,” she said after a few minutes of silence.

His chuckle turned into a groan as her body tightened around him, making his cock harden even more. He let out another curse as he heard his name being called. Both of them froze at the sound. Trinity smoothed her skirt down just in time as one of the hotel managers became visible on the beach holding a flashlight in her hand.

“Over here!” Trinity called out.

“What are you doing,” Maxwell hissed.

“She can’t see anything,” she said, hoping she was telling the truth. It felt incredibly naughty having someone see them while he was still inside her, even though they couldn’t see it.

“Mr. King!” the manager huffed, out of breath from having run around trying to look for them. “I’m terribly sorry to bother you, sir. I saw you heading this way earlier, and well, we have a problem. A body has been found in the water on the other side of the property.”

Fucking hell.

Their fun for the night was obviously over.

Chapter Twenty-Three

Trinity woke to the sound of her phone buzzing.

Even though she'd placed the damn thing on vibrate, it buzzed on the nightstand loud enough to wake her. She tried to reach for it but encountered a warm male body instead. She still wasn't used to sleeping between two men. When she tried to sit up, Jackson groaned in response and wrapped his arms around her to snuggle her closer.

She smiled to herself as she turned to look at where Maxwell continued to sleep undisturbed. The man really did have an amazing capacity to sleep through just about anything. She caught a glimpse of the clock and wanted to groan herself. It was only ten in the morning.

She didn't blame the men for wanting to sleep in.

They'd had a very long night, after all.

After she and Maxwell had been interrupted, they'd gone directly to the crime scene. They had met the manager on the other side of the building after sending her ahead to give them time to collect themselves. Trinity instantly knew the dead body lying on the beach was Alan Browning, the foreman who had been working on the construction site. She could tell just by glancing at the watch on his wrist before she'd even gotten a chance to see his face. From the look of it, she'd guess he had died shortly after he had left Siren's Cove the other night.

He probably left the bar and had gone to meet his killer, and whoever was responsible

had gone with overkill. Why shoot someone five times when every gunshot increased the chances of being heard? That was either rage or someone who didn't know what they were doing. From the pattern of the bullets, she thought it was the latter.

After a brief examination of the body, Trinity had called Jackson. She hated disrupting his poker game, but she knew he'd want to know about the dead guy. By the time she and Maxwell made it to where the body had been washed ashore, two officers were standing guard. They tried to stop her from coming closer, but she'd given Jackson's name and watched as both officers snapped to attention.

She had no idea what Jackson did to the poor guys to make them so afraid of him, but their reaction amused her.

Jackson had arrived on the scene shortly after, and the first thing he had done was make sure she was all right. She had assured him she was, then stepped back to watch him work. He had a natural ability to lead. It was built into his DNA and a part of her felt bad for him because she was the same way. Between her, Jackson, and Maxwell, it was like having three alpha dogs all fighting for the position as leader of the pack.

Only, somehow they had found a good rhythm of switching who took the lead and they did it without thinking.

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She and Maxwell had stepped back, letting Jackson take control of the crime scene. She and Jackson had done the same during the meeting earlier in the day, letting Maxwell do his thing. They all had their strengths, and it seemed like they also shared a mutual respect for those abilities.

The problem was the murder of the foreman just didn't make any sense.

She was almost positive that Browning was the one who had switched the order forms to inferior materials for the build and for the missing funds. It also seemed like he was stupid enough to be behind the botched kidnapping attempt.

But if that was the case, why kill him?

The only way the whole clusterfuck made any sense was if he had been working with someone. And that someone had ended him. Now, it was just a matter of finding out who the hell that was and taking them down.

Trinity considered ignoring everything and going back to sleep for a few more hours, but a whisper of sound coming from the hallway had her going on alert. She jerked up in bed, reaching over a startled Jackson to grab the gun she insisted on keeping on the bedside table. Pointing it at the doorway, she sat up, ready to defend them as the door to the bedroom was pushed open.

"Son of a bitch!" Even as the curse left her lips, she relaxed and put the gun down in her lap. "I almost shot you!"

"Nice to see you, too, Trin," Tony Moretti said with a grin.

“Nice to see all of you,” Finnegan Kelly amended as he propped a shoulder against the door frame.

Jackson let out a vicious curse as he debated taking the gun from Trinity and shooting both men himself. He eyed the two large, dangerous individuals standing in the doorway with a fierce scowl, not liking the way they were grinning at the woman by his side. Glancing over, he was relieved to see Maxwell had dragged the sheet up to cover Trinity’s bare breasts.

She sighed. “What the hell are you guys doing here?”

“Well, it doesn’t look like she’s here against her will,” Finn said to Tony, ignoring her question. “Guess you were right.” He grinned back at her. “Looks like you’ve gone island native, Trin.”

“Who the bloody hell are they?” Maxwell growled out, still holding the sheet up shielding her from their view.

Both Finn and Tony groaned.

“Another King in the family. Jesus, does that make you and T-rex sisters now?” Tony asked. “That could be very dangerous.”

Finn’s laughter had Trinity grinding her teeth. “Get out, Irish!”

“Aww, but we came all this way to see you,” Tony said with a grin.

“Out. Now. Or I’ll shoot you both.”

Tony held his hands up in the air. “We’re going. But I expect you downstairs in five. I’m hungry.” He grabbed Finn by the shoulder and pulled him out of the doorway

before Finn could crack another joke. “Careful, man, you know she doesn’t have a sense of humor if you wake her up. She really might shoot us.”

Their voices receded as she flopped back onto the bed, covering her eyes with her forearms. Jesus, this was just what she needed to wake up to.

She sighed. “Seriously. The next person besides you two that sees me naked is going to have to die.”

Chapter Twenty-Four

“Remember that time we were stuck in Malaysia and that militia group had us pinned down in that old temple?”

Trinity barely held back a groan. For the past few hours, Tony and Finn had taken great enjoyment in regaling Jackson and Maxwell with some of the more exciting stories of her escapades as an agent. The new arrivals had shown up with a truck filled with her belongings that Tony and Finn had personally flown down to deliver to her.

After she and her men had dressed, they’d headed downstairs to discover Tony and Finn had sweet-talked Rosa and Maria into making an elaborate lunch for them while a small army of men brought her stuff inside. They’d left most of it in the guest room next to their bedroom for her to put away later. Once they were done, Tony and Finn decided it was time to entertain Jackson and Maxwell with stories about her as they shared a meal out on the back patio.

A computer expert, Tony mostly handled installing security systems for Mac Securities, the legitimate business used as a cover for the Chicago division of IAD. He was also the mastermind behind some of the highly sophisticated software that the agency used, and Trinity had worked with him to hack into some of the most difficult

systems.

Finn was a handsome man with dark brown hair and mischievous blue eyes. He had a wicked sense of humor, and Trinity often found herself his collaborator when it came to playing jokes on the other agents. But now that his audience was her two lovers and she was the subject of the discussion, she didn't like it one bit.

Maxwell held up a hand before Finn could launch into another story. "I think I'm going to have to hear these stories in stages. I don't think my heart can take them all at once."

"I second that," Jackson muttered before he took a long pull from his beer bottle.

"When Tony said that you were moving down here, I had to come along and see for myself what man actually managed to tame the wild one. Guess it makes sense that it takes two of them," Finn said with a grin.

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“Trinity is like a hurricane. You can’t tame a force of nature,” Tony added.

“Guys, stop scaring them,” Trinity pleaded as she rolled her eyes.

Jackson squeezed her foot that rested on his lap, and Maxwell rubbed her back to show that they both weren’t scared off in the least. Still, it was time to end the trip down memory lane.

“How’d you guys manage to pack up my shit and get down here so quickly?” Trinity asked, changing the subject.

“Mac pulled some strings and got us on a cargo freighter that was scheduled to stop in Miami. He also sent us down with a message. Two messages, actually,” Finn told her, serious now. “The first is to let you know you’re still one of the team, whether you’re active or not. That won’t change. Ever. And even though you’re down here, we’ll always have your back. And anyone who fucks with you should know that.”

Maxwell bristled with indignation. “I don’t take kindly to being threatened.”

Tony shrugged. “Not a threat. It’s fact.”

Jackson slammed his beer bottle on the table, making it almost foam over. “You’ve got some fucking nerve coming here and—”

“As long as she’s happy here with you, we won’t have any problems,” Finn said easily. “And you should be grateful we’re here instead of the others. We won’t hit you...unless you do something to deserve it.”

“Okay, enough of that.” Trinity held up a hand. “What was the other message from Mac?”

“Oh, that was for you and King. If you decide to stay here, it might be good to section off part of the resort for some of us to use...you know, when we’re forced to take some leave. That is, if you’re planning to stay.”

“I am,” Trinity said before either man next to her could stiffen. She had no problem telling her friends about her feelings for Jackson and Maxwell. “I love them both, and we plan to live here when we aren’t traveling.”

“Score!” Finn said, shaking his fist in the air. “Ah, access to a resort whenever I want. This has worked out perfectly.”

“I’m so glad you’re pleased my relationship can benefit you,” Trinity said dryly.

“Well, it is a bonus.”

“I take it Julian has already agreed to a similar arrangement in our Las Vegas hotel?” Maxwell asked, more relaxed now. He had been worried Trinity would hesitate to let her friends know about her commitment to two men, but he should have known better.

When she jumped into something, it was with both feet.

“He said any hotel, any time. But we thought we should ask you personally, seeing as you are now an item,” Tony said.

“An item?” Finn raised a brow. “Really? Who says shit like that?”

“Shut it, asshole.”

Maxwell shook his head and chuckled. “Trinity actually talked me into changing the specs for the new addition to the resort. We will be building private villas instead of another large structure, so it should work out perfectly when any of you decide to visit us.”

“Well, that takes care of that.” Tony turned back to Trinity. “Now, you want to tell us who’s trying to kill you now?”

Trinity briefed them about the events since she had arrived. She went through it quickly, knowing that the subject upset Jackson and Maxwell.

“So, now you have a dead guy on the beach and one in custody who broke into your hotel room,” Tony summed up. “Did you shoot or stick him?”

“Does it matter?” Jackson growled, pissed to be reminded how close Trinity had come to harm when he hadn’t been there. “The motherfucker was there to hurt her! And how do you know she injured him?”

Finn snorted. “We are talking about Trinity. Anyone who comes after her with nefarious intent usually ends up in a body bag.”

“Gun or knife, Trin,” Tony repeated.

“She shot him in the bloody kneecap,” Maxwell answered.

Finn cursed, then pulled out a money clip and slapped a fifty into Tony’s outstretched hand. She just had to shake her head and chuckle at them.

“You should have known better. She always sleeps with her gun,” Tony chided.

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“How the fuck do you know that?” Jackson asked softly.

“No,” Trinity said as she took his hand. “I’ve never slept with either of these idiots, so don’t get all growly on me. These guys are like my brothers.”

“We are one big happy dysfunctional family.” Finn let out a happy sigh. “All our female agents are pretty vicious. I really love that about them.”

She grinned. “I’ll have to tell Nikita that when she gets back. She’ll take it as a compliment.”

Finn’s brow rose. “Flame is here?”

“She was. She came down to the island to bring me some weapons, but she’s on the mainland right now checking out the drug case.”

Jackson stiffed. “She’s what?”

“What drug case?” Tony asked.

Trinity started to explain about the new drug but encouraged Jackson to take over since he had a better understanding of the case.

“I haven’t heard anything about this,” Finn said with a frown.

“Since she’s gone hunting, I’m sure Nikita will have more details for us soon,” Trinity stated.

Maxwell frowned. “What does that mean? Hunting?”

“Bad guys,” Tony explained. “She’ll have the dealer and his network soon.”

“Probably in the morgue. What?” Finn said when Trinity glared at him. “I’m just saying, that’s most likely where they will end up.”

“We got that,” she said dryly.

“I say it with admiration, not snark.” Finn chuckled. “I thought getting married would slow her down, but she just can’t seem to relax and enjoy her retirement.”

“About that...” Trinity began. “Did you hear Sin asked her to run a training facility in Texas?”

“No shit? She going to do it?” Finn asked.

“Probably.”

Maxwell’s cell phone rang, and he glanced down at the display with a smile. “Must be the day for friends and family. This is my brother. I’ll be right back, Kat.”

He pressed a kiss to her forehead before answering his phone and walking inside. Once he was gone, Trinity shifted position and leaned against Jackson. The way he immediately moved and wrapped his arm around her, pulling her closer to him, made her smile.

She was pleased her two friends didn’t even blink an eye at her being with two men. All they cared about was that she was happy. She really did have great friends, but rethought that a second later when Finn opened his mouth.

“Kat?”

“Only Jackson and Max get to call me that.”

“Aww, but it’s so cute,” Finn insisted, his blue eyes sparkling with humor.

“Use it at your own peril,” she warned.

He let out an exaggerated sigh. “Guess I will have to stick with Trinity. Although, the name suits you even more now that you have two dudes to bang.”

She sighed. “I really should have shot you earlier.”

“No shooting in our house, baby,” Jackson said with a smile.

“Damn.”

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“So, back to the construction case. The daughter rang your bell?” Tony asked.

“Yep.”

“Want me to help dig?”

“Sure. With your help, it will be easy to dig for hidden accounts. But you should also take the time to enjoy yourself while you’re here. Speaking of, how long you guys planning to stay?”

“A couple of days. We were going to check in at the resort,” Tony began. The wide grin spreading across his face made Trinity’s stomach sink. “But we’ve decided we’re going to stay here with you instead.”

“Fucking hell,” Jackson muttered. “Don’t you think you should ask first?”

“Family doesn’t need to ask.” Finn leaned forward. “But that reminds me, I do have a very important question for you, Jackson.”

“Okay...”

“Does the ménage thing only work with two men and a woman, or can I go find me a couple of lovely ladies while I’m here?”

Jackson had to laugh at that.

A few days of Trinity’s friends visiting might be all his island could take.

Chapter Twenty-Five

Trinity stood in the walk-in closet of the guest bedroom dressed in nothing but a black thong and stared at her selection of dresses. Both her men had gawked at the amount of clothes she had unpacked over the last few days, but hell, she loved clothes.

And shoes.

She fucking loved shoes.

Truthfully, she had taken over the entire bedroom as her closet, but she wasn't the only one with a lot of stuff. Maxwell's assistant in London had shipped out some of his things. He had more suits and shoes than any man she'd ever seen, but since he looked damn good in them, she wasn't about to complain.

Jackson told them he wanted to tear down the wall between the rooms to make the former bedroom a huge closet for the three of them. The massive wardrobe he could deal with, but he'd been a little distressed when Trinity had started unloading her collection of weapons. As a cop, he wasn't comfortable with having that made unregistered guns in the house, but they had compromised by agreeing to make a secured room to store them in.

They had decided that Jackson's former playroom would make the perfect weapons storage and panic room once they redesigned it and reinforced the walls. Tony and Finn had been a big help with planning that. Having them around was both entertaining and frustrating. For two men who had sworn they were there to enjoy a little fun in the sun, they had done everything possible to cockblock Trinity as often as they could. It was uncanny how every time Trinity cuddled up to either Jackson or Maxwell, her two friends would show up.

Tony and Finn were loud, adventurous, and full of life. Mixed with Trinity, it was an explosive combination. Jackson had been able to escape the chaos when he went to work, but Maxwell wasn't so lucky. He was both fascinated and horrified by the way the IAD agents interacted, but overall, even he had enjoyed their visit.

It was only during the late hours of the night when Finn and Tony went to bed that Trinity was able to have any quiet time with her guys. And by then, they were usually so tired they only had the strength to make love without the crazy, kinky shit they wanted to explore more.

She would have been angry, but she knew that their interference was her friends' way of making sure she was happy with her decision to stay on the island. Tony and Finn would be informing all her other friends that she was content with her new life, but only after they made sure of it themselves. Spending time with Jackson, Maxwell, and Trinity was the only way to confirm they were serious about her.

Having Tony around for a few days was a big help in tracking financials and doing background research. They had located a hidden account in the Cayman Islands listed under Alan B. Caesar and linked it to Alan Browning. He had used his mother's maiden name, not that the money in the account would be of any use to the dead man. And the man had way more money in the account than was taken from just the new resort construction. It was proof that he had been skimming from all the projects he had worked on over the past several months.

Besides his screwy sense of humor, Finn was also a financial wizard who had helped track down the real issue going on with Riviera Construction. There were several large transfers of money that had been listed as down payments from a Zafiro Corporation for the construction of buildings that had never actually been built. Something always seemed to go wrong, and the money was refunded to the corporation.

It was the perfect way to launder dirty money.

And that upped the stakes.

The transactions had been hidden in the corporate accounts, but Trinity, Tony, and Finn traced these types of payments going back over the last three years. Someone had tried to delete all traces of the previous transactions, but the agents were good at finding information that people didn't want found.

Only this time, Alan Browning had skimmed off the account before it could be paid back in full. Someone had paid it back anyway. Money had been deposited into the corporate account just in time for the payment to be released back to the Zafiro Corporation. So, an insider had obviously figured out Browning was skimming.

And he had died for that betrayal.

They also discovered that Alice Jensen, the accounts manager who handled the Zafiro Corporation at Riviera Construction, had gone missing one week ago. That was the same night someone had broken into her hotel room. Since Billy Jensen, the security guard Trinity had first met at the construction site, was the brother of the account manager, the ties between the players began to make sense. Billy was also MIA, which meant someone was obviously cleaning house.

After doing a deep trace of the Zafiro Corporation, they learned that it was a shell company. There was lots of cash floating through, making it look successful on paper, but there were no actual completed projects to be found. The ties to the real corporation were buried deep. It would take time to work it out, but they would.

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Now that they were armed with the knowledge that someone inside Riviera Construction was laundering money for an unknown entity, the murders made more sense. Alan Browning put a large operation at risk, and his greed had caused a chain reaction that led to his death.

He wasn't the only casualty, but hopefully, he would be the last.

Tonight was the auction event being held at the resort, and Trinity wanted to look amazing for it. She had taken her time doing her makeup, using a heavier hand than usual to create the effect that she wanted. Her hair fell in a mass of waves down her back, making her look like a 1950s starlet. The style went perfectly with the bronze sheath dress she had selected to wear for the gala.

Her hair was held back on one side with an intricate barrette that was decorated with small diamonds. In a pinch, it could also be used as a weapon. Adding to her personal arsenal, Trinity strapped on the thigh holster to take what she liked to call her dress-up gun.

It was small but still packed a punch.

When she slid the dress on, she held her breath while she zipped the back closed. The bustier top that hugged her breasts was tight, but the rest of the dress was a fluid panel of flowing silk. There was a discreet slit up the right side that showed off her long leg when she moved and gave her easy access to her weapon.

She attached a multi-tiered bronze necklace that matched the dress perfectly. She also put an amber ring on her right hand. It might have looked like an interesting piece,

but with a flick of the stone, a tiny needle would pop out. It held a powerful drug inside it that would take down a two-hundred-pound man in less than three seconds.

A girl could never be too careful.

When she finished getting ready, she checked herself over in the mirror once more before leaving the guest room carrying a small clutch purse. She had insisted on getting ready alone so Maxwell and Jackson would get the full impact once she was completely put together.

Her heels clicked on the stairs as she descended slowly, waiting for the reaction from her men. She paused on the landing as someone let out a loud wolf whistle and glanced over to see Finn and Tony grinning up at her.

Beside them stood her gorgeous men.

Jackson had on a black suit and black shirt with no tie, while Maxwell was decked out in a three-piece charcoal gray suit with a pinstriped shirt and a silver tie. They both looked absolutely heart-stopping, but what made her smile were the expressions on their faces. Their eyes were wide, and their jaws were hanging open as they watched her walk the rest of the way down the stairs.

Stopping in front of them, she stuck out her leg and posed. Her heart pounded in her chest when a look of absolute lust darkened both of their eyes.

The silence continued until she was forced to ask, "Well, what do you think?"

"You're so fucking beautiful," Jackson whispered.

Finn snorted. "Smooth, man. Really fucking smooth."

Jackson glared at him, then turned back to frown at Trinity. “Every damn man is going to be hitting on you tonight.”

Maxwell smiled as he came forward to take both of her hands in his. “What he meant to say is you look like a vision, Kat. You take my breath away.” He pressed a light kiss to her lips, then graciously moved to her side before Jackson could push him aside.

“Yeah, what he said,” Jackson grumbled. “Baby, I’m not going to be able to wait to make love to you. Why don’t we just stay home?”

Laughing, Trinity shook her hair so it flowed over her bare shoulders. “Oh no, we’re going to the auction. Besides, waiting will be good for you. It will make later even more...explosive.”

“Okay, enough of that. My virgin ears can’t take anymore,” Tony quipped. “But you do look smoking hot, Trin. I’d do you if I didn’t think of you like a sister.”

“I’d do you anyway,” Finn said. “But you’d probably kill me if I tried, and then your men would cut me into tiny pieces and feed me to the sharks.”

“Damn right,” Jackson replied.

“Yep, sorry, mate. Get your own girl,” Maxwell said.

Trinity smiled. “Sure you don’t want to join us?”

“Hell, no. That would require us dressing up like these two, and you know how wearing a suit makes me itch,” Finn said with a shiver. “Besides, Tony and I have dates tonight. We actually met some models shooting a calendar spread at the resort.”

“Ah, which months?” she asked.

Finn grinned. “All of them.”

That made her roll her eyes. “Why does that not surprise me.”

Jackson sighed. “Come on, baby. If you insist on going, we should head out or we’ll be late.”

Chapter Twenty-Six

They arrived at the resort amidst a horde of other vehicles. When they pulled up to the entrance, Jackson got out of the town car Maxwell had sent to pick them up first, then he turned to help Trinity.

She sighed as he frowned at her again. “Why are you looking at me like that?”

“That slit is pretty damn high,” he muttered, looking down at her leg showing as she got out of the car.

“Just consider it easy access for you.”

She laughed as he cursed. Maxwell smiled at her after he came around the side of the car and placed her hand on his arm.

“Are you teasing Jackson again, love?”

“Yep. He just makes it so easy.”

“Keep that up,” Jackson whispered in her other ear. “And I’ll spank you for it later.”

She fluttered her lashes at him. “Promises, promises.”

They climbed the stairs as a unit, her holding onto both their arms. They got their share of attention from the staff and patrons as they made their way into the hotel and through to the ballroom where the charity auction was being held.

The ballroom was a splendor of white and gold. Gossamer curtains in shimmering gold hung between the large, white columns that frame the room, highlighted by spotlights pointing up from the floor. Elaborate crystal chandeliers bathed the entire room in more light, and tastefully dressed tables filled more than half of the massive space.

At the far end of the room was a small stage that would be used for the auction portion of the evening. Right now, a string quartet was seated onstage, playing a selection of classical pieces and adding to the elegant ambiance.

Trinity, Maxwell, and Jackson were forced to greet a number of guests as they made their way through the room. Everyone local in the room knew Jackson, and it seemed like all of the wealthy patrons who had been invited to the special event wanted a moment of Maxwell's time. She was impressed when Maxwell's voice turned ice cold with any man who looked at her with more than a polite glance, but the way men scrambled back from Jackson's growls made her want to laugh.

They certainly were a pair of possessive males.

And they were all hers.

She had her own territory to claim as a number of women tried to eye-fuck her men. Confident in her own appeal, Trinity let a seductive smile tilt her lips as she met their envious gazes. She also took every opportunity to brush up against her men, making it clear they belonged to her.

"Keep that up, you wildcat," Jackson said through clenched teeth. "And I'm going to bend you over one of these tables and fuck you blind."

"That sounds like fun," she purred back, making him groan.

Jackson was pulled away by his chief, and after being introduced, Trinity left them to talk shop and went looking for Maxwell, who had been pulled away by people clamoring to speak to him. She found him talking to Pamela Riviera. She had on a vibrant red dress and was practically rubbing up on him as she leaned closer than was proper.

There was nothing subtle about Trinity's approach as she slid her arm around his waist and forced the other woman to step back.

"There you are, love," Trinity whispered, knowing how much it pleased him when she called him that. "We should probably be seated soon."

"Of course, my love," Maxwell said before he kissed her softly. His eyes gleamed knowingly as he smiled at her. "Darling, you remember Pamela Riviera?"

"Oh." Trinity batted her lashes as if she just noticed the other woman who was glaring daggers at her. "Nice to see you again, Ms. Riviera. You look lovely this evening."

"Likewise," Pamela Riviera said, not meaning it in the least. "Excuse me, I must rejoin my family. Maybe we'll get a chance to speak again later," she said, casting a glance at Maxwell, who answered in a noncommittal hum as she walked away.

"You let that skank touch you again, and I'm going to have to detox you before I let you back into bed," Trinity hissed as she turned around.

Maxwell grabbed her in a firm yet gentle hold. "Tell me you aren't jealous, love. You know you are the only woman I want."

She huffed out a breath. "I know, but still. I can't punch her in her pretty face at this nice event, so I have to bitch about it instead. I don't like her. I really don't like her."

“Tell you what,” he said as he pulled her hips closer so that their bodies were flush together. “If she approaches me again tonight, I’ll make sure to molest you in front of her.”

A slow smile spread across her face. “I like the sound of that.” She felt a hard body brush up against her back and reached behind her to grab hold of Jackson’s hand.

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“If you two don’t stop it we might end up being the entertainment for the evening,” Jackson warned.

“I think you already are,” a deep voice said from behind them. They turned as one and saw Brody, Adam, Ford, and Olivia smile in greeting as they approached. Brody, the man who had spoken, greeted Jackson with a bump of their fists while Olivia hurried up to Trinity, leaving her men to fend for themselves.

“Hi, Trinity!” Olivia said. “Wow, I love that dress on you! You look absolutely stunning.”

“Thank you. You look gorgeous as always,” Trinity said as she eyed the other woman’s beautiful dress. The strapless gown was a deep sapphire color made of a flowing material that looked like silk overlaid with chiffon and a shimmering crystallized bodice that drew the eye. “Is that one of your designs?”

“It is.”

“I’m definitely going to have to come shopping there soon,” Trinity said. “If you have any really naughty outfits, make sure to put them aside for me.”

Olivia laughed. “Will do.”

Trinity eyed her new friend. Olivia had been in a car accident earlier that week, but she showed no signs of trauma. In fact, she looked blissfully happy. “I heard you had a pretty rough week. How are you holding up?”

“I was just a little bruised and banged up, but my guys acted like I was dying. They really have been wonderful,” Olivia answered with a smile. “I barely have to lift a finger before one of them is rushing over to do it for me.”

“Good. They should pamper you.” Trinity could tell that Olivia loved her men, and by the way all three of her men couldn’t take their eyes off of her, they obviously loved Olivia just as much. “You know, for a small island this place is sure entertaining.”

Olivia’s laughter filled the air. “I know what you mean. Speaking of entertainment, you ready to be auctioned off tonight?”

Maxwell’s head whipped around. “What did you say?”

Trinity wanted to groan. She had completely forgotten about the auction bid Rosie had finagled out of her. Truthfully, she had been trying to block it out.

“Katrina?” Jackson growled.

Did he really think saying her name like that was going to do anything but make her hot and wet? She wanted to laugh but thought better as she took in her men’s scowling faces.

Olivia shot her a sympathetic look as she grabbed two of her men’s arms. “Let’s go.”

“Aw, wait. It was just getting good,” Ford West protested.

“Okay, so maybe I forgot to tell you that a woman named Rosie talked me into being a part of this auction thing,” Trinity said.

“What do you mean, you forgot?” Maxwell asked.

“What exactly did you agree to auction off?” Jackson glared at her. He was familiar with the way Rosie Abbas rolled over people and didn’t like this turn of events.

“I don’t even remember. Look, food! We should probably take our seats.”

She quickly moved away from them and headed toward a table off to the side. It was ingrained in her to take one of the seats that was closest to the wall so her back was protected and sat down. She sighed as Jackson scowled at a couple that had been planning to sit at their table, causing them to scamper off as fast as their feet could take them.

“Stop glaring. You’re scaring people away.”

“Then they can sit somewhere else,” he snapped.

She huffed out a breath and turned to Maxwell. “Are you doing anything for this auction?”

“Well, yes. We are donating a suite here at the resort and a spa package. But—”

“Nope.” She made a cutting motion with her hand. “That’s it. You didn’t tell us about that, so you can’t get mad at me.”

“I can be mad at both of you,” Jackson muttered.

“Aww, you’re cute when you pout.” Trinity grabbed Jackson by the nape of his neck and kissed him hard.

“Enough of that. We’re going to be eating soon,” a man said as approached their table with Elodie Simmons, the owner of the ice cream parlor, and another man who looked vaguely familiar.

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It took a few seconds, then Trinity remembered meeting Noah as she and Jackson had been leaving the Siren's Cove during their first date. The man who had spoken tapped Jackson on the shoulder in greeting before sitting down at the table next to him. He leaned forward and smiled at Trinity. He was a good-looking man with black hair and intense dark eyes, and Jackson immediately leaned forward so she could no longer see him.

"Jesus, Stone," the man muttered. "Territorial much?"

"Stop looking at my date and focus on your own."

"Since this animal hasn't introduced me, my name is Carlos Sanchez. I'm Jackson's best friend, and I've been dying to meet the amazing woman who has him twisted into knots." He grunted as Jackson's elbow made contact with his ribs. "Damn it, Lieutenant. That hurt."

"Good. Carlos and I were in the army together," Jackson explained. "When I came back here, I couldn't get rid of him."

"Ah, I can feel the love," Carlos quipped.

Trinity laughed. "It's nice to meet you, Carlos. You and I are going to have to talk later so you can tell me all the fun stories he won't tell me about himself."

"You can bet on it. That is Noah Diaz, my partner." Carlos took Elodie's hand in his and raised it to place a kiss on her knuckles. "And I believe you've met our girlfriend, Elodie."

“Oh, we’ve met,” Trinity confirmed with a grin. “You could say our first encounter was pretty memorable.”

Elodie slapped a hand over her mouth to hold back her laughter as Jackson choked on the sip of champagne he just drank. Maxwell introduced himself to the table as a host of waiters appeared through the doors on either side of the ballroom and made their way to the tables with the first course. Trinity glanced down at the grilled tiger prawns that had been served along with a small mountain of leafy greens that had a light dressing drizzled over it with glee.

Some women didn’t eat at events like this, but she wasn’t one of them.

Rosie Abbas bustled out onto the stage that had been set up and politely cleared her throat to gain everyone’s attention.

“Hello, everyone, it’s so lovely to see you all here tonight supporting such a wonderful cause. It’s always hard to see the children of this community go off to seek their fortunes on the mainland, but this scholarship fund makes sure that they can get the best education possible. It is important to invest in education, and many who succeed will also bring those skills back here to the island where they are needed the most. No matter where their future may lead them, it is our chance to help them along the way.”

Everyone applauded politely as she smiled and toyed with one of the many rings on her fingers for a moment, waiting for the applause to die down before continuing.

“Tonight, we’ll be changing things up a little and starting the auction with one of our most popular items instead of leaving them for last, when all your pocketbooks are already feeling lighter. The first item up for bid is a romantic cruise on board the Blue Horizon Marina’s vessel, The Triple Deck.”

Trinity stopped eating and applauded with the rest of the audience as a young woman named Dana was called up to the stage. She felt sympathy for the woman, who looked like she had just been shocked with a Taser when Rosie mentioned a date with the new owner of the marina had been included in the romantic cruise package.

Her skin seemed to pale against the dark blue of her flowing dress as the bidding began. Trinity watched as the creepy manager from the marina went head to head with two other men who looked damned determined to win the young woman.

When the hot duo won her, Trinity was concerned when Dana bolted from the stage until Jackson leaned in and said, “That’s Harris and Casten. I work with them. They’re damn good cops and good men. She’ll be fine.”

Trinity picked up her fork but set it down again when her name was called from the stage. She smiled at her men as she rose from her seat. Just for the hell of it, she put a little more swagger into her walk as she made her way up to the stage. If looks could kill, she’d be six feet under if Jackson and Maxwell had anything to do with it.

“Katrina Cross is new to our island. I know it’s hard to believe, but this lovely young woman is a security expert working with the prestigious Mac Securities company based out of Chicago. She has graciously agreed to donate private lessons in self-defense to one lucky winner. Now, who would like to—”

“One thousand!” Jackson shouted before Rosie could finish.

“Damn it, Stone. Why can’t you at least give the rest of us the appearance of having a chance?” a man called out from the back.

The audience laughed as Rosie beamed a smile at the crowd. “Are there any other—”

“Ten thousand,” Maxwell called out, making everyone in the room gasp.

Rosie fanned herself with her hand. “Well, isn’t this exciting! Mr. King has already been so generous this evening, but it seems he and Mr. Stone are determined to keep any private lessons with their lady to themselves. I don’t suppose there are any other bids? No? Congratulations, Mr. King. You have the winning bid!”

Jackson and Maxwell both stood up and stalked toward the stage. Each of them held out a hand to her, and Trinity took them, allowing them to help her down the stairs. Maxwell swept her into a slight dip as he kissed her like a scene from an old Hollywood movie, making the crowd laugh. When he released her, Jackson gripped her neck and dragged her in for a searing kiss, making the crowd break out into a round of applause.

Pulling away from them, Trinity flashed the room a saucy grin and took a bow.

“Come on, I can’t wait anymore.” Jackson grabbed her hand and pulled her out of the room.

She let out a breathless laugh as he dragged her down the hallway. He hurried out the back doors of the resort leading to the beach with Maxwell at their side.

“Jesus, Jackson—”

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“Damn it, I need you,” Jackson whispered before slamming his mouth down on hers. He wrapped both of his arms around her waist and lifted her off her feet, taking her further down the beach, away from prying eyes.

“Not that I wouldn’t love to join in, but we seem to have a problem over at the construction site,” Maxwell announced grimly. “The site is completely closed, and there shouldn’t be anyone there, but I see lights.”

“Damn it, just damn it,” Trinity said. “Shit, my purse is still inside. Let me borrow your phone.”

She held out her hand and wiggled her fingers until Maxwell handed it over. She dialed quickly, then held it up to her ear as she moved across the sand, her men close behind her.

“This better be good,” Tony barked out.

“We’ve got trouble at the construction site.”

“Fuck! We’re in town, wait for us. We’ll be there in twenty. Ten if we punch it.”

“Can’t wait,” Trinity said. “Just meet us there. You packing?”

“Always.”

“Good. Going in hot, come in silent. And hurry.”

“Got it. Watch your six, Trin.”

“You know it.”

She hung up and tossed the phone back to Maxwell, then leaned down to take off her shoes. With a sigh of regret, she slammed them against the ground until the heels broke off. Slipping back into the altered shoes, she reached into the slit of her dress and yanked her gun out of her thigh holster.

“What the bloody hell do you think you’re doing?” Maxwell asked, grabbing for her arm.

She evaded him and kept going. “If they are the assholes who tried to kill me, this ends tonight.”

“Damn it, Katrina!” Jackson hissed out. “Just hold on. Let me call for some backup.”

“Call it in, but tell them to fucking be quiet about it,” Trinity said before turning back to Maxwell. “Maybe you should—”

“You don’t want to finish that sentence, love,” Maxwell warned. “If you go, I go.”

Shit. She knew Jackson could handle himself in a tight spot, but Maxwell was an unknown. Still, if she were him she wouldn’t wait either. Not wanting to waste time, she nodded.

“Fine, let’s go. You listen to me, and I swear to God if you get hurt and I’ll kill you myself.”

“Love you, too, darling,” Maxwell whispered.

“That goes for you, too, Katrina,” Jackson bit out. “If you get so much as a scratch on you, I’m going to be pissed.”

Before she could retort, Jackson made a quick call to Carlos back at the resort and told him to grab some men and follow them. When he hung up, they quickly made their way to the construction site, following the lights as a guide.

As they worked their way through the skeleton of the building to the far end of the site where the construction ended against the towering cliff, Trinity scanned the surrounding area for any guards. She came to a stop and pulled Maxwell down into a crouching position next to her, silently cursing as the sounds of muffled gunshots rang out.

Silencer.

This time the killer was smarter.

Jackson motioned to her using hand signals that there were five guards he had spotted. Peeking over the lumber pile they were hidden behind, Trinity was able to see the older security guard, Javier Vega, standing next to Pamela Riviera. They looked down at the dead body of Billy Jenson, the security guard she had met on her first day on the island. She assumed the woman’s body on the sand next to Billy was his sister, the missing accounts manager.

Poor greedy fools.

She smacked Jackson and Maxwell on the arms and silently mouthed, “I told you the damn bitch was involved!”

Jackson rolled his eyes and looked over the wood pile again.

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“Are you sure the ties to this will trace back to them?” Javier asked in a calm, dispassionate voice.

“I know how to do my job,” Pamela snapped.

“If you did, I wouldn’t have had to come out here, now would I?” Javier’s eyes narrowed on the blonde.

Pamela huffed out a breath. “Look, I didn’t know Billy would screw up and leave Alan Browning’s body where the police would find it. And how the hell was I supposed to know that Alice Jensen told her boyfriend about the laundering deal we had set up? She’s to blame for Browning’s involvement.”

“They were your problem to deal with,” Javier snarled.

“And I did,” Pamela replied coldly.

Javier got in her face. “No, I took care of it. And it’s a big risk for me to be here, given my ties to the Azules cartel. We can’t have the Zafiro Corporation tracing back to Azules.”

“It won’t.”

“You’d better make sure, or it will end very badly for you and your entire family.”

“Don’t threaten me!” Pamela snapped.

Javier slapped her. Hard. She let out a startled cry as her head snapped to the side from the impact and she stumbled on her heels. “You’re lucky you’re a good fuck for an ice queen, or I would have just let you deal with this shit.”

Pamela bristled in indignation, then she launched herself at Javier. Trinity raised her gun and took aim. Her lips curled in disgust as she watched Pamela and Javier share a brutal kiss.

Sick.

Some women were just too stupid to live.

It made Trinity want to gag as the blonde rubbed her body against the hitman. She wanted to shoot them both just for making her watch their disgusting make-out session.

Pamela pulled back, rubbing her hand over Javier’s chest. “Don’t worry, lover. I’ve set it up so in a few days I’ll discover that Alice, Billy, and Alan have been working together to steal from my company. I’ve deleted all traces of the Zafiro Corporation from our records. After the investigation is over, we can begin funneling the Azules cartel’s money through a new shell company. No one will know anything we don’t want them to. Now, we have fifteen minutes to get out of here before this place blows. After tonight, all of this will be a bad memory.”

Shit.

Time had just run out.

Jackson tapped Trinity on the shoulder and motioned to her that his men were in place. She gave him a nod, and both of them rose at the same time, taking aim.

“CIPD! Put your weapon down!” Jackson ordered.

Trinity didn't even bother to sigh. The bad guys never listened.

Javier Vega's gun swung up to take aim at Jackson, but Trinity was faster. She shot him in the head and watched his body fall to the ground. Multiple gunshots filled the air as Jackson's men returned fire from the men Javier Vega had brought with him to the island. Pamela's screams mixed with the sounds of gunfire until all that was left were her hysterical sobs as she lay curled up on the ground.

Carlos Sanchez and Noah Diaz came out of the darkness, moving in to kick guns out of the fallen cartel member's hands and cuff the ones who were still alive.

“You okay, Lt.?” Noah called out.

“We're fine,” Jackson confirmed. “Damn it, Trinity. Couldn't you have left him alive?”

“No,” she said over her shoulder as she moved quickly into the area where the dead bodies lay. A shout had her turning her head, and she saw they had missed one cartel member in the firefight.

Son of a bitch.

He had her in his crosshairs.

The sound of three gunshots reverberated through the air, making Trinity tense as she waited for the pain to come. Only, there was none. She sucked in a deep breath when she realized that she wasn't hurt and watched the gunman fall to the ground, dead. Finn and Tony strode out of the shadows grinning at her.

“What? You shouldn’t have invited us to the party if you didn’t want us to play,” Finn said.

“Damn good timing, Irish.”

“That’s what they always say,” Finn replied with a wink.

“Wait. Finn and I hit this bastard in the chest. Who got in the throat shot?” Tony demanded.

“I did,” Nikita announced as she strolled into view.

Finn grinned at her. “Nice to see you, Flame.”

“Irish.” Nikita glanced around. “Who are these fuckers?”

“Azules cartel,” Trinity told her.

“Well, well. Isn’t that interesting? Want to guess which cartel is behind that new drug that killed that kid at the beach party?” Nikita asked.

“Son of a bitch!” Jackson growled. “Did you find the dealer?”

“Sure did.”

“Is he in custody?”

Nikita snorted out a laugh. “No, he’s in the morgue along with a handful of his buddies.”

“I told you,” Finn said gleefully.

“You know these guys, Lt.?” Noah asked, eying the agents warily.

“Yes. Trinity works with them.”

“I’m guessing they are more than just your average security consultants...” Carlos ventured cautiously.

“You could say that,” Jackson hedged, not wanting to go into details. If he did, his head might explode. “Damn it to hell, Katrina—”

“I’m going to have that tattooed on your ass if you keep saying it! We can talk about all of this shit later. Now, grab your buddies and get the hell out of here. We have a live bomb in play!”

“Three, actually,” a sobbing Pamela claimed. “We have to get out of here! I don’t want to die!”

“Where are they?” Tony demanded as he lifted her up by her arm. He shook her when she didn’t answer. “Where are the fucking bombs?”

After she gasped out the answer, he shoved the crying woman at Carlos.

“Oh, come on...”

“Deal with it,” Tony barked.

“What did she say?” Nikita demanded. “I couldn’t understand what she said through all that blubbing.”

Tony smirked. "I'm proficient in translating crying females because of my sister. She said there are three bombs in the building structure." He turned to glance at the cops. "You guys should get the hell out of here."

"I'll take one of the bombs," Finn offered.

"I've got another," Nikita confirmed.

"I've got the last. Let's get to work," Trinity ordered.

Before she could take off, Maxwell grabbed hold of her arm, holding her in place. Stark fear shone back at her. Instead of slapping out at him, she lowered her voice and placed her hand over his. "I know what I'm doing."

"I'm not leaving you," Max swore.

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“Neither am I,” Jackson bit out. “Don’t argue, just get it done.”

Huffing out an irritated breath, she hurried into the skeleton structure of the building with the rest of them close on her heels. She was about the order them to spread out and search but didn’t have to since two of the glowing red countdowns on the timers were easy to see in the dark.

“Take that one,” Nikita told Trinity, pointing toward the closest bomb. “Finn, you take the other. Tony, help me find the last one.”

“On it.”

As they ran off, Trinity fell to her knees in front of the bomb that had been placed on the ground by one of the support columns. Max held up his phone as a flashlight so she could see what she was working with. She shot him a smile of gratitude as she pulled the barrette out of her hair. Pushing and twisting one of the diamonds, a blade popped out of one of the ends.

“Handy, that,” Maxwell murmured.

“She’s a fucking walking arsenal,” Jackson muttered. “Are you sure—”

“Jackson, honey? Go away and hold the light up for Finn,” Trinity ordered sweetly.

“On it.”

Even though Jackson would rather stay with Trinity, he wasn’t going to argue when

all of their lives were on the line. As he headed over to Finn's position, he turned to scowl at his friends who were still standing by the entrance to the building a few yards away.

"What the hell are you guys still doing here?" Holding up his phone, he pointed the flashlight at the bomb Finn was working on. "Get the hell out of here and get to cover."

"No can do. You stay, we all stay," Carlos said grimly.

One of the cuffed men protested, but Noah quickly hit him in the jaw, knocking him out. He shrugged. "We could do without the screaming. Too bad we can't knock that one out." He jerked his head over to Pamela, who was still sobbing as she sat on the ground.

Carlos sighed. "Don't I wish..."

"Hit her," Trinity demanded. "Put her out of my misery."

"Can't. I don't hit women."

"She's not a woman. She's an idiot that got hit by stupid and run over by fucking moron," Finn called out while he worked on the second bomb. "Getting into bed with the cartel? That's like raising your hand and asking to be killed. And blowing up the construction site to cover your tracks when we already knew you were involved? Now, that's just an epic fail."

"Exactly." Trinity had enough. "Gag that bitch or something. She's really beginning to annoy me."

"With pleasure," Noah said with feeling.

Much to everyone's relief, a moment later the sounds of sobbing were muffled.

Finn glanced up. "Hey, Trin? Is this just a standard—"

"Trigger mechanism attached to the timer? Yeah," Trinity confirmed. "Fail-safe?"

"Not that I see. You?"

"Nope."

"What is with these damn cartels using basic shit?" Finn asked. "I mean, if you're going to use this much C4 to blow shit up, you could at least be a little original."

"That's...an interesting way of putting it," Jackson said. "Can you disarm it?"

"Yes, we can," Trinity answered. She had already pried open the panel of the crude bomb and was working on separating the wires.

"Hey, Trin. Does this remind you of that time in Jakarta?" Finn called out conversationally.

"No."

"Really, I thought—"

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“You’re thinking of Rio.”

“Ah, that’s right. Now that bomb was a thing of beauty...” Finn sighed.

Jackson stared at the other man with an incredulous look. “What is wrong with you?”

Finn chuckled. “I don’t have time to make a list for you.”

Trinity blocked out the banter and focused on the bomb in front of her. Too much was at stake for her to make any mistakes. She took the blade in her right hand and held up the wire she needed to cut with the left. She knew it was the right one, but still. Anytime she dealt with a bomb, there was a second of hesitation before making the cut. All she needed to do was take a deep breath, then cut.

“You aren’t done yet?” Nikita demanded. “What the hell are you guys waiting for?”

“She took that bomb apart as easy as Legos,” Tony praised.

Trinity gritted her teeth together. That certainly got her competitive side riled.

Three...

Two...

One...

Snip.

The clock on the bomb stopped with two minutes and forty-six seconds to spare. She breathed out slowly in relief. “Disarmed!”

“Aw, shit. I’m last,” Finn complained. “Bomb three, disarmed!”

Maxwell grabbed onto Trinity and kissed her with a passion that rivaled the heat of the sun. It seared her brain and set her body on fire. Before she could reengage her brain, Jackson tore her out of Maxwell’s arms and gave her another mind-blowing kiss.

She threw her head back with a laugh, glad to be alive. She noticed Jackson’s friends studying her like she was a wild animal, while her own friends smiled at her fondly.

“I should kick your asses for staying,” Jackson said gruffly, holding onto her like she was a lifeline as he spoke to his friends. “But thanks.”

“We don’t leave a man behind, Stone. You should know better,” Carlos scolded. “Next time, try to have your shoot-outs when I’m not wearing a suit. I liked this one, and I think I tore a fucking seam.”

Trinity grinned. “I like your friends, Jackson.”

Carlos laughed. “You guys certainly know how to spice up a party. Stone, I have a feeling your lady is going to keep you and Maxwell on your toes.”

Jackson sighed. “You have no idea.”

Epilogue

The days after the shoot-out were filled with procedural bullshit that had Trinity’s nerves grating. Much to the Crescent Island Police Department’s annoyance, the IAD

agents had disappeared with Pamela Riviera and the surviving cartel members, leaving Trinity alone to deal with the aftermath.

Tony and Finn had escaped the chaos, flying back to Chicago to start an official investigation on the Azules cartel using the financial information provided by the blonde who was all but singing for a deal.

Too bad for her she wasn't going to get one.

Since Nikita had no patience to sit through an interrogation or questioning by the police, she'd headed home to Breakers. Before she left, she explained everything she had discovered about the Azules cartel to Trinity, Jackson, and Maxwell. She also handed over a flash drive containing copies of all the information she had gathered.

Resigned to her fate, Trinity sat through a long ass debriefing with Jackson's boss, Chief of Police Henry Simmons. She liked the gruff older man as much as she enjoyed his wife, Addie. The only problem was the damn man wouldn't let shit go. She really couldn't blame him, though. It was his island to protect and, in his position, she would probably do the same.

After a few hours of questioning, she finally gave in and decided to come clean, disclosing exactly who she, Finn, and Tony worked for. She left Nikita's name out of the mix since she was technically retired, but Trinity figured the chief could probably figure out the truth on his own.

Henry had simply sat back in his chair stroking his chin during the explanation, then he had dismissed her. Later that night, Jackson came home from work and told her that the chief now considered her a consultant to the CIPD as long as she was on the island. She had laughed at that. The wily old man thought he was taking advantage of her, but she was actually pleased about the offer.

It had been two days since the incident at the construction site, and Trinity was nervous about the strain it had put on her connection with Maxwell and Jackson. Although they told her they wanted her to enjoy some downtime, a part of her wondered if their feelings for her had changed since they had seen her in action.

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She had never considered herself one of those needy women who clung to a man, but she'd hardly seen either of them. Jackson had been stuck at work, while Maxwell had practically been living at the hotel taking care of the new changes that were being discussed with Joseph and Eric Riviera.

Despite what Pamela had done, Maxwell insisted on giving Joseph and Eric another chance to work on the new villas that would be built. The men had been grateful for the chance to redeem themselves and had promised to do whatever they could to ensure the new build went off without a hitch.

Knowing that Maxwell was on his way back from the resort, Trinity decided it was time to take their relationship to the next level. She sent a quick text to Jackson, then went searching through her things in the guest bedroom. Pulling out a bag of her personal toys, she took out her vibrating butt plug and a motorized tickler that fit on the end of her finger.

Back in the master bedroom, she undressed, then settled herself in the middle of their bed. She lubed up the plug and slowly inserted it in her anus, enjoying the bite of pain that came with the first penetration. Once it was seated completely inside her, she used the remote control to turn it on its lowest setting. She spread her legs wide, bending her knees so anyone who walked into the bedroom would get an eyeful.

She stroked her left hand up her taut stomach up to one of her breasts and pinched her nipple until it was a hard pebble. Reaching between her thighs, she clicked the small button on the tickler and held it up to her clit as it began to hum. Undulating her hips to move the plug in her ass, she closed her eyes and enjoyed the vibrating sensations.

“Well, isn’t this a pretty sight,” Maxwell practically purred as he came into the room.

Trinity opened her eyes and saw that he had pulled off his tie and was now undoing the cuffs of his shirt. Something about the way he went from corporate mogul to sex god by simply removing his clothes had her pussy heating and flooding with wetness.

“You look lonely in that bed all by yourself, Kat.”

He slowly unbuttoned his shirt after tossing his suit jacket on a chair. His blue eyes had darkened with desire as he watched her. He kicked off his shoes as he tore the shirt from his body, his actions belying the calm in his voice.

“I am. I need you, Max,” Trinity moaned.

“I’m here, love. Right here.”

His hands were working on his belt buckle as Jackson called out from the hallway.

“Hey, where are you guys—” Jackson’s words cut off as he stopped in the doorway.

“Well, Jesus…”

“Do you realize that neither of you have fucked my ass yet?” Trinity asked conversationally as she moved her finger in slow circles over her clit.

Jackson swallowed hard. “We were waiting for you to give us a sign you wanted us to.”

She smiled. “Is this good enough?”

“Oh, hell yeah.”

She turned her head as Maxwell crawled onto the bed next to her. She reached out to stroke his hard cock with her hand as she watched Jackson rip off his clothes at the foot of the bed. She looked back at Maxwell, knowing the emotions she felt for him were shimmering in her eyes.

“I love you, Max.”

“God, I love you, too, Kat. So much.”

His mouth came down on hers, and she rolled him onto his back so she could straddle him. She trailed the vibrating tickler up over his nipples as they kissed, reveling in his moan. Shifting a little, she felt the large, mushroomed head of his cock lodge at the entrance of her pussy and slowly lowered herself onto him. They both moaned as his enormous shaft filled her until he was fully seated inside of her, the butt plug still vibrating in her ass.

“Holy shit, I can feel that all up my shaft,” Maxwell groaned.

“Kat?”

Trinity turned to look at Jackson, who was stroking his rock hard cock in his hand. She knew what he was asking and pressed the button to turn off the tickler before reaching out to grab the remote for the butt plug to turn it off.

“Fuck my ass, Jackson. Fuck me while Max fucks my pussy. I want you to love me together.” Her eyes searched his, then flickered down to Maxwell’s. “Is that okay?”

“God, yes, love,” Max groaned as his cock jerked inside her.

“I’ve been dreaming about fucking your tight little ass,” Jackson whispered. “And now that you’re stretched out and ready for me, we are both going to show you how

much we love you.”

She felt Jackson pulling the plug out of her slowly so it slid along the length of Maxwell’s cock still lodged deep inside her. She hummed in pleasure as she watched Jackson squirt some lube on his hand, rubbing it along the entire length of his shaft. Maxwell distracted her as he gripped her hair, pulling her down so their lips met in a searing kiss.

Jackson moved behind her, his eyes fixated on her perfect ass. He parted Maxwell’s legs more, then got in position behind her. He pressed the head of his cock against the entrance to her ass and pushed gently. She was so damn tight and her muscles seemed to fight his penetration. God, she felt amazing. He wanted to shove his cock deep inside her but knew he had to take it slow.

He wouldn’t risk hurting her.

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“You’re so beautiful, Kat,” Maxwell whispered softly as he stayed buried to the hilt inside her pussy. “Lean forward on me so Jackson can work his cock up your ass.”

She breathed out long and hard as Jackson pressed forward with more force, pushing his massive cock head against her entrance. “I need you to relax, Katrina.”

“Just do it,” she ordered. “I can take it. Push harder.”

Taking her at her word, Jackson shoved harder, lodging the head of his cock inside her ass. He stopped when Trinity cried out. He knew that both he and Maxwell were large, and he needed to give her time to adjust to the new sensations.

“You okay?” Jackson asked. His body was practically vibrating with the need to move, to plunge deep and fuck his way to heaven, but he forced himself to remain still.

“I need more,” Trinity gasped. “Please...move...”

“Oh, fuck. You’re so fucking tight,” Jackson growled. “It’s like pushing my cock into a vise.”

Maxwell’s arm wrapped around her, holding her to him as Jackson slowly thrust his long cock into her ass so it rubbed against his own already in her pussy. He used his other to grip her hair so he could stare into her beautiful hazel eyes.

“Don’t rush us, love. We need to make sure you’re ready for us.”

“I am,” she swore. She rocked her hips, trying to force Jackson further in her ass, then sucked in a breath as a sharp slap landed on her ass.

“Naughty, baby,” Jackson said as he rocked his cock slowly inside of her, forging deeper with every thrust. “Even when we have you between us, you’re still trying to call all the shots. I think this time you need to let us control your pleasure.” He pulled out slightly, then pushed back in. “What do you think, Max?”

“I think she needs us to show her that we can give her what she needs without asking for it. Don’t you, love?” Maxwell crooned as he began rocking his hips, pushing further inside her tight pussy.

Trinity pushed back on Jackson harder this time and earned another slap. She could feel the burn reverberate straight through her body so it pulsed in her clit.

“Son of a bitch!” she cried out. “Do that again.”

“You liked that? I think she’s ready now, aren’t you, baby?” Maxwell asked with a chuckle.

“I am,” she panted. “Do it. Fuck me, you big dick bastards.”

“You asked for it, baby. Max?”

Jackson’s eyes met Max’s over Trinity’s shoulder. When the other man nodded, Jackson began thrusting his cock back and forth inside her ass as Maxwell began pushing his cock into her pussy in tandem.

“Take it, take my cock up your ass,” Jackson ordered.

Pure pleasure filled Trinity in a way she’d never felt before. It felt so damn good to

be connected to both of them at the same time. She threw her head back and moaned as Jackson and Maxwell began thrusting their hips faster, thrusting one cock in as the other pulled out, working together to give her the ultimate pleasure.

Jackson wound his hand in her hair and yanked her head back so she was kneeling on the bed as they worked her body. His mouth savaged her neck and he forced her head to turn so he could take her lips with his.

Maxwell grunted as he started to slam his hips up, embedding his cock deeper into her pussy as his hands moved up to cup her breasts. "Let us give it to you, Kat. Let us give you what you need."

"I need you," she sobbed as the pleasure burned through her. "I need you both."

"We've got you, baby," Jackson crooned as he pounded into her ass. "We'll give you anything. Everything. I love you, baby. I love you so fucking much."

"I love you, Jackson," Trinity moaned.

"Oh, fuck, this feels too good," Maxwell growled as he rocked her on him. "I want to keep fucking you forever, but you're too tight, love. I'm going to come."

"Do you hear that, baby? Your tight little body is going to make us come. But we won't until you do. So, come for us," Jackson ordered.

"My clit, I need—" Trinity screamed out as Jackson's fingers slapped her clit.

"We know what you need, baby," Jackson growled. He slapped her again as he pounded into her from behind. "Come, Kat. Come and take us with you."

Maxwell yanked her down on him. "Look at me, Kat. Let me see what we do to you.

Come on my cock and make me spill inside you. Take it. Take it from me.”

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She never took her eyes off Maxwell's as her entire body tensed up. She screamed out as Jackson rubbed her clit in rapid circles, making her body shatter into pure ecstasy. Maxwell let out a shout as her orgasm forced his own, and he shot pulse after pulse of his release into her tight pussy. The feeling of him filling her triggered another climax even more intense than the first, making her entire body tense up so tight that both men could barely move.

"Fuck!" Jackson shouted as he jerked against her ass.

Her tight muscles gripped him so hard they milked the cum from his cock as they undulated around his shaft. His body shook as he continued to spurt his hot seed into her ass. He collapsed to the bed, moving so he took her down with him on their sides instead of crushing her.

"That was..." Jackson began but couldn't seem to find the energy to continue.

"My idea," she claimed smugly, then she sighed with contentment.

"And it was a spectacular one," Maxwell said with a chuckle. "Speaking of ideas..."

His hesitation had her tensing up. "What?"

Maxwell cleared his throat, his expression so serious it made her stomach flutter. "Jackson and I have talked about this. We know we haven't known you very long, but I...we..."

"We want you to marry us," Jackson burst out.

Trinity blinked in surprise, then a slow smile spread across her lips. “Why the hell not.”

Both men froze.

“Was that a yes?” Maxwell asked.

She leaned in and pressed a kiss to his lips. “Yes.” She laughed as she turned and kissed Jackson. “That’s a hell yes!”

Trinity’s men had surprised her, but she had done them one better. On the spur of the moment, two days after they proposed to her, she suggested that they just skip the engagement and get married that very day.

“Why wait?” she’d asked. “You love me, I love you both. Let’s just do it.”

Trinity wasn’t the type of woman who needed a big wedding, and Jackson and Maxwell were just happy to be able to call her their wife that they didn’t care when it happened. They could always have a big reception later on. The more Trinity thought about it, the more she didn’t want to wait to belong to them both.

They had just enough time to spread the word, then the three of them found themselves on the beach at the resort, surrounded by their friends and family as they got married by Judge Jethro Carrington under a perfect blue sky. Even with short notice, it seemed like half the island showed up to watch the impromptu ceremony.

Trinity wore a long, flowing white gown that she bought from Olivia’s store in town. It was absolutely perfect for a beach wedding and matched the white linen pants and shirts Maxwell and Jackson wore. Trinity’s hair had been pulled up at the sides, leaving the rest to cascade into a wild array of curls down her back. A gorgeous bouquet of flowers was shoved into her hands by a smiling resort staff member, then she was ready to walk across the sand to meet her men.

When they spoke their vows, Trinity felt her eyes well up with tears and she saw the same emotion on Jackson's and Maxwell's faces as they promised to love her forever. She had lost her breath as they presented her with a gorgeous princess-cut diamond ring that matched the intricately braided platinum bands they had all picked out together.

Once the ceremony was finished, everyone retreated inside to Sinful, which had been closed for the special occasion. The chefs had taken up the challenge and put together a spectacular menu for everyone to enjoy.

As Trinity sat between her new husbands, she felt something she'd never felt before. She closed her eyes to savor the feeling and felt a light kiss being pressed against her lips. Opening her eyes, she saw Jackson smiling back at her.

"Are you okay, baby?" Jackson asked.

"I'm perfect," she whispered.

"You certainly are," Maxwell replied as he tilted her head to him so he could rub his lips against hers.

She smiled. That was it.

The feeling was happiness and contentment all rolled into one. It was the joy of belonging and being exactly where she was meant to be.

THE END