



Dirty Uncle

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Category: Erotic, Romance, Young Adult

Description: Rex spends a lot of time on king crab fishing boats. So much time that he's never bothered to settle down. So the day he sees his step-niece for the first time, he's not ready for what she makes him feel.

Clara is old enough to make her own decisions, and she's decided she wants her step-uncle Rex. Everyone is telling her it's wrong, but she can only follow her heart. She just needs to be ready for the consequences when he finally claims her.

Warning: When Jessa and Alexa team up you know it's going to be terrible. Terribly-wonderful! This over-the-top tidal wave of love is about to sweep you under. Don't worry, you'll thank us!

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Chapter One

Clara

All my life, I've wanted nothing more than to feel protected. Safe.

You know, that feeling you get burrowing into a mountain of blankets on Christmas morning, surrounded by the soft glow of white lights? I get that same exact sensation when I walk out onto the back patio and see Rex for the first time.

I know it's him, because he's the only person at the anniversary party I don't recognize. My stepfather hates Rex, his brother, and probably only invited him to show off the new house. It's obvious now why my mother's husband of one year can't stand his sibling—Rex is everything he isn't.

Rex is almost too male with his weathered face and unkempt beard. I've heard stories of the Alaskan king crab fisherman who now stands silhouetted by the night sky. My stepfather calls him reckless for fishing on those dangerous waters, but that boldness clings to him, makes him look twice as capable as any regular man. The buttons of the flannel shirt he's wearing barely contain his thick masculine bulk—muscled and meaty and...God, is that black hair curling through some of the openings between buttons?

My thighs clench together all on their own and I gasp, because I've never felt that tug between my legs before. It's a warm, melting twist that doesn't end, only gets more intense as Rex puffs on a short cigar, releasing a steady stream of smoke toward the ebbing sunset.

This man is strange to me. We haven't even been properly introduced. But something draws me closer. A promise of safety, which doesn't make any sense considering we haven't exchanged a word. Maybe it's his huge hands or the thighs that look so sturdy I could jump on them like a trampoline and he wouldn't notice. My nipples grow stiff at the idea of touching him. What is happening to me?

Out of everyone, my step-uncle had to make me feel this way?

Although...surely it can't hurt to talk to him. My body is probably just confused. It's reacting to what it wants most—safety—and uncles are supposed to make you feel safe, right?

Remembering my manners, I cross the patio with my hand extended for a shake. "Hello, nice to meet you, my name is—"

My toe catches on a brick and I go flying.

You see, this is why safety appeals to me so much. I'm a disaster. A walking, talking disaster that should be wrapped in bubble wrap or kept indoors. Ever since I was a toddler, I have found my way into messes, scrapes and broken bones. I don't mean to—honestly. My mother says God forgot to give me balance. Isn't that terribly sad? It's hard not to believe her some days, though.

Especially now, when I'm about to hit the patio and probably sprain a wrist—again—or earn a gash on my chin. But no...

Rex catches me.

And when I look up into his ogre-style frown? Angels. They start singing.

"What in the good goddamn is wrong with you, girl?"

His voice. It's ashes and soot. A rusted gate swinging open. It shouldn't make me feel as though I've landed on a fluffy cloud sent from heaven, but it does. Wow. "God didn't give me any balance. Isn't that terrible?" I whisper. "I save loose change in a jar so I can go to Paris one day and see the Eiffel Tower, but I keep having to cash it in for Band-Aids."

In my flushed and flustered state, my words have come out in a high-pitched jumble, but he still seems to comprehend all right. I think. Those narrowed eyes are sweeping over me and lingering in my sensitive places, a tick-tock beginning in his cheek. "When I asked what was wrong with you, I meant you shouldn't be out here in the cold wearing nothing but pajamas."

"This is a dress, silly."

He gives a low grunt and when he speaks again, his voice has dropped to a scraping baritone. "Ain't like no dress I've seen."

Oh God. He thinks I'm sexy, doesn't he? Boys have asked me out before and I've even gone on a few movie dates. Having them stare at my boobs never felt like this, though. As if I'm seconds from being carried off into the shadows. I should tell him who I am. Right this very second. But he would stop holding me if I did that. I'm not even sure he realizes I'm still locked in his arms, my side pressed against his hard, unmovable body. "It's my favorite color," I say, instead of the right thing. "That's why I bought it."

"Pink, huh?" Those eyes trace down lower, where the hem of my dress brushes my upper thighs. "Sweet baby pink."

I squeeze—squeeze—my legs together. It's like going over the steep drop of a roller coaster. "I lied." I lean up to whisper against his ear. "They are pajamas."

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There's a harsh rasp in his throat—and then my world tilts. Rex turns my body and jerks me up against him, leaving my tiptoes scraping on the brick, my breasts plumped where they meet his chest. “You eighteen?”

“Yes,” I whimper.

His hips tilt and his big penis presses into my stomach, a long groan leaving his mouth. “That ain't another lie, is it?”

“No, sir.”

“If you're at this party with your daddy or a husband, best tell me now.”

Technically, the man inside isn't my father—not by birth, anyway—and I'm definitely not married. I've never even had a boyfriend. I'm being a little dishonest not clarifying who I am, but I'm too excited to find out what happens next. Tingles are racing up and down my back, sliding up my thighs, making my breasts feel heavy. More. I need more. “I'm not here with a daddy or a husband.” I wet my lips and feel his flesh jerk between us. “Why d-do you want to know?”

With a slow headshake, his hands travel to my backside and mold it roughly. “I've been on the boat for months, nursing my own hand. Now some cute little thing lands in my lap, trying to flirt the come straight up my cock.” He lifts me higher and seats me on top of his erection, bouncing me on it with a hard thrust. “I'm fitting to send you back to the party with smeared lipstick, girl.”

Chapter Two

Rex

And here I thought this party was going to suck.

Couldn't believe my damn eyes when this little fuck princess came toward me in the backyard, wobbling around in her sparkly high heels. I figured she was coming to tell me I couldn't smoke in this rich, uppity neighborhood. She fell into my arms instead, beaming up at me like I was her lord and savior when I caught her. Kind of messed me up in the chest area, if I'm being truthful. Maybe she's blind and that's why she tripped? Because I'm not exactly a knight in shining armor. I'm the enemy that enters battle with blood in his beard. Least that's the reaction I normally get from women. Wariness or...the desire to give me a haircut.

Not this one, though. This doe-eyed brunette with titties like a jerk-off magazine centerfold has both legs wrapped around me, her sexy lips parted with excitement. Christ. She's going to let me fuck her in my brother's backyard, ain't she?

The reminder of why I'm really here is an unwelcome one. I don't want to think about my asshole brother or why I continue to feel obligated to maintain some kind of relationship, good or bad. It's the guilt that keeps me calling on holidays. Guilt that had me finally accepting an email invitation to help celebrate his amazing life, free of the family that dragged him down. Me.

Don't want to think of that, though. I only want to think about the sweet little knockout in my arms and getting my first decent nut in months. Hell, she's going to be my best nut, period, the end, and that's reason enough to give responsibility the middle finger and find a place where I can get my hurting cock inside of her. I need her.

"I think..." She glances back over her shoulder. "I think there might be a pool house..."

Without waiting for her to finish, I start in that direction, figuring if she's friends with my brother and his wife, she must have been here before, for pool parties or whatever the hell rich folks get up to. Not that I don't make a damn mint myself trapping crabs, but I sure as shit don't act stuffy about it, throwing soirées and the like. "You wear a bathing suit around men and ain't nobody locked you down. How the hell is that?"

"At the last pool party, I slipped on the diving board—on my first dive—and had to be taken to the emergency room for stitches." She lays her head on my shoulder and I get hit with another weird chest squeeze. Lord, I feel like a thug kidnapping the princess from her tower. "People stay away so they don't get sucked into my vortex of doom."

"Ah, now." I give her back an awkward rub. "The men around here must be pussies. I'd walk through a damn inferno just to see you topless."

She gasps and gives me those heart-in-her-throat eyes again. "You would?"

"Yeah." For the first time in my life, possessiveness rises up in my throat and digs in with steel claws. Jesus, it turns me inside out while I'm looking down into her beautiful, trusting face. She trusts me. I can't let her regret it. I can't let her look at any other man this way—ever. The very thought almost sends me into a goddamn rage. "Other men don't get to look no more. Soon as I've made use of that baby girl mouth, it don't say no one else's name but mine. Soon as I've worked that pussy into a lather, you keep it wrapped up in a fucking bow for me. You hear me, girl?"

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I don't know where I get the nerve, telling this sweet, beautiful angel that she's mine, only that I have no choice. If anyone else touches her from now until I die, my world is going to burn down around me.

"Yes, I hear you," she breathes, staring at my mouth. "H-how are you going to mess up my lipstick?"

We reach the small bamboo pool house and I walk us inside, kicking the door shut behind me. I set her down, chuckling to myself when she almost trips again, then I whip the silky pink nothing over her head, throwing it aside. Damn the near-darkness, because I can barely see her tits and lack of hair between her legs, but she's incredible enough in the muted light to make me feel like a neglected animal. That's what I am, I realize. That's what I've been without her. "I've been on the boat, girl. My dick is pounding like a motherfucker." I reach down and unzip, gripping my cock and presenting it to her. "If I kiss that pretty mouth, I'll be fucking you to kingdom come before you can bat those eyelashes." I stroke my cock and her chin drops. "Why don't you give this a little kiss now? Soon as my balls ain't so full, our tongues can play together."

I fight the urge to pinch myself when she lowers to her knees and crawls forward, a lock of dark hair falling forward to cover one eye. In my thirty-four years, I've never seen anything so sexy, so beautiful. So mine. "I've heard other girls talking about doing this." Her breath is on my cock now. She's that close. "You don't really want a kiss here. You want to put it all the way into my mouth, don't you?"

"Yes. Want to wrap your hair around my fists and..."

“Tell me,” she murmurs. “You can say anything to me.”

“Dammit,” I grind out. “I just want to rape your little throat, girl.” Come beads on the tip of my dick, saying it out loud. “You telling me I’m your first man? First suck?”

She nods solemnly.

My teeth bare themselves in the darkness, pride puffing my chest. By some miracle this girl has been kept untouched for me. I should be carrying her to a soft bed and feeding her fucking grapes or some shit, but I’m too horny and she’s looking at my cock like it’s an ice-cream sundae. Later. Later I’ll treat her like a goddamn queen. Ice her sore pussy and rub her down with lotion. “Don’t be shy. Wrap a hand around it and feel. It’s full to bursting.”

Apparently she was waiting to be urged, because the gruff invitation sends her forward. She licks the semen from my tip, her eyes closed on a whimper. I’ve barely recovered from that before she’s got those pouty lips stretched around my cock and she’s sucking like her life depends on it. My load almost blows then and there. Jesus Christ, it’s clear she’s never given a suck job before, but Lord help me, that’s what makes my balls harden to boulders. I must have done something right in my life, because I’ve got a naked, dick-starved virgin kneeling in front of me, pumping her mouth up and down so fast, her tits bounce with the effort.

“Fuuuuuuck. Took you for a good girl at first. Maybe you are, but you’ve got a bad seed planted between your thighs, don’t you?” I slide my fingers into her hair and roll my hips toward her enthusiastic mouth. “Yeah, the devil created your pussy, girl. Made it bare and eager for fuckin’ and God kept it safe so no one would touch it until I found you. Didn’t he?”

She gives me a yes with her eyes and I growl, tightening up my stomach to keep from going off. It’s a losing battle, though. I’ve never fucked a sweeter mouth. Never had a

girl this perfect want me, let alone blow me like I'm a king. No way I can prevent what's coming. My balls are practically in my throat, they're hauled up so tight. Her hands are jerking me off in time with her sucks now. She's making these horny little sounds, her thighs moving around like she's long overdue for a cock. And it's going to be mine claiming that pussy, soon as I get rid of this edge I've been building up. I'll be hard again in seconds for this girl. "Shit. Here it comes. Here it—"

The pool house door opens, spilling light across the room.

There stands my brother, a look of outrage on his face. "What the hell is going on here? You're a sick pervert."

Pervert? My girl makes a startled mewling sound and it tingles my dick, right down to the root. And I keep right on thrusting into her little mouth, because I have no choice. Pleasure has me by the balls, forcing me to keep going. So good. It's too good.

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“Stop this now!” thunders my brother. “She’s your niece!”

Niece. When he says it, liquid fire is already shooting up the stalk of my flesh and there isn’t a damn thing in the world I can do about it. I pull her face flush with my lap and hit the resistance of her throat, listening as she happily chokes down my come, wave after wave. I bellow my relief into the small pool house, lights flickering in front of my vision, the orgasm ripping through me. Best one of my life by a hundred miles. I haven’t even been living until now.

When it’s over, though? When my brother is staring at me like I’m a monster and my niece’s lies replay one by one? That’s when I get good and pissed.

Chapter Three

Clara

Uh oh. I’m in big trouble now.

My stepfather storms toward me and I curl into myself—but when I expect him to grab me by the arm and drag me back to the main house...nothing happens.

I open my eyes to find Rex blocking his path, hands fisted at his sides.

Inside my chest, my heart bursts into a shower of confetti. Does that mean Rex still wants me? Please let him still want me. The last twenty minutes have been the best ones of my—admittedly short—life. No one has ever made me feel so safe and secure. Possessed. No one has ever caught me before I hit the floor, either. Ever since

I was a little girl, I've prayed for...something. I wasn't sure what it was. A person? A thing? All I knew was the feeling it would give me. A sense of belonging. That's what Rex gave me for the last twenty glorious minutes. I belonged to him. And he wasn't going to cast me aside for being clumsy or a little bit crazy once in a while.

Not like everyone else.

Knowing this isn't the right time doesn't stop my gaze from roaming up his thighs and backside. His fly must still be undone, because the waist of his jeans is loose, giving me a glimpse of coarse skin, black hair, tattoo ink. Oh God, I can still taste him in my throat, all salty and thick. I just want to do it again. Want to see his ownership blazing down at me, hear it in his voice.

"Well?" shouts my stepfather. "I just walked in to find you face-fucking my stepdaughter. Explain yourself."

"Watch your tone. I'm still your older brother and I'll still belt you across the mouth when necessary." Rex's cold warning jolts me, but I still scoot closer, pressing my face against the backs of his legs. "I didn't know who she was."

My stepfather shoves a hand through his perfectly styled hair and laughs. "You expect me to believe that? Jesus, man. She's barely out of high school."

Rex curses. "She's legal, though?"

"If she wasn't, would you have stopped?"

Silence drops like a curtain, finally giving me my chance to interject. "Stop talking about me like I'm not here." I reach for my silk pajama slip and tug it over my head. "I'm an adult. I can speak for myself."

“You’re only an adult on paper,” spits my stepfather. “In real life, you’re a daydreaming baby who can’t walk two feet without tripping into a ditch. Is that what happened here? She tripped and her mouth landed on your—”

Rex plows his fist into my stepfather’s face. He staggers back, hand pressed to his nose. Blood begins to ooze out almost immediately.

“Get out!”

“I warned you,” Rex says, pointing at his brother. “A warning is more than I give most men. You should have listened.”

My stepfather visibly reins in his temper. “You’ve come into my home, defiled Clara and assaulted me. How am I going to explain this to her mother? She looks like she’s been working a street corner.” He looks at the blood on his hand and winces. “It’s time for you to go, Rex. Go and don’t ever come back.”

“This is the Clara you mentioned in your email,” Rex murmurs, finally turning to look down at me, but I can’t read his shut-off expression. “I didn’t ask her name. I would have known.”

“Yes, well. It’s a little late for regrets.” My stepfather sneers down at me. “Believe me, I know she’s tempting, I’ve thought about waiting until her mother is asleep and—”

Rex cuts him off with a growl. “You don’t want to finish that sentence.” He steps into my stepfather’s space and the man’s face turns white as a sheet. “If you ever lay a goddamn finger on her, you won’t live to see the next sunrise.”

My heart floats up into the clouds and I come to my feet, prepared to launch myself into Rex’s arms. He’s not angry at me for lying. He understands that we’re not related

by blood and we're free to be together. At least, that's what I think.

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“Christ, you can’t be serious about her,” says my stepfather slowly. “She’s your niece. You were in high school when she was born. There’s no way around this. You pursue something with her, the stigma will follow you. Follow her.”

Several beats of silence pass. “I’m not. I’m not...pursuing her.” There’s the sound of Rex’s belt jangling as he tucks his shirt back into his jeans with hasty movements. But all I can hear is the rushing in my ears. It’s over. It’s over and we’ve barely even started yet. “I’ll get gone soon enough. But I’m going to have a word with her first.” Rex grunts. “Go on. Get back to your party.”

“Oh yes. Can’t wait to explain my broken nose.” My stepfather’s sarcasm hangs in the air as he turns to leave. Before he gets too far, though, he turns back to face Rex. “Dad was always right about you. You find a way to blacken everything.”

Rex stands there for long seconds, hands propped on his hips. I can sense a deep sorrow...or maybe disappointment in him. It corresponds to the sorrow inside me. The one that deepens every time someone tells me to get my head out of the clouds or laughs at me for bumping into something. My attraction to Rex is about more than safety, isn’t it? More than belonging. We share a spirit, don’t we?

I move forward to wrap my arms around him from behind, but before I can comfort him, he turns to look at me and all I see is his anger. Regret. And still a touch of sorrow. “Did you know who I was?”

“Yes,” I say, refusing to be anything but truthful this time. “I knew.”

His eyes widen in surprise before narrowing to slits. “You lied to me, girl.”

“No.” I sidle forward. “I found a loophole. There’s a difference.”

“Yeah. A huge difference. Once that ended with your uncle’s cock in your mouth.” He drops his head forward. “I shouldn’t even be speaking to you about things like that.”

“I like it,” I whisper. “I like everything about you.”

“You can drop the act now. I see what’s going on here.” His laugh holds no humor. “You like pissing off your new stepdaddy. Well, I’d say you achieved that and then some.”

“No, I...” I shake my head, confused. “When I want to piss him off, I just hide his flaxseed oil. His face turns all red and—”

“Stop,” he barks, before taking a slow step closer to me. “Stop being so...”

“Random? Ridiculous?”

“Who calls you that?”

My lower lip pokes out. “Everyone.”

His gaze turns dark, seeming to be arrested by my lip for a handful of seconds. “Damn. You’re not going to make this easy, are you?”

“Are youuu...”

He raises a messy eyebrow.

“I was trying to coax you into saying my name again.” Taking a chance, I lay my

hands on his chest, sliding them up to his huge shoulders. “I loved it so much the first time.”

“Clara...”

I melt toward him with a sigh and push up on my toes. “Will you take me home with you?” Our mouths brush and he seems to expand with heaving muscle, one hand twisting in the back of my pajamas. “I’m not always clumsy, if that’s what you’re worried about. As soon as the music starts, I just close my eyes and feel. My dance instructor tells me I’m as graceful as a feather.”

He snorts. “Not worried about you tripping once in a while—”

“It’s more often than that.”

“—I’m worried that we’re related.” He grips my arms and shakes me a little. “Don’t you understand we did something very bad? Can’t do it again.”

“But you want to?”

For just a sliver of time, his eyes travel down to my breasts and he groans. “Don’t matter. I won’t.” Rex sets me away from him with a firm nod. “You hear what my asshole brother said? I blacken everything. He was...right.” He turns away with a curse, his hands going back to his hips. “Shit. Don’t know why I bother trying to change his mind.”

“How can you blacken everything and still make me feel so hopeful?”

Rex is unreadable as he turns to me. “Enough, Clara. I’m your uncle. Get that through your pretty little head.” Even as he says the words, he can’t seem to help reaching out and brushing back a piece of flyaway hair. “This shit with my brother is complicated,

and after what happened tonight, there's even less of a chance of us working out our differences. But taking you home and fucking you, girl...it would be ten kinds of wrong. And it would be the final straw." He chews on the inside of his cheek. "Hell, Clara, you shouldn't..."

"Shouldn't what?"

"Look, I'm a nasty bastard." I'm not prepared when he lurches toward me, as if to scare me, and it sends my pulse into hyperdrive. "Not ten minutes after I meet such a sweet little thing, I'm shoving my cock down her throat. The things I would do to you are obscene. Beneath you. I'll blacken you, too."

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“No, you wouldn’t.” In desperation, I twist my hands in his collar and tug him down with all my might, bringing our mouths together. “Don’t listen to him,” I murmur against his lips. “Keep me.” Our tongues touch and a shudder passes through him. “Kiss me.”

“No, Clara.” He winds an arm around my waist and yanks me higher. “No.” His lips press mine wide, making room for our tongues to lick at each other. “Ahh, fuck, girl. You’ve got a little sugar mouth. It sucked me so good.”

“How could you say I touched you just to get back at my stepfather?” I whisper, planting kisses on his chin and cheeks between words. “You know it’s more than that. You know there’s something here.”

With a tortured groan, he breaks the kiss and steps back, that oversized part of him protruding behind his fly. “Real or not. We can’t see each other, again, Clara. I’ve been enough of a burden to my family. I can’t add this to my list of sins—and it would be a big one.”

I want to ask why he believes himself a burden, want to ask what happened between him and his family, but his jaw is firmed, as if to signal I won’t get anything of importance. Tonight, anyway. For right now, though, I’m not going down without a fight. I can’t let him take this incredible feeling of belonging with him and never experience it again. “My mom is surprising him with tickets to Bali tonight. They’re leaving in the morning for two weeks.”

“Why are you telling me this, dammit?”

“It’s nothing new. They go away all the time...but I have a dance showcase, two nights from now. It’s important. An instructor from my dream performing arts school will be there and I won’t have anyone there to watch me. Will you come?”

He hesitates. “No.”

“You’ll come.” A smile stretches across my face. “I know you will.”

“Don’t look at me like I’m your white knight. That ain’t me.” His tone is harsh. Mean. “You’ll know for sure when you wake up with a sore throat in the morning.”

Maybe I do have the devil’s seed between my legs, because I lift the hem of my dress and sway my hips side to side, letting him see me from the waist down. “I’ll be keeping this wrapped in a bow for you. Just like you asked, Uncle Rex.”

A heaved curse leaves him, his hands flying to the pool house doorframe and creaking it beneath his grip. I think he’s going to give in. To catch me up in his arms and take me to his home, wherever it is. Sweat pops up on his brow, his erection turning uncomfortable looking. From the direction of the main house, though, my stepfather calls my name and Rex smashes his fist into the door. And then he’s gone.

But I smile to myself as I return to the party, because I know it’s not the last time I’m going to see my big bad fisherman uncle.

Chapter Four

Rex

I’ve never been more out of place in my goddamn life.

How the hell do people fit in these auditorium chairs? The metal armrests dig into my

sides and no amount of shifting dislodges them. I rummaged through my closet and found a dress jacket, but it's snug around the shoulders. I'm seconds from ripping it if I stretch the wrong way.

What am I doing here? I should be picking up work, getting a spot on a crew until crab season picks up again in the fall—and staying the hell off of dry land. It's what I do every year. Usually I take some time off right after crab season. But right now, I need to jump on anything to keep me away from Clara. Clara and the tight, virgin cunt she offered me.

Can't take it. Won't. I'm only here because someone should be supporting her on this important night. Couldn't her mother book the vacation for one day after the showcase? Are they inconsiderate of Clara often? I don't like that shit at all. For the last two days, I've thought a lot about what she told me. Not to mention what my brother said. They call her a daydreamer. Ridiculous. A baby. What other kinds of insults do they throw at this sweet girl?

And God, is she sweet. Not just her taste, but the way she pressed her face to my legs while I argued with my brother. Like...she was on my side. When has anyone ever been on my side? Unconditionally.

Never.

I shake off the unpleasant thoughts when the lights go out, soft classical music beginning to play. A group of ballerinas prance onto the stage. Soon as I confirm none of them are my niece, I begin scrolling through my text messages, the top one from a fisherman buddy of mine, Hank, inviting me on a hunting trip. Tomorrow.

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I haven't answered him yet, but common sense tells me I need to go. If I hang around town any longer, I'm going to find myself between two extremely off-limits thighs. Damn. If she hadn't been so eager, hadn't shown so much interest...I still would have found her fucking exquisite, but keeping it in my pants wouldn't have been such a challenge. Knowing she wants it has my cock in a permanent upright position. Goddamn, she's a sweet little thing. Can't believe she wants me.

The memory of my brother's angry face fades into another, angrier face from my past. My father's. And before I can talk myself out of it, I respond to the text message, letting Hank know I'll meet him at the lodge tomorrow morning. It's only about an hour's drive up the mountain, but I'll have to leave bright and early if I want to catch them before their first outing. I can control myself long enough to watch Clara perform, congratulate her and go.

I like everything about you.

I'm distracted by the memory of Clara's words and how they twist my stomach up when I notice murmuring around me. Music has been playing on the stage, but it cuts out now, a man in a tuxedo jogging out with a microphone. "Please excuse us while we take a short break," he says, wiping sweat off his forehead. "The showcase will resume in a few minutes."

"Here we go again," someone behind me says with a chuckle. "What do you think she did this time? Ankle sprain? Ran into a pole?"

I need no further proof they're talking about Clara. She's hurt? Backstage? With a glare at the shit-heads behind me —damn right I memorize their faces — I stand and

squeeze my way down the row, trying not to step on anyone's feet, but obviously failing since I keep hearing outraged yelps. Whispers follow me down the side row toward the door I hope leads backstage, but I'm only concerned with reaching Clara. Finding out what the hell is wrong and fixing it.

One step through the door and I come up short at a curtain. There's a skinny fellow guarding it with a clipboard, but I ignore his sputtering and breeze on past. Soon as I'm on the other side, I see her. She's on the floor, a lacy, pink skirt poofed out around her outstretched legs. Her shoulders are shuddering up and down as she tries to unwrap a Band-Aid. It's only then I see the gash on her knee. I also notice there's a bunch of girls her age standing in a circle around her, looking peeved and useless. No one is helping her—and that shit kicks up a fuss in my damn belly.

Clipboard man storms past me and wheels around. "You can't be here, sir."

"You want to eat that clipboard?"

He turns white. "No, sir."

"Then fuck off," I growl, shouldering my way past him.

I'm almost to Clara when she looks up, beaming at me with a thousand-watt smile. "You came."

"Yeah." Damn, she makes my ribs feel funny. Especially in that sparkly getup with all that glitter on her eyes. I'm not sure I can speak right yet, so I pull a bandana out of my back pocket and crouch down, pressing it to the bloody cut. I expect her to wince or start crying, but she just keeps on gazing at me with stars in her eyes. "Hold this down and stop the bleeding. I'll open the Band-Aid."

She does as she's told...and my cock likes her obedience way too much. Likes it even

more when I rip the Band-Aid open with my teeth and she gasps, her nipples pebbling beneath the thin material of her costume. “We’ve got an audience, Clara,” I mutter.

“What would you do if we didn’t?” she whispers back.

Probably pry your legs open and rut like a death row inmate. “Nothing,” I say, grateful my voice sounds firm. I ease the bandana away and, satisfied the bleeding has stopped, I smooth the Band-Aid over her cut. “It hurt much, girl?”

“Not anymore.”

This is why I have to get out of town. She’s making it impossible to do the right thing. And the right thing is definitely not letting my attention travel up her bare thighs where they disappear into all that poofy, pink material. As if she senses me looking, she spreads them just a couple of inches and there it is. There’s her untapped pussy, covered in nothing but a narrow path of stretched pink silk. She’s just looking for a Daddy, my little niece. Isn’t she? Someone to bandage up her injuries and kiss her princess mouth.

Not me. It can’t be me. Not only am I related to her by marriage, but I’m too old and my soul is too black. She’s the purest thing on this earth.

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Steeling myself against the attraction, I take Clara's hands and help her stand up. I've been so absorbed in her, I've forgotten all about the mean-looking girls hanging around, sneering with their arms crossed. Clara must notice, too, because she hunches her shoulders. Which I don't like one bit. Turning toward the bitch crew, I bare my teeth at them and growl—loud—sending them running.

"S-s-sir, you really must leave now," stammers Clipboard Man, to my right, half of him hidden behind the curtain. "It's just policy—"

"I'll leave when I'm damn well ready." I wait for his enthusiastic nod, before facing a giggling Clara again. Man, even her laugh sounds innocent. Untouched. Beautiful. "You going to be able to dance?" I manage.

"Yes," she murmurs, smoothing her hands down the tight top of her costume. "Will you stay afterward? Please?"

Despite the eyes on us, I can't help moving closer, trying to count the sparkles on her eyelids. "You know I shouldn't."

"You saved my night." Her skirt brushes my legs and my dick turns to swollen, hanging meat. "You made everything better and I just want to say thank you."

"Say it now," I grit out. "Words only."

She shakes her head, mischief shining in her eyes. "See you later, Uncle Rex."

I have to untuck my shirt to cover my vicious cock-stand, just so I can return to my

seat. Everyone watches me curiously as the music starts once again, but as soon as Clara takes the stage, I see nothing but her, encased in glowing white light.

My life has been nothing but grit. Ropes, crab traps, icy death, danger. Before I started my career crabbing, I bounced at biker bars where I witnessed the shitty side of humanity on a regular basis. Ugly. All I've seen is ugliness. All I've heard is anger and cynicism. But watching Clara float around the stage like an angel, all the hardness inside me crumbles. Dear God, who knew this kind of beauty existed?

I know I should leave now, because there's more here than inappropriate lust for something I can't have. There's...more. I want her smiles. Her trust. I want to scare off people who are mean to her. Tuck her into my arms at night. But none of that is possible, so I need to leave. Do my best to put Clara out of my mind.

But I remain glued to the seat, knowing—knowing—I'll be staying after to get her thank you.

Chapter Five

Clara

I'm standing outside the auditorium and I don't see Rex. Did he leave?

My heart sinks into my stomach at the possibility. I came on too strong backstage, didn't I? God, he must think I'm a sex-starved lunatic. I practically begged him to climb on top of me in front of everyone. What is wrong with me?

It's just that the sight of him makes everything south of my belly button feel...wobbly and ticklish. I get wet and flushed and my skin turns so sensitive, I want to scream. Once, I snuck a romance novel out of my mother's nightstand just to read the sex scenes and I found it ridiculous. No way could a person lose control of

their body in such a way. Oh, I was so wrong. When I see his hearty shoulders and that chest hair curling around the top of his shirt, my thighs spread themselves.

He always looks so mad—so irritable—but his words are like blankets straight from the dryer. As soon as he stomped backstage, looking like an avenging lumberjack, my blood sighed with safety. Here he is. I'm fine now.

But I probably scared him off, all but promising not to behave. As if being his step-niece isn't enough to keep us separated, there's something in his past—something involving my stepfather—that is making him twice as adamant to stay away. I wish I knew what it was—

“Clara.”

I whip around to find Rex standing in the shadows, down the stairs and to the right of the entrance, puffing on his cigar. When he puts it out with a twist of his boot, my belly cinches inward, my heart clattering like tin cans tied to a back bumper. I don't want to question my instincts. I just want to follow them. Needing to be in his reassuring presence, I fly down the stairs, make a quick turn and take a flying leap into his arms. My legs twine around his waist in full view of everyone still filing out of the auditorium—and I guess that's why Uncle Rex gives a low, punctuated grunt and walks us around the side of the building.

“Girl, you are asking for trouble.”

“You stayed.” I snuggle my face into his beard. “Does that mean you're asking for it, too?”

“No.” Even as he makes the denial, his hands inch up my thighs, toward my backside. “Just wanted to tell you...I ain't never seen anything like you. Up there. You move like some kind of angel.”

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I've had instructors encourage me or give positive feedback, but my parents seemed to enjoy my dancing because it kept me out of the house. They've nodded their approval and paid the tuition, but I've never gotten this kind of praise from someone who matters. And never, ever so honest. "Thank you," I whisper. "I'm going to kiss you now, Uncle Rex."

He shakes his head. "No, girl. No."

Voices reach me from the nearby parking lot. "If you're afraid of people seeing, you could bring me somewhere." I curl my fingers in his shirt collar and climb higher on his hips. "I'll kiss you down there again, too. I'll suck and play and do anything you want."

His guttural groan hurts my eardrum. "Fuck."

"That, too," I whisper against his ear. "Is that what we would have done in the pool house, if we hadn't gotten caught?"

"Five minutes later and my brother would have walked in and found me dripping in virgin blood." He moves us further into the building's shadow, his hands finally finding my bottom and punishing it. "Feels like it's mine to take, but it ain't." His teeth press into my cheek. Hard. "But I'll still kill any motherfucker for even thinking about taking it. It don't make no sense."

"Yes, it does," I moan as he presses me back against the building, his bulk wedging between my legs. "We didn't ask for your brother and my mom to get married. It's not our fault."

“Stop. Stop trying to talk me into this.” He thrusts hard into the cradle of my thighs, his groan splitting the night air. “It’s wrong, Clara. It’s wrong.”

Hump hump hump. Each one harder than the last. His mouth finds mine and we’re ravenous. His beard is coarse on my cheeks and chin, his tongue smooth and smoky as it licks against mine. Again and again. I need no interpretation to know his growl means “open wider.” I just do it. I open my mouth as much as I can, letting him invade it. Letting him pump me hard into the wall, my legs shaking with the force on either side of him.

“Hell, I knew it,” he rasps, kneading my backside, then holding it steady to receive his thrust. “Knew you’d be a good little fuck princess. Can’t help but please me, can you? Can’t help but spread everything open for Uncle’s use.”

“Yes,” I moan, static tickling my veins. Energy snaps inside me at the right. At the wrong. All of it. “Oh my God. Yes, yes, yes.”

“Yes, what?”

I sob once. Twice. “Yes, Uncle Rex.”

We spiral into a kiss after that and it’s so wet, so sexual, I’m whining in my throat by the time it’s over, clawing at his shoulders. He pants at my mouth upon pulling away. “Where’s your car?”

“Um...” I search through my brain fog, finally coming up with an answer and pointing to the parking lot at the rear of the building. “There. The gray Camry.”

The words are barely out of my mouth before we’re striding in that direction, his hands roaming underneath my skirt, those callused fingers sliding beneath my thong, tracing the crack of my bottom. And all the while, I’m like a greedy koala bear,

clinging to him and licking every patch of bare skin I can find. There's not much except for his neck and an inch of chest, where I rake my teeth through that curly black hair that drives me insane.

We must have been kissing for a while, because my car is the only one left in the rear lot, although voices still carry from the front of the auditorium. As soon as we reach my car, Rex pushes me face down over the hood and lifts up my skirt. I'm still gasping when my thong is wrenched down to my ankles.

"Can't bang you how I want, niece, but this sweet little ass is too tight and pretty to call a consolation prize."

When I feel his tongue traveling down between my cheeks, I don't expect it to feel so amazing. But when he gets where he's going—that entrance I never imagined anyone touching—and he starts to bathe it with rough, thorough licks, my clitoris begins to tingle with epic sensitivity. More and more until my hands become fists on the hood of the car, screams trapping in my throat. What did he mean about my bottom being a consolation prize? Is he going to put himself inside me there?

I turn to watch over my shoulder, just as Rex straightens. My pussy swells and grows unbearably wet, watching him spit in his palm and stroke the saliva onto himself. He does it three times until his erection is huge and glistening in the moonlight, those thick, hair-covered balls resting in the V of his fly.

Our eyes meet. "If you don't want to give Uncle Rex that ass, speak up now. Once I've got a few inches in, the time for negotiations is over. You're getting ridden like a prize fucking pony." He curses under his breath. "You're such an innocent thing and I'm going to hell for taking you like this, but I need to get my come inside you somehow or I'll go insane, you understand?"

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Does he actually think I would say no to anything involving him? I'm so desperate to please and be pleased, I'm shaking. "I want it. I want you."

His hand plants in the center of my back, pushing me down flush with the hood of the car. "Oh, you're getting every inch of me, girl." I feel his plump head at my back entrance and listen to his strangled grunt. "I'm doing a very bad thing. Very bad. But I'm leaving you a virgin, Clara. Can't pop my niece's cherry. Can't do it."

"Yes, you can," I breathe, tilting my hips. "It's yours."

"No. This is how it has to be." With a rude drive, a few inches of his thickness are inside my bottom, stretching me. Discomfort digs in its claws. My thighs scramble on the bumper, trying to change the angle and ease the strain, but I'm pinned beneath hips much larger than mine. "Shhh." His hand is suddenly between my legs, two fingers finding my clit and rubbing it clockwise, slow, slow, slow. "I'll take care of you."

A few seconds of his touch and the pain begins to fade into a numb throb. "That feels so good." His fingers move faster, rougher, dragging my clit with them until the friction begins to take effect, begins to tighten something at the core of my being. I can feel him pushing deeper inside me, his girth wedging between my cheeks, but the buildup inside me is such a glorious distraction, I focus on that. I focus on Rex's labored breathing behind me, the tickle of his pubic hair brushing between my legs, the weight of his sac where it eventually presses against me.

"Who's taking your ass, girl?" he grates into my neck. "Who's got every fat inch of his cock inside the pretty dancing angel from the stage?"

“Uncle Rex,” I whimper. “H-he does.”

He rears back and punches his hips forward, springing tears to my eyes. “Can you hold our little secret as tight as you’re gripping this dick?”

“Yes.”

“That’s real good, niece. Because I shouldn’t be anywhere near this hole.” He grinds into me and lets out a throaty shout. “Shouldn’t be fuckin’ none of them. Shouldn’t even be thinking about them.”

The tempo of his fingers has escalated along with the aggression in his voice and I’m...I’m at a breaking point I’ve never reached before. I’ve touched myself in the dark when no one is home, but the results have only been sort of satisfying. Maybe because I hadn’t met a man who actually turned me on before. I’ve been blindly anticipating something more since I walked out onto the back patio and found Uncle Rex smoking his cigar. “I’m going to...I-I don’t know. Please don’t stop.”

“You don’t know?” He laughs without humor into the crook of my neck and continues to fondle me between the legs while pumping in and out of my backside. “I’m not just going to hell, I’ll be seated at the right hand of Lucifer.”

Until now, there’s been a slow build of the pleasure inside me, but when Rex seems to lose his grip on his control behind me, that’s when the tide rises with a vengeance. He snarls into my hair, his teeth searching for my ear to clamp down on. He’s a bucking beast, the brutality of his drives making a dent in the hood around the outline of my body. My feet come off the ground, lifted by his hips, one thigh being wrenched wide by Rex’s free hand.

I open my mouth on the hood of the car and begin to sob. Half because the pressure he’s inflicting on me hurts. Half because it feels so good when paired with his fingers

on my clit. Oh my God. Whatever's coming is going to split me down the middle and I'm ready for the pleasure/pain. "I want it. I want it. I want it."

This time, his laughter is dark. "Mommy and Daddy don't know you're a little cock slut, do they, Clara?" He licks up the side of my neck. "But Uncle Rex knows all about it, doesn't he? Yes, he does."

An explosion takes place inside me, so powerful that I can't even scream. Can't even move. My muscles tighten like drums and I tremble violently, pleasure rushing through me in scalding waves. Am I shaking or is that the car? My clitoris throbs, my walls clench so tight, I slap a hand down on the car hood and writhe, writhe to combat it. In the distance I hear Rex give a choked shout, then warmth attacks me from another direction. His. I want him to drown me in it. Never want to stop experiencing his huge body jerking and cursing on top of me, his hot sac branding my ass like a cattle stamp.

Moments later, even though he straightens my clothes with gentle hands and pulls me back into the heat of his chest...I can still sense the ongoing battle in his head.

Perhaps because I only reach his shoulder, he doesn't realize I'm prepared for war.

Chapter Six

Rex

The angry sea is an adversary of mine. There's an unspoken agreement between us. When it's howling and tossing my boat around on twenty-foot swells, it's trying to kill me. It's understood. I'm gambling on fate when I come into its house. I'm rolling the dice with my life, wagering that I can steal enough of the sea's treasure before it swallows me whole. I've done it successfully for years, despite watching men on my crew lose their footing and sink below the icy surface, never to be seen again. Yeah, I've battled angry seas successfully until tonight.

This is a new kind of storm—the one inside me for Clara. And I lost. Hell, I couldn't even put up a decent fight against this...this obsession. It swells and grows more turbulent by the minute. I'm obsessed with her soft voice, her big doe eyes, her virginity. Taking it. Protecting it from myself. Killing over it.

I should be put in jail for what I did tonight. Fucking my sweet little niece up the ass over the hood of her car. The car my brother is probably paying for. I'm following behind it now along the dark avenue, making sure Clara gets home all right. There's a stuffed bunny rabbit in the back window and a ballet slippers bumper sticker. She's so young. So refreshingly honest. Her future is bright, except for the depraved black spot I've just left.

In the darkness of my car, though, I can't help but reach down below the steering

wheel and fist my satisfied cock. Lord, she took it like a champ. Creamed all over my hand even while I was treating that tight backside like my own personal playground. At one point I had my boot up on the front fender so I could thrust deeper...and she only mewled like a happy kitten. I've never come harder in my life. And I sure as shit have never wanted to hold a girl afterward. Rock her, kiss her forehead, massage away the soreness.

Never wanted to take on the world for a female before. But when she flashes those big eyes at me, I want to be her superhero. Someone to fight evil on her behalf, keep her tucked away in a safe place and provide for her every need.

The brake lights on Clara's Camry light up as she pulls into her driveway. I pull over at the curb across the street, knowing I can't go inside. Or I will hold her. I'll sleep in her bed with her tucked against me. She'll be so soft, her pussy there for the taking, and I won't be able to help it this time. I'll bang her nine times before morning. Shit, at that point, the addiction will be out of control. I'll still be here when my brother returns from Bali, either shacked up with his little girl or...I'll have taken her home with me. I'll have claimed her forever.

I have to leave before the obsession turns into something I can't control.

The suggestion that I'm controlling it now is laughable. Because she's jogging toward my car and I'm fighting the urge to pull her through the driver's side window and peel out of this goddamn suburban nightmare. I live closer to the coast, not too far away. We could be there in no time, Clara tucked into my sheets with a tummy full of food. She belongs with me. Me.

Beneath my white-knuckled hand, the steering wheel creaks. "Go on now, girl. Get. I'll wait here until you're inside."

Hurt flashes in her eyes and I call myself a bastard ten times. "But...don't you want

to come inside?”

“Can’t. I’m going on a hunting trip in the morning.”

Her lower lip pushes out. “Where?”

“Long Shadow.”

She absorbs that. “What if there are robbers?”

“Come again?”

“Inside my house,” she whispers, glancing over her shoulder. “Like, if I’m already home with the doors locked when it gets dark? I’m fine, you know? No robber just waits in a house all day to jump out and start robbing when night falls. But if I come home in the dark—like, right now—there’s a better chance of robbers. Because I haven’t been home since there was daylight. They could have snuck in after dark. Can you just come in and check?”

God almighty, she’s as cute as a button. And she wants me to play her protector, despite the fact that I just tarnished her innocence in a public parking lot. Just looking at her hopeful face, my heart lifts and sticks in my throat. I can no more say no to this girl than I can change the seasons on command.

I grunt. “Just a quick check.”

She dances around, her hands clasped beneath her chin. “Thank you.”

I climb out of my truck and cross the street beside her, making a warning sound in my throat when she curls her fingers into mine, holding my hand. “Clara...”

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“What?” She looks up at me through her eyelashes. “Uncles hold hands with their nieces, don’t they?”

“When they’re kids, maybe.”

“I didn’t know you when I was a kid. Can’t we make up for lost time?” She holds up my hand and twirls beneath it. “I see lots of presents in my future.”

In the corner of my eye, I see a male neighbor in his driveway, squinting at us in the darkness. Probably wondering if I’m Clara’s new, ancient boyfriend. Probably wondering if I’m going to ride her to the Promised Land as soon as we’re inside the house. Ain’t a red-blooded man alive who wouldn’t wonder about how and when Clara spreads her thighs, but I pass him a black look, anyway, pointing at him in the darkness. In other words, I know where you live. Don’t look. Don’t touch.

Ironic, considering I should be following those rules.

Clara lets go of my hand to unlock the door and I frown, wanting it back. “How come none of those girls tonight helped fix up your knee? Ain’t they your friends?”

She ducks her head and trudges through the open door. “No. Not really.”

“Why not?” I ask, following her inside. “They stupid or something?”

The smile she turns on me makes my steps falter. “No, they’re not stupid. They just think I’m weird.”

I start flipping on lights and going through the house, searching closets and under beds while she follows behind me on the balls of her feet. “Why the hell would they think that?”

“I don’t know...” I pass her in the doorway of a guest room and her tits graze my belly, making her gasp. “Th-they’re into boys. That’s all they’re into. But I think the guys they want to date are gross. I think they’re offended at how much I don’t care. They think I’m stuck up.”

Goddamn, the barest touch of her and heat is wriggling in my veins. I struggle to focus on the conversation, though, because I can tell it’s important to her. Yeah, nice try. It’s important to me. I care so much more than I should about Clara in relation to boys, it’s not even funny. “You don’t date?”

“Do you?” she asks quickly, seeming to hold her breath.

“Been on the boat for months. No one serious before that. Never really had nothing serious. No time. No...interest, either.”

Her shoulders deflate, mouth spreading into a smile. “Oh.”

“You didn’t answer my question,” I say, knowing I shouldn’t.

Before I walk into the bathroom, I turn to catch the shake of her head. “I’ve been to the movies on dates a couple times, but...”

My hand pauses on the shower curtain I’m fitting to wrench back. “But what?” I bark. “Those little motherfuckers get handsy with you?”

“They wanted to,” she murmurs, coming up behind me in the dark bathroom. “I didn’t let them. I never wanted anyone to put their hands on me until I saw you. Now

it's all I can think about."

Maybe it's the darkness or the fact that we're in a place no one can see us, but I can't help drawing her closer, letting my hands roam over her back. "I was a rough son of a bitch with you tonight, girl. Ain't no excuse for it, except kissing you...it made me forget the rules. I needed to give you all my come or I was going to die."

"Kiss me again now, then," she breathes, running her hands over my shoulders. "Uncles kiss their nieces, don't they?"

"No." I fist a section of her hair and pull, tilting her face up. "Not the way we do it. Not with open mouths and tongue."

"What about tucking me in?" Her fingers brush the curve of my dick. "If we're making up for lost time, shouldn't you do that at least once?"

With a growl, I tighten my grip on her hair, lowering my face to hers. "You weren't really scared of robbers, were you?"

"Oh yes." She licks her lips. "Petrified. I probably will be all night long."

My whole being protests over her being alone and afraid. But I'm learning to read my niece and here's the deal: she can play me like a fucking fiddle. And she knows it. "I'm not staying, Clara, so don't even try it. We done already gone too damn far with this." I guide her by the hair through the bathroom doorway, my cock stiffening despite my mental commands. She's just such a good girl, walking along dutifully under my guiding hand. I'm about to ask which bedroom is hers, but there's a pink princess sign on one door. Shaking my head, I head us in that direction.

I'm expecting Clara's room to be tasteful like the rest of the house, so I'm not prepared for the explosion of pink I walk into. "Jesus Christ," I mutter, letting go of

her hair and turning in a circle. Every spare inch of wall space is covered by an inspirational dance poster...or kittens in tutus. So many kittens in tutus. Her bed is cocooned in a gauzy, white canopy draping down from the ceiling. Beneath that, it's buried under a mountain of stuffed animals. Everything is poofy and pink and sparkly. And I just took the occupant of this room up the ass.

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There are so many layers of wrong here, I can't even begin to dig. Because the top layer of wrong is something I didn't expect. Something unacceptable.

I'm turned on as fuck. I want to lay Clara down on that stupidly adorable bed, hike her knees up over my shoulders and plow her until she's screaming for her mommy. Completely opposite of that, I want to sit her on my lap in a nightshirt and watch as she brushes her hair for bed. God almighty. I...want to be her Daddy.

She looks up at me. "You don't like it?"

My stomach twists. "I like it too much, girl."

A smile breaks loose. "Really?"

"Yeah," I say on a rushed exhale. The truth is out, but I don't know how to handle it. My tastes have never run in this direction. I beat off to nudie magazines on the boat when there's no Wi-Fi available. When I'm home, I get the deed done to whatever internet porn happens to catch my eye. But truth be told, I tend to avoid anything like this. Men giving in to their urges in places they damn well shouldn't. It's Clara that's turned me into one of those men. Made me crave virgin blood and panties with pink bows and things I can't have.

It would be so easy to go down this path without thinking about it too hard. Especially tonight. To not worry about consequences and just fuck my horny little princess under my brother's roof. God knows she's ripe for it. Her big eyes are inviting me to strip her naked and do whatever the hell I want. She would call me Daddy. I don't know a ton about this shit, but some part of me has recognized since

the beginning that a caretaker is exactly what Clara is looking for. Needs. Maybe my infatuation with her has turned me into that person...

But as much as I'm starved for her skin, her touch, her pussy, I can't give in. I'm her uncle. I might satisfy her body, but she'd be even more of an outcast once I claimed her. Eventually went public. She doesn't even realize how big the world is. Sure, the bitch crew of dancers don't like her, but life after eighteen is so different. She's about to discover that. Can I really saddle her down with someone who will alienate her from the world? Her family?

You blacken everything.

"The house is safe. No robbers." Backing toward the door is the hardest thing I've ever done in my life, but I take one step, then another. "I'll do one more check of the house and lock up before I go. You're safe, okay, girl? Good night, Clara."

"Uncle Rex..."

I don't hear the rest of what she says over the roaring protest of my heart.

Chapter Seven

Clara

Of course, I slip climbing onto the bus.

My already injured knee slams into the step and I swallow a scream, scrambling back to my feet as fast as I can so I don't block the line of embarking passengers behind me. An elderly woman in the front row gives me a sympathetic look as I move past her, limping and clutching my backpack to my chest.

I am doing this.

I am doing this.

I can't believe I'm doing this.

Rex couldn't have made it clearer last night that he's backing off. It was my ridiculous bedroom that ruined everything. I still can't help but be surprised by his willpower, though. I saw the hungry shape of him through his pants. I like it too much, girl. Thank God he let those words slip, because they're giving me enough courage to surprise him on his hunting trip. When I'm in front of him, he can't help but touch me. If I just keep getting in his way, he'll stop worrying about the wrongs and rights. And a change of scenery can only help my cause, can't it? Without any reminder of his brother and my youth popping up, we can just be us.

That's what I'm hoping, anyway. Because I don't think I can be happy without him. There's an emptiness inside me that is on the verge of fulfillment. I've never pursued a relationship with anyone. Not with a potential friend or boyfriend—barely even my parents. But Rex...it's like I can't help being drawn back. He's got one half of a magnet inside him and I've got the other.

I slide into a seat toward the back of the bus and rub my throbbing knee. Tears threaten behind my eyelids, but I think about Rex storming backstage last night and I immediately feel better. How is he going to react when I show up unannounced? He might bluster a little, but he won't send me home, will he?

Thinking of the groceries...not to mention the bikini I've packed in my bag, my mouth moves into a smile.

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No. He won't be able to send me away.

The bus ride to Long Shadow takes an hour, but I'm too excited to sleep, even though I didn't catch a wink last night. So I watch the passing scenery and breathe through the knots in my stomach. After about forty-five minutes, the foliage becomes dense and a forest builds, the trees stretching higher and higher toward the blue sky.

Rex only gave me a cursory idea of where he's staying, but my stepfather goes on hunting trips up this way. I'm surprised I retained a word of his boring stories, but I did. And I know there are two hunting lodges where less experienced hunters bunk overnight, before going out with guides in the morning. I'm going on instinct, but I doubt Rex would lump himself in with less experienced anything. So I'm going to rent a bike once we reach the mountain summit and check rental properties until I find Rex's truck.

Me on a bike. Shouldn't be too dangerous, should it?

My knee throbs harder as if to mock me.

Chapter Eight

Rex

I know something is fishy as soon as I walk into the cabin.

"What the fuck is that incredible smell?" asks my buddy, Hank, sniffing at the air.

"Whatever it is, I'm eating two helpings of it."

Rudy, the third in our hunting party, joins us in the entry. “Roast beef and baby carrots.” Eyes closed, he holds up a finger. “With a sprig of rosemary on top.”

With a sigh, I ease off my camouflage vest and toss my cap toward an entry table. “Ain’t you two idiots concerned with who is cooking in our cabin?”

Rudy leans his rifle up against the wall and rubs his hands together. “Probably should be.”

“I don’t question free food,” Hank adds. “Plus, we didn’t take down anything today, so it’s the mysterious meal or takeout. I choose option one.”

Both of them clomp past me toward the kitchen, leaving filthy footprints behind them. Which normally wouldn’t bother me one bit. Unfortunately, every damn thing is bothering me today. The sun is too bright, the leaves are too crunchy, my friends never shut the fuck up. I’m anxious and irritable and it’s all because of the girl I left standing in her princess bedroom last night, looking so vulnerable and confused that I’m haunted by the memory.

A scream cuts through the air.

At first, I think it’s my imagination. I’ve been psyching myself out all day, picturing robbers converging on Clara’s bedroom and scaring her, making her call out for me, but I’m not there. I’m not there to protect her.

No. I’m not imagining the scream, though. Rudy and Hank back out of the kitchen with their hands up, their jaws on the floor. And I know. I know my niece is in the kitchen. Especially when Hank uses one finger to push back open the swinging kitchen door and peeks in, letting out a low whistle. That’s when I see her through the crack.

She's wearing nothing but a tiny white apron.

"Clara." I thunder toward the kitchen, my bellow bouncing off the living room walls.

"You two jackasses. Get the fuck away from the door."

"Damn. You know her?"

"Yeah. She's my goddamn niece." I shoulder through them, one hand poised on the kitchen door. "You know what that means?"

"Look but don't touch," Hank says with a nod. "You got it, boss."

"Wrong. It means, don't even look."

"Roger that." Hank backs away. "But, uh...you might want to wait for her to cover up before going in there..."

Something passes between the three of us in that moment. It's obvious I'm not waiting to go in there, meaning I've already seen her without clothes. Or I want to. I've known Rudy and Hank for a damn decade, but they don't see it coming. Don't know what the hell to make of it, either. They simply stare as I use my body to block the opening and close myself in the kitchen with Clara.

Jesus. My cock hoists like a main sail at the sight of her pressed back against the kitchen island, breathing like she just ran a race. The bottom of that dinky apron doesn't even hit her thighs. Nah, it shows off slinky, little black panties I'm willing to bet ride straight up the crack of her ass in back. Her tits aren't showing, but they're plumped and pointed at the apron's square neckline...and fuck...the slope of her sides and swell of her hips are all on display.

Now I'm pissed. My friends saw her this way? They've probably already ran off to

their bedrooms to jerk themselves into a stupor. She's indecent. She's innocent. She's too many things to pinpoint...except for one unshakable certainty.

She's about to be mine.

I start toward Clara, intending on demolishing her. I don't know how I'm going to do it yet, but I'm not restricting myself anymore. I can't. The obsession is choking me, crowding me in from all sides. Coming to Long Shadow was my last-ditch attempt to avoid debauching her. She came to me, though, and I'm losing control. I've almost reached her when I stop short, noticing the cuts and bruises on her legs. They've all been bandaged, but that only ticks me off more, because I didn't have the privilege of fixing them up. "What the hell happened to you?" I cage her in against the island. "How did you get here?"

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“B-bus...” she stammers, her cheeks pink. “And then a bike.”

“A bike,” I bite out. “How many times did you fall, girl?”

“Several,” she whispers. “Can we talk about something else?”

“You could have hit your head. You could have been seriously hurt.”

“But I didn’t. So we should...celebrate?” She gives me a trembling smile. “I made dinner. It was just supposed to be for us, but there’s enough for your friends.”

“You thought I was coming alone?”

Her nod is vigorous. “Yes.”

“That’s why you’re half goddamn naked?”

“Yes.”

My anger cools, which is very bad, because it makes way for the need. And the need is savage, liquid fire pooling in my balls. Hard isn’t even an adequate word to describe my cock. It’s a sweating, pulsing length of meat and it’s trying to tear through my pants to get at her virginity. She’s come here to offer it. It’s mine for the taking. There’s nothing to do but take, is there? No choice but to give her this liquid fire and let it take root where it should never, ever go. Where it’s forbidden.

I think of her glowing on stage, though. I see her poor scraped-up knees and I

hesitate. Lord, she's the sweetest thing on this planet. I'm not good enough for this gift. I'm not worthy. My brother knows it. My father knew it. Clara will know someday soon. I'm a man who battles the sea and comes home with torn-up hands and dirty jokes. Keeping her innocent is the one thing I can give her. Not taking this one thing might keep my guilt and self-disgust from sucking me under.

"Uncle Rex..." Clara whispers, going up on her toes and wrapping her arms around my neck. "I hurt."

My body moves on instinct, molding her between me and the island. "Poor girl. Your legs?" I breathe in the scent of her hair. "I'll make it all better."

"Not my legs," she says, playing with the ends of my hair. "Down there, I hurt. It got worse and worse the longer I waited for you."

A groan forces its way out of my chest. "We talking about that little cunt of yours, Clara?" My callused palms scrape down the bare slopes of her sides, resting on her hips. Squeezing them. "Did you bring me a horny pussy, hoping I would forget I'm your uncle again and play with it?"

She makes a sobbing noise. "Uh huh."

There isn't a man alive who could withstand this temptation. And I have the new, added certainty that Clara needs a Daddy. And I want like hell to be him. I want to play games only we know and understand. Once I open that door—once I've taken ownership—I'll never be able to close it, though.

That door creaks open when she reaches behind her neck and unties the apron, letting the neckline sag lower and lower until her prize tits are showing, all pink and puckered in the soft kitchen light. "Will you kiss them, Uncle Rex?" Her hips inch forward and I hear the movement of fabric as she unties the bottom part of the apron,

letting it fall. Leaving her in nothing but some bullshit panties. “Will you kiss them while you’re inside of me?”

Sweat rolls down my back and my hands begin to shake. I can’t do this. I can’t fuck this beautiful doll and call her mine. We’re related by marriage. It’s wrong. So wrong. “How’s about I lick your pussy, girl? Been dying to get at it.” I grab her around the waist and drop her onto the counter, groaning like a slaving beast when the thong tugs to the side, giving me a glimpse of tight, teenage cunt. “Yeah. My tongue will keep you a virgin, won’t it? Just can’t shove it in too deep.”

Her puckered tits are shaking with excitement, but her face moves into a pout. “No. I want you inside me.”

“Clara, it ain’t happening.” I frame her jaw tightly in one hand. “But I’ve taken your ass and gotten sucked off. Need to give you something back now.” With a grunt, I let go of her jaw and shove her thighs apart. “Need to make you come worse than I need to come—and that’s saying something since I’m worked up as fuck.”

“No.” She squeezes her thighs back together, that little chin lifting. “I won’t let you make me come. Not unless you’re inside me.”

Something dangerous curls in my belly at being denied the right to give her pleasure. Shit, I’m all but drooling to get a taste of her fresh, young pussy. If I don’t hear her moan and know it’s my doing, I’m going to lose my mind. That creeping insanity is what makes my voice emerge dark. Scary. “You wouldn’t be playing games with me, now, would you, niece?”

“It’s not a game!” she shouts.

Faster than lightning, Clara slides off the counter and tries to get past me, but I catch her around the waist. And that’s when the struggling starts. Not to mention the

conflict inside me. My mind is telling me to free her from my unbreakable hold before she goes and injures herself. But my body is telling me this is natural for us. She's throwing a hissy fit and pleasure is the only way to appease her. My dick wouldn't be thick as a rolling pin unless this was right. Hell, maybe Clara doesn't even know why she's fighting me, but I do. She's not getting her way and on top of that, she's horny. Daddy has to fix it.

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Her back is to my front and she's twisting right to left, scratching at my arms. "Let me go. I hate you."

A spike lodges in my heart, but I ignore the discomfort and remind myself she doesn't mean it. "Get these panties off," I grit out, using my free hand to rip them down her kicking legs. "You better quit if you know what's good for you, girl."

"I do know what's good for me. You won't give it to me."

With that pronouncement, she renews her struggles. Naked. Naked and writhing her perky backside all over my lap. Needing leverage, I walk us toward the kitchen table and push her face down on the wooden surface. Going on instinct, I step to the side and deliver a mean slap to her ass, while she continues to battle my hold. "This hurts me more than it hurts you," I rasp, delivering two more rough smacks, come leaking from my cock at the sight of my handprint on her flesh. "Now you're going to be a good little girl and let Uncle Rex get his fill of pussy. You understand?"

"No!"

"Oh yes, you are." It's hardly an effort to flip Clara over on the table, leaving her on her back. She catches me across the face with an open palm, but I ignore the sting and yank her knees open, getting my first unobstructed view of her perfect cunt. "Who the fuck are you waxing this for?"

"Not you, obviously." She tries to close her legs, but I keep them pried open. "You don't even want it."

They probably hear my laughter in China. “Don’t want it? I think of nothing else. Nothing. Your pussy rules my life.” I deliver the subject of my obsession a slap and savor Clara’s gasp. “Answer me. Why don’t it have a single goddamn hair?”

“Dance costumes,” she says, glaring at me. “Sometimes they ride up or tug to the side and...it’s just easier this way, all right?”

My rage ebbs slowly. Taking advantage of her distraction, I drop down to my knees, jerking Clara to the table’s edge at the same time. She begins to struggle when she sees I’m done talking, but as soon as I deliver that first lick, the fight in her vanishes. I hear her shoulders land on the table, a shocked moan filling the kitchen. Teasing her clit with my thumb, I lift my head to find her mouth open, eyes glazed. “I can taste our fight down here, girl. Soaked you up good, didn’t it?” I replace my thumb with the tip of my tongue, jiggling her nub until she’s gasping my name. Uncle Rex, Uncle Rex. “Your parents aren’t around to make you behave, so it has to be me. This is how your uncle disciplines you. Just like this.”

I’m so close—so fucking close—to calling myself her Daddy, especially with the taste of heaven on my lips and tongue. With my talk of discipline hanging in the air. There’s a rumble deep inside me that’s going to become an earthquake once I let loose. So I use the sweetest cunt I’ve ever tasted to stop myself. I bathe every inch of it. Every smooth inch. Somewhere in the back of my mind, I remember Rudy and Hank are in the cabin, but I can’t stop. The volume of Clara’s moans is growing, her fingers spearing through my hair to keep me stationed at her clit.

Yeah, this girl’s clit is sensitive as they come. Knew it when she got off from my fingers while I was tapping her virgin ass. Nothing can stop her from coming when it gets the right amount of attention. And nothing is going to stop her now.

“Oh. Ohhhhh. Please don’t stop, Uncle Rex.” When I gently suck her little bud of flesh, only to attack it afterward with side-to-side jiggles from my tongue, Clara’s

hips shoot off the table, her grip on my hair jerking me closer. “Feels so good. Oh God. I’m g-going to...I-I think...”

What I wouldn’t give to sink three fingers into her right now. I’d fuck them in deep and fast until she gushed, but I’d probably pop her cherry in the process. My hands curl into fists on her thighs. Don’t do it. Don’t do it.

Her scream is broken and hoarse when she orgasms, her feet flopping around on my shoulders, pushing at them, her tight body shaking like a fucking leaf. Goddamn, it’s the hottest thing I’ve ever seen. Don’t even get me started on the state of her pussy. I can see it clenching, feel it on my lips. It’s like a pink rose covered in dew when she finishes whining my name, her body lying boneless on the table.

My cock is still in a state of pain, but I lumber to my feet and twist my balls hard, trying to lessen the agony of my erection. Because she’s too beautiful like this to mess up.

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And hell, she's sleeping.

With a sigh, I go to the kitchen door and—blocking the sight of my naked niece—I open it and find my two friends milling by the couch. Shit. They heard every second of what happened and they're going to want some kind of explanation. My instinct is to tell them to mind their own business, but if they heard Clara struggling and fighting me, I don't want these good friends of mine thinking I done her dirty.

Didn't you, though? Aren't you?

I clear my throat. "Get me a blanket, would you?"

Rudy tosses me an afghan that's settled over the back of a loveseat. A minute later, I pass through the living room with a blanket-wrapped Clara, her face tucked trustingly into my chest.

"Can we eat now?" Rudy asks, wincing when Hank punches him in the shoulder. "What?"

Chapter Nine

Clara

Dancers make the best eavesdroppers, because we're light on our feet. The three men in the living room don't even hear me coming down the hallway, especially over the noisy television. They're watching some survivalist reality show and nursing beers, frankly looking kind of uncomfortable with each other. Rex is lounged back in a

leather easy chair, his two friends spaced out on the nearby couch.

My attention travels back to Rex and I have to cover my mouth so they won't hear my dreamy sigh. Holy moly. He gets more irresistible every time I see him. In the old white T-shirt he's wearing, I can finally see his tattoos. They rake down his arm in spikes and brushes of bluish green. The material of the shirt is thinner than his usual flannel, so I can see patterns of his chest hair underneath, more tattoos sneaking out over the neckline.

He doesn't have a flat stomach or six-pack abs. Not like the girls in my dance school never stop talking about. No, he's got a big barrel chest that drops to a real man's waist. Thick but powerful. Sturdy. He's a tank with thighs to match and they're barely contained inside dark blue jeans.

As I watch, he lifts the bottle of beer to his lips, draining half of it with one gulp, the slide of his Adam's apple making me ticklish between my thighs. I don't even remember falling asleep after...after Rex used his mouth on me there. But God, how embarrassing. Seriously. Who just passes out on a table?

I didn't even satisfy him.

My gaze drops to the bulge in Rex's lap. Did he touch himself when I wasn't awake to do it myself? If he did, I'm going to throw another tantrum. Throwing my fit in the kitchen felt...good, actually. I've always been polite and mild mannered, but there's something about Rex that fills me with static energy. Makes me want to lash out and be a brat, just so he'll take over. Take control of me. Touch me.

"All right," Rex says, slapping a hand down on the arm of the chair. I fade further into the hallway, pressing my back against the wall. "Let's get this shit over with so you can stop acting like a couple of scandalized church ladies. Say what you have to say."

“She really your niece?” asks the skinny, red-headed man. “That’s some serious shit, Rex.”

“Step-niece. My new sister-in-law’s kid,” Rex answers in a grim voice, hoisting his beer bottle for another swig. “Met her for the first time a few days ago. By the time I knew we were related—”

“You’d already baited the trap,” says the second man, with a wise nod. “Hell, I’ve been there. Except mine was an undercover cop, not my niece.” He turns thoughtful. “Although, she was probably someone’s niece.”

“Jesus, Hank. Shut up,” Rex mutters, setting down his beer. “This is...different.”

“Bet her daddy won’t think so.”

“Don’t call him that, Rudy,” Rex snaps, sitting forward in his chair. “He’s her stepfather. They ain’t close enough for him to be called Daddy.”

Rudy and Hank mimic each other, holding up their hands in surrender.

“How is it different than my undercover cop situation?” Hank asks, after a long pause. “You’re not fitting to keep her, are you?”

“Can’t.” A muscle jumps in Rex’s cheek. “Can’t do that. I’m a salty bastard like you two. I couldn’t make her happy. And hell, you seen her. She’s too young, too beautiful. I spend those fall months crabbing. You don’t think someone will steal her out from under me while I’m gone?”

“She’s a peach, all right,” Hank drawls. “You’d have to worry about those young bucks sniffing around.”

Rex sends him a murderous look. "I can say it. You can't."

Hank just appears confused. "Which part?"

"All of it."

Rudy leans forward with a sigh. "The argument is irrelevant. She's his niece. This kind of shit breaks up a family." He tips back his beer, finishes it and sets it on the floor. "People will think it's unnatural. And they won't mind telling you. Telling her. Hurting her feelings and whatnot."

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“Yeah.” Rex’s voice sounds raw. “Yeah, I can’t ruin her life before it’s barely started.” He shakes his head. “Man, you should see her dance. She’s going to be a star.”

“Tasted her cooking,” Hank says, patting his belly. “Good thing I’m not a young buck anymore, huh, Rex?”

“Last chance,” Rex growls. “Then you’re sleeping outside.”

Hank and Rudy dissolve into laughter.

I’m caught between floating on air and sinking into the ground. Rex talks about me to his friends like I’m important to him. Like I’m special. And there was something about his jealousy when Rudy brought up my stepfather. He’s her stepfather. They ain’t close enough for him to be called Daddy. A low, thrilling tremor moved through me, seeming to hit a target. What was that all about?

The conversation between the men fades and I glide back down the hallway, replaying Rex’s words in my head. I can’t ruin her life...I couldn’t make her happy. At least now I know what I’m up against. Now I know where to prod his armor.

Taking a deep breath, I open my bedroom door and slam it, before padding down the hallway, pretending to rub the sleep from my eyes. Rex tenses as I walk into the living room, his eyes narrowing on the hem of my nightshirt.

“Good...morning?” I laugh at my own joke, since no one seems inclined to do it for me. “Did everyone enjoy dinner?”

Hank chances a look at me, but whips back toward the television when Rex growls. “Best meal I’ve had in a good long while.”

Rudy nods. “Same here. Thanks, Clara.”

Rex shifts in his chair. “Left a plate for you on the stove.”

I twist my fingers in the bottom of my shirt and watch my uncle swallow hard. “I’m not really hungry...” I slide off toward the kitchen. “But those beers look nice. Maybe I’ll have one of those.”

Without waiting for the protest I know is coming, I speed walk into the kitchen, open the fridge and snag the closest bottle. After a short search, I find a bottle opener and spend way too much time figuring out how it works. Eventually, however, I get the beer open and waltz back into the living room, trying to hold the bottle like it’s one of thousands I’ve held in my lifetime.

The closer I come to the trio of men, though, the more it becomes obvious I have nowhere convenient to sit. Rudy and Hank are taking up the couch and Rex’s bulk leaves zero room in the recliner. Having no choice, I move toward the couch, intending to squeeze between Hank and Rudy—

“Get over here, girl.” Rex’s hard voice halts me in the middle of the living room. I turn to find him crooking a finger at me. “Now.”

The desire to throw a tantrum sneaks up on me, but not because I’m mad. I mean, don’t I want to sit on Uncle Rex’s lap? No, I want to throw a tantrum so he carries me off to bed and punishes me how he did earlier.

Why? So you can pass out again?

Oh, shut up.

With my chin raised, I reverse directions and return to Rex's side. He pats his lap and—ignoring the thickening tension in the room—I ease over the arm and perch on his big, strong thigh, my body angled sideways so his chest meets my right shoulder. Rex clears his throat and sits up straighter, pulling an afghan off the top of the chair, laying it across my bare legs. Then he ignores me and watches the television. As if I don't feel how much he likes having me in his lap. The proof is growing by the second, finding its way between my butt cheeks.

“You ain't old enough to drink that beer,” he finally mutters, for my ears alone. “Considering my list of sins concerning you, though, I guess it don't rate.”

Until he mentions the beer, I forget I'm even holding it, but I take a long pull now, refusing to grimace over the bitter taste. “Uh...yum.”

A laugh rumbles in his chest, making me want to snuggle closer. We're not alone in the room, though, and I can feel Rudy and Hank's interest from five feet away. So I lay my head on Uncle's Rex's shoulder and try to watch the television program, taking occasional sips from my beer. My limbs start to tingle when I've almost reached the bottom of the bottle...and that's when things like Rex's scent begin hitting me harder. Not just his soap and aftershave, though. No, the subtle flex of his thighs and the possessive hand he settles on my knee beneath the blanket.

Hoping to ease the sudden pooling of heat between my thighs, I drink the last drop and lean back to set the bottle on the floor. But just the act of arching my back on a stretch is decadent. There's a delicious tug in my tummy. Rex's eyes feast on my nipples which are more than visible through the nightshirt. And when I settle back onto his lap, his hand is higher on my thigh. High enough that I can feel the heat of his touch through my panties.

“Stop squirming,” he grunts in my ear. “Sit still.”

“I’m trying.”

Attempting to be subtle, I lean in and take a long whiff of his neck and his hand tightens—hard—on my leg. I think he’s going to admonish me for doing something so intimate in front of his friends, but that hand begins to massage and it melts me all over the place, turning me soft in places I’ve kept safe for Uncle Rex.

“I’d be more comfortable like this,” I whisper, turning beneath the blanket and straddling him. Fizzy bubbles pop in my blood courtesy of the beer, heightened by the most perfect contact in the world. Yes. I settle down on Rex’s huge erection with a roll of my hips and he curses, reaching up to turn off the lamp beside the easy chair. The only light left in the room comes from the television. The darkness might as well be permission to do whatever I want and the beer buzz only encourages me, our audience be damned.

“I eavesdropped,” I whisper in Rex’s ear. “I heard what you said. About boys stealing me away. About being too much of a bastard for me.” My tongue dances up the side of his neck and he stiffens. Except for his arm, which spreads the blanket higher. “But I told you, I’ve never liked boys my age. I-I didn’t even know what I wanted, until I saw you. I would be sad and miss you while you’re gone. I’d worry about you. But I would know how right we are and I’d wait. I’d wait years, let alone months. I have.”

“You say that now, Clara, but your mind could change. You’re too young to make decisions like this.” He pulls our hips tighter together, his voice a bare rasp. “Ahh, girl. Ones that could affect your whole life.”

“That’s why you have to make them with me.” I lock my mouth with his, keeping us hovering on the brink of a kiss. Then I reach down and undo his jeans, lowering the zipper slowly, determination simmering inside me. “You won’t let us make decisions that will hurt me. Or my feelings. I don’t know how I know this, but I do. You’re...you’re my...”

“I’m your Daddy,” he breathes against my mouth, his muscles expanding and hardening underneath me. “Ain’t I, little girl?”

It’s almost like flying, this mental cog twisting into place and launching me into the atmosphere. I’ve been missing something my whole life. A safe place, a protector. Even my birth father couldn’t give me those things. But this man does.

Uncle Rex.

Daddy.

There might be two other people in the room, but in this moment, there’s no one else on the planet but Rex and me. And I need him so bad, I’m gasping into the kiss he gives me, his hands delving into my panties to manhandle my bottom. It’s unrestrained, this kiss. Rex fingers my back entrance while sucking my tongue into his mouth and I can’t get enough. Can’t get enough. When Rex tugs away and lays a finger across my lips, tipping his head toward the couch, I turn and find both men have dozed off.

“You want to play, you need to stay quiet.”

I nod, prepared to agree to anything, as long as Rex keeps touching and kissing me. No, not just touching and kissing. I want it all. I want that final act that’s going to make me feel complete. That’s going to mark me as Rex’s forever.

I trail my fingers down his stomach and circle his length, sticking out my bottom lip. “Does this big part of you hurt, Daddy?”

His close-mouthed groan sounds like surrender. “Hurts like a motherfucker.”

“But...how do we make it stop hurting?”

Asking him these questions to which I already know the answer is as natural as breathing. Like I’ve been preparing for it all my life.

“Ain’t got a rubber on me, girl.” Sweat is beginning to appear on his forehead, his expression one of pain. “And goddamn. I just know I’d fuck you good and pregnant on the first try.”

My forehead wrinkles. “What’s a rubber, Daddy?”

Right in front of my eyes, Rex sails past his breaking point. I don’t have time to savor the victory, though, because his coarse hand wedges between my thighs, twisting and ripping the crotch of my panties. “Lord forgive me,” Rex grinds out, a bead of sweat rolling down the side of his face. “Lord forgive me.”

I move further and further into a different version of myself as Rex positions his arousal where I’ve been begging him to put it. I’m still Clara, but now also I’m Rex’s little girl and I’ve never felt more at home in my skin.

“It’s so big, Daddy,” I whisper with wide eyes. “Do you have to hurt me to make your own hurt go away?”

“Sometimes, girl. Yes.” He shoves the first few inches of himself inside me, his mouth falling open against mine. Breathing heavy along with me. “There are times I won’t have a choice. Little pussies make Daddies angry sometimes, because we know

we shouldn't wreck 'em, but forbidden fruit tastes the sweetest. It's just the way of the world."

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I shake my head, bite my lip. “I won’t tell.”

“That’s a good girl. That’s what’ll keep Daddy coming back for more. Just before you fall asleep in your pretty princess bed, Daddy might have to come in and get angry, but he’ll put your panties back on and give you nice kisses afterwards.” His hand finds my right butt cheek, gripping it hard. “Let me see how brave you are.”

Knowing I can’t make a sound, I bury my face in his neck and nod. The flesh of my right butt cheek is screaming from abuse and Uncle Rex uses that grip now to shove me all the way down on his steel flesh. Pain cuts through me like a dagger. He’s too huge, too thick, but instead of screaming those concerns, I only whimper into his neck. And I focus on him, because his reaction to being inside me eases the discomfort considerably.

“Jesus Christ almighty, that’s some tight cunt.” His head is thrown back against the chair, his mouth open wide, chest thundering up and down. There’s a pulsing, pulsing between my thighs and I realize it’s the veins in his big penis. “How the fuck am I supposed to get a ride without comin’ in two damn seconds?”

There’s some stirring behind me on the couch, but I ignore it and start to move my hips, instinctually trying to ease Rex’s misery. “Don’t you like me tight, Daddy?”

“Ahhh shit, girl. Daddy loves you tight. Means ain’t nobody come in this princess hole but me. And that’s the way it’s going to stay.” The rest of my pain fades away when Rex leans in and gives me a slow, loving kiss. His hands frame my hips, helping me climb to the head of his erection and wiggle back down. “You make Daddy so happy moving like that. Letting me rub you on the inside. Does it feel

good?”

I gasp when my clit grazes his base and tingles move into my belly, tightening the muscles. “Y-yes.”

His smile is hard when he catches my jaw, tilting it up. “Yes, what?”

Excitement shivers down my back. “Yes, Daddy. It feels good.”

That hold on my jaw tightens just a touch. “And we don’t tell anyone what happens when we’re alone and Daddy takes your panties off, do we, girl?”

“No, Daddy. I promise.”

When I start to ride him faster, his eyelids droop, his hips rolling up to meet me, upper lip pulled up in a snarl. “I don’t want to have to tell everyone how you’ve been teasing me. Sitting on my lap and twirling those pigtails around your finger. Changing in your bedroom with the door open. Daddy had no choice.”

My thighs start to tremble on either side of his hips. “Sorry. I’m sorry.”

“That’s okay, little girl,” he rasps. One big hand slides up under my nightshirt and cups my breast, squeezing it tight and pinching the nipple between two rough knuckles. “Having our nighttime secret is going to make it all better.”

The blanket covering me begins to slip off my shoulders, but I can’t tell Rex, because my vocal cords are no longer working. I can barely breathe. The orgasm is beginning to crumble me, starting deep in my belly and spreading to the insides of my thighs, my core. Mindlessly, I ride Rex harder and harder, finding that place where I can grind my clit side to side, up and back. Oh God. Oh Jesus.

“Now look at you, teasing little girl. You’re going to make Daddy breed you if you keep that up.” His hips are jerking in violent upthrusts now. Drives that rattle my teeth and make me dizzy, along with his words. Words that are wrong and right and everything I’ve fantasized about since I can remember. “Is that what you want? You want everyone to look at your swollen belly and know Daddy couldn’t take it anymore?”

I throw myself forward on Rex’s chest and sob into his shoulder, my climax picking me up and shaking me, rocking me to the very foundation. Rex’s big body tenses beneath me and begins to quake, low, animal groans in his throat. Hot spurts well up inside me, one after the other, Rex’s hands still guiding me up and back in relentless yanks, until hot stickiness begins to leak out where our bodies join. And it doesn’t stop. Rex has more to give me. He picks me up by the waist and bounces me up and down several times, his erection still spilling seed, his jaw clenched so tight I worry he’ll break it. Even though I’m replete, I continue to service him until he’s completely spent and he crooks his finger to bring me close, his arms folding around me in an embrace.

A safe one. The one I’ve been longing for.

Several minutes later, Rex wraps me in the blanket and carries me from the now-empty living room.

Chapter Ten

Rex

I throw an arm over my eyes to block the morning light.

Christ, I feel fucking great. There's my first clue that I'm not in my bunk out on the boat. My chest is light, my cock is hard...I'm actually glad it's morning. There's something to look forward to. A weight falls from the ceiling and lands on my gut.

No, not something. Someone.

Clara.

I jackknife in bed, my gaze falling to the empty spot beside me in the bed. Where is she? Where's my little girl? I almost roar the question to the cabin in general, because I need a goddamn answer right now. She slept in my arms all night, her adorable tush tucked up against my junk. Man, she sleeps like the dead. When I carried her into my bedroom—instead of the guest room she claimed yesterday—she was already sawing ladylike logs, her head lolling against my shoulder.

The privilege of laying her down on my bed and cleaning the virgin blood off her inner thighs turned me into a possessive motherfucker. I knew she wasn't in danger last night, but I still stayed awake until the wee hours, waiting to slaughter anyone who posed her danger. This is it. We opened the door last night and I can't close it now.

She's mine. She's mine and she's not in this bed. Therefore, I'm pissed. Rudy and Hank don't have a death wish, so they won't lay a finger on her. But I know too well how Clara likes to dress. And if I'm not there to make sure they keep their eyes to themselves, they're going to see too much of what's mine.

Not to mention, I've got a hard-on here that needs attention. I could visualize Clara riding me hell bent for leather—the way she did last night—and give myself a quick jerk job. I experienced the best last night, though, and I'll never be satisfied with anything but my niece's pussy until the day I die.

“Clara.” I throw my legs over the side of the bed and pull on my jeans. “Where you at, girl?”

Not getting an answer, I stomp from the room without bothering with a shirt. There's no one in the living room, but I hear water running in the kitchen, so I head in that direction. When I walk inside, there's no Clara, though. Only my two friends, who are back to looking like outraged church ladies. Not surprising, considering I fucked my niece in front of them last night. But hell, once she called me Daddy, there was no stopping. Not having claimed her virginity was driving me insane. Couldn't even take the extra minutes of waiting to get her somewhere private. It had to be now, now, now.

I clear my throat. “Where is she?”

“Good morning to you, too,” Hank blusters.

Rudy pours a cup of coffee, taking his time adding sugar and milk. “She went for a walk.”

“A walk?” I bellow. “Alone? Where?”

“She’s only been gone about ten minutes,” Hank says, leaning back against the counter. “Let the girl enjoy some nature.”

“Hell, she’s already caught herself a bear,” Rudy drawls.

My asshole friends high five each other.

I snatch up the communal set of cabin keys. “Which direction did she head? If something happens to her, you’re both dead.”

“Said she wanted to see the lake.”

Lake? Jesus, she could drown. Or get bitten by something. Or trip over a tree branch and cut herself. Don’t these idiots know Clara has balance issues?

No, they don’t. And that’s the only thing that stops me from shutting their lights out. It would waste time, anyway, and I need to find my little girl. Still not bothering with a shirt—or shoes—I stomp from the cabin and head toward the lake. It’s not far, but during the five-minute walk, I picture every bad thing on the planet happening to her. She could be in pain and calling for me—

What I see instead when I reach the lake turns my vision dark, bloody red.

Clara is knee deep in the lake, wearing nothing but a yellow bikini. A tiny scrap of one that’s already gotten wet, clinging to her pussy and tits like a second skin.

Two young men in their early twenties wade in her direction, outfitted in fishing gear. I don’t know what the hell passes for handsome, but they sure as shit ain’t as ugly as me.

“Hey there. You lost?”

“No,” Clara says, backing away. “I’m staying with my uncle and his friends. They’re on the way here to meet me.”

“That so? Well, we’ve got our own cabin over yonder. It’s real nice,” says one of the boys, taking off his hat and letting it smack against his thigh. “Why don’t you come with us and hang out?”

“Can’t have enough friends, can you?” says the other, smiling a little too brightly, like a toothpaste commercial actor. “I’m sure your uncle won’t mind.”

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There isn't a chance I'm letting Clara go off with these boys, but there's a part of me that wants to see her make that decision. Needs to know she'll choose me.

"You better get out of here before my uncle shows up. He won't like other men talking to me." She lifts her chin. "I don't like it, either."

The young men exchange a look that turns my stomach and they begin wading toward Clara again. "Come on, now," says one of them. "You're not being very friendly. We just want to make nice."

I've heard enough. The blood in my veins is boiling, a roar pressing against the insides of my throat. Hands in fists, I storm the water and let loose a sound that carries clear across the lake, echoing off the mountains. The boys drop their poles and try to run, but I reach them in three quick lunges, catching them both by the collars and slamming their heads together. Taking advantage of their dizziness, I spin the first one around and cold cock him once, twice, letting him drop into the water. The second guy throws a right hook at me, but it's like getting tapped by a fly swatter. He attempts to escape when I barely register his punch, but I don't allow it. Oh no. I saw the way he looked at my niece and he's going to pay.

One shot puts his lights out. His friend, who is only somewhat coherent, drags the man toward the shore. I start to follow, intending to inflict more harm, but Clara steps in front of me. "Don't. Please." Tears run down her cheeks. "Just hold me."

My hands close around her shoulders and I give her a good shake. "I should paddle your ass, girl," I grit out. "Where the fuck are your clothes?"

She chews her lip. “I was coming for a swim.” Her gaze moves lower to my chest and stomach, followed by a quick intake of air. “You’re not wearing a shirt.”

“So what?”

“I haven’t seen all the h-hair and tattoos before.” Under my watch, her nipples turn to little points inside the triangles of her bikini top, her eyes glazing over. “Y-you...I-I...like the way you look.”

My dick grows swollen behind my fly. Somewhere deep down, I expected her to find me an ugly bastard below the neck. I’ve got anchors and treasure maps and ship masts inked all over me, but half of them aren’t visible, thanks to the pelt of black hair on my arms and chest. She actually likes this? More than she likes the look of those two kids her own age? I shake myself. “Stop trying to distract me, Clara. You’re in trouble.”

“I know.”

“They were fittin’ to carry you off somewhere, goddammit.”

Her lower lips starts to wobble. “You have a cut under your eye.” She takes me by the hand and tugs until I follow her out of the water, my anger turning black at seeing how little of her ass is covered by the bikini bottoms. When we reach the shore, she goes down to her knees in the spot she left her backpack. She unzips the front pocket and pulls out a box of Band-Aids. I throw a glance across the lake to make sure the young men are long gone, and when I return my attention to Clara, I notice something. She’s holding the box right in front of her face, nose wrinkled, eyes squinted as she tries to find the opening.

“Clara.”

“Sorry, it’s so hard to find the little flap...”

I take the box out of Clara’s hands and pull her to her feet. “Answer me something.” She nods and waits as I take a few paces backwards, holding up the Band-Aids. “Read the red words near the bottom.”

She squints for a second, a pout playing around her mouth. “I can’t.”

When I see my brother and sister-in-law, I’m going to tell them they’re a couple pieces of shit. Seriously, how did they miss something this obvious while living with her every day? “You need glasses, girl. That’s why you’ve been falling down all over the damn place.”

Pink appears in her cheeks. “But...really? You think so?”

“We’ll go see the eye doctor today.” I toss the box toward her backpack, then pin her with a look. “This don’t mean you’re not in trouble.”

My leftover rage drains right out of me when Clara launches herself at me, wrapping her arms tight around my waist. “Thank you, Uncle Rex.”

With a grunt, I pull her closer, wondering how long the squeeze in my chest can last without killing me. “You want to go for a swim, you bring me with you next time. Men see a sweet thing barely clothed and alone, they don’t care that you belong to someone else. They just want to take.”

Her head comes up, face full of hope. “I wasn’t sure if you’d still feel the same in the morning. That’s why I came out here alone. I was worried.” She slides her fingers into my chest hair. “But...you said I belong to you.”

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“That’s right. Meant it.” I widen my stance and tug her hips up against mine. Groaning when she writhes on my fuck-ready cock. “I tried to do the right thing. But the wrong thing feels too goddamn good.”

“It’s not wrong,” she murmurs, giving me big, earnest doe eyes. “Your friends know about us and they’re still your friends, aren’t they? Some people might have a problem with us, but we probably wouldn’t have liked those idiots, anyway.”

A laugh rumbles out of my chest, surprising me. “You’re a fierce little thing when you want something, aren’t you?”

“I don’t know. I’ve only ever wanted you this much,” she says, pulling me down for a slow kiss.

About two seconds of her sugar tongue and I’m ready to bang her doggy style, right here on the shore, but I sense her holding back. “What’s going on in your gorgeous head?”

She drops back on her heels. “I, um...will you tell me what happened between you and my stepdad?” A frown draws her eyebrows together. “He said you blacken everything and I know you believe that. That you’ll blacken me. I want to know what happened so I can tell you it’s all nonsense.”

Can I tell her? I haven’t told anyone about my past. Never even considered it. Why would I volunteer the information that I’m the family bastard? With Clara’s encouraging touch and maybe a deep-seated need to be free of the secret, though, I find myself telling her. “My mother had a one-night stand and got pregnant with

me—and it happened while she was married. She decided to go through with raising me, even though her husband didn't want the reminder of what she'd done. How she'd betrayed him. Later, they had a second child. Their child. That child is your stepfather now."

I shrug off the years of disgust being leveled in my direction, every time I left my small room in the cellar. Instead I focus on Clara's sympathetic eyes, her hands as they stroke up and down my chest.

"I got a job when I turned thirteen and tried to pay my way, but...I think my mother regretted keeping me. I was always that elephant in the room and her husband never stopped being bitter. I...did blacken everything in their world."

"No, Rex." Her outrage is so cute—so welcome and unexpected—my throat begins to ache. "How dare they blame a child? They should have known the betrayal was theirs and never held it against you." She sputters a little bit. "They're the ones that blackened everything. You...you make everything brighter for me. That's how I know they were wrong and this is right."

I cap off her final word with my mouth, letting her taste how much I need her. How much I appreciate her. God, what has my life been up until this point? What was I living for until Clara? "Starting tomorrow," I growl, fisting her hair and tugging it back. "You stay in bed until I've given you a morning fuck. My cock is all worked up and nasty now. It don't like waiting for a helping of little girl pussy."

Her eyelids flutter. "I'm sorry, Daddy."

"Show me how sorry."

I don't even have to direct Clara to her knees, she just drops like a stone, her fingers eager on my fly. Didn't bother putting on briefs this morning, so she's on my cock

within seconds, pumping it in and out of her mouth. Whimpering around it. Savoring it. Her eyes are on me the whole time, looking for approval and I give it, grunting and stroking her hair, tucking it behind her ears.

“You taste the nasty, don’t you? Yeah. Lick it off. You love it. You love having Daddy panting after that ass. Makes your little cunt wet, doesn’t it?”

She nods her head, choking when I hit the back of her throat and push deeper, deeper—until she’s just beginning to panic—before pulling out.

“Get on your back, little girl.”

I stand above Clara, stroking my dick as she lies down on the wet earth, her dark hair fanning in all directions around her. Fuck, she’s flushed and beautiful. Hot as goddamn fire, too, with that yellow material cupping all my favorite parts. “Should I leave my bathing suit on, Daddy?”

“Yeah,” I grit out, going down to my knees in between her splayed legs. “Want to watch those tits bounce around in your top. Just like when Daddy used to bounce you on his knee, only this time I’m going to have my cock right where it’s meant to be.”

Last night, I knew my instinct about Clara needing this kind of relationship was dead on, but watching her thrive in it makes me proud. I gave this to her. I gave her what she needed. Her back arches as I speak the filth we both know is fantasy. For us, though, it’s a touch closer to real. Something we both hunger for.

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“This is a punishment fuck.” I wrench the bathing suit bottoms down her legs, throwing them over my shoulder. “You’re going to walk bowlegged back to the cabin, girl. And if I see so much as a pout over it, you’ll lie back down wherever we’re standing and you’ll get another lesson.”

She shakes her head. “I won’t pout, Daddy.”

I wedge the head of my cock inside her tight entrance, then fall flush with her soft body, thrusting the rest of my inches into her slippery passage, letting loose a shout at the perfection of it. “Shit.” I pound the earth with a fist. “Ain’t ready for a man yet, but you sure do try for Daddy.”

Her knees lift and spread, opening her up just right. “Does that mean I’m a good girl?”

“Not today, you weren’t,” I rasp into her neck, bucking my hips. Hard. Again and again. She starts to scream, so I slap a hand over her mouth and shake my head, warning her with a look. No no. “You make a scene and them boys might come running back. Might get an eyeful of Daddy’s secret treasure. And I wouldn’t like that, would I?”

A timid headshake from Clara.

“Who’s the only one who sees your privates?”

I remove my hand to hear her answer. “Just you.”

“That’s right. Very good.” I draw up her ankles, draping her sexy legs over my shoulders. There’s no help for it now. I fuck her like a beast. Hell, I feel like one taking her so close to the woods, rasping my chest hair all over her unblemished body, leaving redness behind. Hearing the slap of my sac pounding off her ass. I’m snarling louder with every thrust, growls kindling in my chest. And even though this started as a punishment, I see Clara is with me. Her eyes are glassy, mouth open and groaning. Are those her fingernails raking down my back?

Yeah. Fuck yeah they are. I have no choice but to pleasure her, I realize. I know exactly how to do that, too. It’s the same shit that gets me off now.

“You can’t even let Daddy get his nut without being a greedy girl, can you, Clara?” I tilt my head. “Did I raise a little slut?”

“No, Daddy,” she moans, even as she arches her back. “No.”

“Did you make me mad, make me jealous, just so I’d come inside you?” I bare my teeth and rocket in and out of her incredibly small pussy. “Did you know I’d want to claim my little girl after seeing her with those boys?”

“No,” she gasps, her tits bouncing up and down with the force of my body entering hers. The straps are barely holding now, leaving the ripe little mounds to jiggle free of the material, along with her pointed, pink nipples. “No, I’m a good girl.”

“If you’re so good, why do you make Daddy want to do bad things?”

“I don’t know!”

“Maybe Mommy will have the answer.”

“No!” she screams. “Please!”

“I won’t. Not as long as you keep the bedroom door unlocked, right, girl?” I’m riding her into the fucking ground, the packed earth keeping her lower body steady so it doesn’t slide an inch when I drive deep. Perfection. I have to bust soon, though. She’s too tight and sweet and wet. The back of my neck is gripped by a steel claw, the base of my spine beginning to clench. Fuck. My balls aren’t even hitting her ass anymore, they’re cinched up so tight, ready to blow.

“Daddy needs to come. Open your pretty legs wide.”

Clara does as she’s told, her eyes blind, tits heaving.

Have to bring her with me. “Now, remember. Daddy just couldn’t take it anymore.” I thrust deep as I can and begin to shudder, allowing the liquid seed to shoot up my cock. So good. So good. Jesus Christ. “This is all because of your teasing, brat,” I grit out, unimaginable pleasure wracking me. Owning me. “You made me do this.”

At the last second, she joins me and we topple over the edge together. Watching her big eyes grow wide, broken sobs falling from her swollen lips, makes me come all the harder, my hips working overtime to pump her cunt full of Daddy. Christ almighty, she’s milking it something fierce, too. I thought it couldn’t get any better than last night, but I see I was wrong. Every time I take my little girl, she’s going to run the chance of getting pregnant.

Hell, could be today. I’m still not done spurting. She’s cleaning me out. “Ain’t no choice. Can’t suit up. Sure as shit can’t pull out. Too snug. Too pretty. Won’t be long before you’re having Daddy’s baby.”

Finally, I’ve got nothing left inside me and I drop onto the ground beside Clara, drawing her rug-burned body up against me. She turns in and tucks her feet between my legs, trust shining in her eyes. A feeling I’ve never experienced before rises up in my chest, robbing me of breath. Love.

I'm in love with Clara.

She's forbidden. But God help anyone who tries to take her away.

Chapter Eleven

Clara

I'm walking through the parking lot toward the eye doctor, my hand held protectively inside Rex's much bigger one. Yes. We're walking. But I feel like I'm floating ten thousand feet in the air, twirling through the clouds. I'm so content, I don't know what to do with myself. A bunch of songs are crammed in my head—all of them extremely cheesy and involving wedding chapels. Who cares, though?

Rex doesn't think I'm a weirdo like everyone else. I've been living with confusing fantasies in my head since puberty. They never involved my own father—ever—just a faceless authority figure. A man who would discipline me and love me unconditionally at the same time. He's not faceless anymore. It's Rex who gives me that. My fantasies are no longer these moving images I have to lock away. They're shared. I get to act them out.

Speaking of acting them out...I'm not sure I want to save our games just for when we touch. I'm not sure I can. Having Rex hold my hand to bring me to a doctor's appointment is almost as satisfying as having him inside me. I'm being cared for. He saw a problem with my vision no one else had addressed and handled it. Like a man. The man I've needed all along.

“You got something on your mind, girl?”

Rex’s gruff voice sends pleasure shivering down my back. “I was wondering what will happen after we leave here.” I glance up at him. “You know, when you’re done hunting.”

He scoffs. “Only hunting I’ve been doing is under your skirt.”

My face heats, along with other parts of me. God, I love the way he talks. It’s crude and honest and I never want him to be any other way. “After the trip, then. When we have to go back to real life.”

We’re almost to the entrance, but Rex pulls me to a stop. He looks around for a second, before leading me around the shaded side of the building. With a hard knuckle, he tips up my chin. “You’re coming with me, Clara. Going to set you up in my place, make you real comfortable and happy. That’s as far as I’ve gotten.” He grunts, face moving into a frown. “Can’t even think about letting you go. Idea of it scares me. I need my girl.”

“I need you, too,” I whisper, shaken by the euphoria that fills me. “I’ve needed you forever.”

“I’m here now.” He looks right to left, over his shoulder, then takes my breasts in his large hands, massaging them with a groan. Something about the action bothers me, but I’m too distracted to dwell. “Can’t keep my fucking hands off you.”

“You don’t have to.” My head tips back, my breath shuddering out. “Kiss me?”

“Yeah. Hell yeah.” Rex crowds me into the wall, leading with his hips, that jutting part of him. “Listen up. You’re going to suck and fuck this thing later.” He gives a rough thrust, grinding himself against my belly. “I’m going to film myself sinking in

between your legs. All that slapping and squelching. Going to film my come dripping out of your bare pussy, so I can jerk to it on the boat.”

“Yes.” My panties are already soaked in my anticipation. But with a hard swallow, I shake my head. “You’re not going away yet, though, are you?”

“No, little girl,” he says soothingly, bringing his mouth to mine, chafing my chin and cheeks with his beard. “Not until the fall. We got damn near a year before crabbing season. Until then, I’ll only work during the day.”

I try to look brave. “Okay.”

He makes a comforting sound, turning the edges of my worry fuzzy with a long kiss, his tongue rubbing against mine. Over and over and over. “Come on,” he rasps, taking my hand. “Let’s go get you some glasses.”

Just like before, I’m hovering in mid-air as Rex leads me through the glass door into the crowded optometrist. I forgot how different Rex and I are—physically. But every customer in the place regards us with interest and it’s hard to ignore. He’s older and much bigger. Rugged where I’m fragile. If Rex’s irritated expression is any indication, he doesn’t like the attention. And I get another bothersome twitch in my chest, just like the one I had outside when he checked for witnesses before touching me. But I tell myself to stop borrowing trouble. I’m holding Rex’s hand in public and he’s keeping me and life could not be better.

Rex made an appointment earlier over the phone, so after giving my name to the receptionist, we’re directed to a seating area. Only one seat is available and it’s natural as breathing for Rex to sit down and pat his knee. I perch on the hard surface of it, sighing over the flex under my butt. His hand comes to rest on my thigh and I turn into his chest. Fluid movements neither one of seem able to help. Only a few breaths later, his attention lands on my mouth and I shiver, my nipples tightening.

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When they call my name, I stand up to find all eyes on us. And they're not just interested anymore. No, they seem kind of...wary. Disapproving.

A curl of Rex's upper lip makes them all turn away, go back to their own business. But I walk into the examination room feeling uneasy. Not because I give a rat's behind what other people think...but because I don't think Rex is cool with it. At all. He's stoic as the woman examines my eyes, his big arms crossed. What is he thinking about?

"Have you heard of anisometropia?" asks the doctor, interrupting my worry. "You have different refractive power in each eye, Mrs. Bates."

I ignore the fact that she referred to me as Mrs. "Is that...bad?"

"Well, it can cause poor depth perception." Her gaze travels down to my bruised knees. "Cause trips and falls..."

"That's me," I breathe, reaching out to hold Rex's hand. He takes it, bringing my palm to his mouth as the doctor watches. "Can you fix it?"

"Yes. Glasses, corrective lenses. We just need to give your eyes the same refractive power." The doctor stands and picks up a device that looks like spectacles on steroids, twisting two small, black wheels. She walks back over and holds it in front of my eyes. "Look through here. This is how the world will appear through glasses."

I take the device in my own hands and immediately turn to Rex, seeing him even more clearly than usual. Oh. Oh wow. When he sees what I'm doing, he coughs and

glances away, then back at me. As if waiting for a verdict. “You’re even more handsome now.” I whisper the truth, my loins tightening and wetting the material of my panties. “I love the gray in your beard.”

He shifts in his boots, giving another cough. Trying to be casual, but I can see the relief and pleasure he’s trying to hide. “Good thing, cause I ain’t dyeing it.”

The doctor chuckles and takes back the device. “You’ll need to wear glasses or lenses at all times. Surgery is the only way to repair your eyes for good. Without them, you’re still at risk for falls.”

“Give her both,” Rex says, taking a credit card out of his wallet and handing it to the doctor. “Whatever keeps her from getting hurt.”

“Perfect. The glasses will be a short wait, but we can get your contact lenses ready to go now.” The doctor sends a smile over her shoulder as she walks toward the exam room door. “Let’s go look at some frames while my colleague gets your lenses from the stock room.”

“Great.” I slide off the chair into Rex’s waiting arms. “I never would have known. Not without you.”

He frames my jaw in one hand, lowering his head for a slow kiss. “Going to take care of you so damn good.”

“Going to take care of you, too.” I go up on my toes, gasping when his hands slide down and grip my bottom. “So good.”

The doctor sticks her head back in through the door, clearing her throat. “I’m, uh...ready for you up front, Mrs. Bates.”

“Oh. Okay.” Blushing to the roots of my hair, I unplug myself from Rex’s body and we hold hands, walking out of the examination room together. The doctor is whispering to one of her associates when we approach, but stops talking when we arrive at the glass case. She has already laid out several pairs of glasses in a felt-lined box, square frames, more circular, different colors. But I know before trying on any of them, I want the pink frames. They’re perfect.

Rex laughs when I pick them up and I elbow him. Putting them on confirms what I already know. I’ve found my glasses.

I face Rex and cock my hip, catching my breath over the affection he’s showing me. “What do you think, Daddy?” It just slips out. Rex’s easy demeanor stiffens, his smile collapsing. And everyone in the store seems to hear, turning to look at us like bugs under a microscope. “I-I mean—”

“Daddy?” I cringe at the outrage in the doctor’s voice. “I thought she was your wife, sir. You’ve been...I saw you—”

“Forget the glasses. Just charge me for the goddamn contact lenses,” Rex snaps. “Hand them over so we can get out of here.”

“Gladly,” sneers the doctor, sailing toward the back of the store.

The silence that falls is deafening. All I can hear is my pulse pounding in my head. Not to mention, the crash and burn of my earlier optimism. “Please...” I murmur, moving closer to the safety of Rex.

But he steps back, thrusting his car keys in my hand. “Go wait in the truck.”

A piece of my heart chips off. “No.”

His jaw is poised to shatter. “Clara.”

It’s a standoff between us, but thankfully the doctor returns, holding out a plastic bag for me to take. Rex signs the receipt and gets his credit card back, allowing us to leave the store, which remains at a total standstill. Before we even climb into the truck, I know I was naïve to think we could work. This will never work. Rex might not treat me like I’m the weird girl in private, but in public he’s the same as everyone else. Making me feel odd. Different. He wants us to pretend we’re something else for other people’s sake—but after coming so close to what I’ve always needed, doing that will only hurt. I need Rex to be one hundred percent on board with our unique relationship...or...or what?

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Rex starts the truck with a vicious twist of his fist and peels out of the parking lot. “What the hell were you thinking?”

“It was an accident,” I say, before squaring my shoulders. “But I’m not sorry.”

The steering wheel groans under his hands. “You should be.”

“Why? Because we offended some strangers?” A shout builds in my throat and I don’t try to calm myself down. “I don’t care.”

“I care,” he bites out. “I care about everyone in the goddamn store staring at you like some kind of freak.”

My vision blurs with tears. “That’s how you were looking at me.”

Rex does a double take. “The hell I was, girl. I just wanted to get you out of there before one of them men said something and I fractured their skull.”

“Are you going to do that every time? Because this will probably happen again. Even before I called you...” The title sticks in my throat and that alone makes me sad. “They were already staring. From the second we walked inside. Are you planning to keep me locked inside forever?”

It’s obvious he considers it for a few beats—until I screech in my throat. “Not going to keep you locked inside,” he says, finally. “We just need a few ground rules.”

“Like what?”

“Like when we’re in public, we don’t touch. Don’t kiss or hold hands. We’re uncle and niece. And that’s it.”

Another section of my heart loosens and drops. “But it’s a lie.”

“No, it ain’t, Clara.” He bashes his fist on the dashboard. “You and me are wrong. That shit back there? It was your proof. First damn time we go out in public and we might as well be wearing a sign. I’m putting my cock somewhere it don’t belong and they could smell it on us.”

“Wrong?” I whisper, dazed. “But holding hands was one of my favorite parts.”

He slides me a troubled look. “That’s...too bad.” His Adam’s apple bobs. “Can’t do it no more.”

We’re silent for the rest of the ride back to the rental cabin. Every half mile, I sense Rex watching me and can tell he wants to say more. There’s nothing left to say, though. I don’t feel safe with him now. Oh, I know he would never let anyone hurt me. But my mental safety...the safety of my heart...I put those things in his keeping and he let me down. It’s as if I parachuted out of a plane this morning and soared, soared so high, only to have my harness cut. The parachute is floating above me out of reach now while I plummet to earth.

Finally, we reach the cabin and he parks alongside the trucks belonging to Rudy and Hank. We sit in silence for a moment after he puts the vehicle in park. “Clara...”

Hope wells in my chest. “Yes?”

Seconds tick by. “Nothing.” He takes a cigar from the sun visor, shoving open the driver’s side and getting out. “See you inside,” he mutters, walking away in a cloud of smoke.

I wait until he's been inside a full minute before grabbing my backpack, throwing it over my shoulder and climbing out. But I don't follow Rex into the cabin. I take the broken pieces of my heart and jog toward my rental bike.

Chapter Twelve

Rex

I can't believe I hurt her. Who could hurt such a sweet girl?

Holding hands was one of my favorite parts.

A roar leaves my throat and I stub out the cigar, resuming my pacing on the back porch of the cabin. Holding her hand and leading her into that stupid eye doctor was one of my favorite parts, too. Standing guard while she was examined, handing over my credit card afterward. All of it. Every second. I'm her Daddy and I make everything better for her. It's a privilege.

You blacken everything.

Maybe it's true. Even though she makes me feel the opposite. No matter how I dice it, though, the way those motherfuckers were looking at my girl sideways was all because she was with me.

I rear back and throw a punch at the rail, disconnecting it from the deck floor, leaving it teetering on the edge. Growing up, when my parents took me out in public, everyone looked at me the same way they were looking at Clara today. Like a single decision made before I was born was somehow my fault. Men and women alike in that eye doctor gave Clara the same treatment. I didn't bother to notice how they regarded me. Only her. She's all I care about. And I can't be responsible for people treating her bad. She deserves the fucking best of everything.

So I asked her to pretend. To keep our real relationship a secret in public. At the time, it seemed as though the only possibility, if we're going to stay together. And we are staying together, because I can't breathe without her. Even now, she's on the other side of the cabin and I'm not happy. I want her looking up at me with trust in her eyes, every minute of the day. Need Clara. Need.

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My boots scuff to a stop on the wooden, leaf-covered planks. There was no trust in how she looked at me when I left the truck, was there? No. No, because she handed me these desires and I embraced them with her. Then I made her feel...wrong. Jesus, did I actually use that word?

This relationship we started in the living room last night, then made solid on the lake's shore this morning, is something Clara needs twenty-four seven. Knew it when she was practically skipping alongside me in the parking lot, looking up at me with hearts in her eyes. I've already limited her, though. Us. I'm not giving her what she needs. What we both need.

I hurt her, instead. I hurt her real bad.

"Clara!" I bellow, walking into the cabin. "Where you at, girl?"

Silence.

Wait. Not total silence. I hear some shuffling near the front entrance and I head in that direction. But when I open the door and expect to find Clara pouting, Hank and Rudy are there, returned from a trek in the woods.

"You seen Clara?"

"No, sir."

Rudy shakes his head. "She's not with you?"

She's supposed to be. Hoping to find Clara in our room, I turn—but something is off about the front yard. Takes me a minute to realize what it is. The bike Clara has been using was leaned up against the tree when we left this morning, but it's gone now. And there's a skinny track in the dirt. Fresh. Heading toward the main road.

“She wouldn't.”

Hank sniffs. “Wouldn't what?”

Panic cuts into my chest like a buzz saw and I run for the passenger side, finding her bag of contact lenses still sitting on the seat. Bells peal in my head. “She...” I stagger away from the truck, hearing the optometrist's words in my head. But you'll need to wear glasses or lenses at all times. Surgery is the only way to repair your eyes for good. Without them, you're still at risk for falls. “She's on her bike and she can't see right. Christ, she's going to...”

Don't think it. Don't say it. Just move.

But as I run for the driver's side, every worst-case scenario under the sun flashes in front of my eyes. And I never told her I love her.

Chapter Thirteen

Clara

In the blink of an eye.

It was always just a phrase to me before now.

I'm going faster than I should down the mountain. Only another few minutes and I'll be at the rental hut. I think. Everything is blurrier than usual, thanks to the tears. This

is how I've been living my life—a little blurry—only I didn't realize it until the optometrist clicked those slides into place so I could see the letters on the wall.

There's a minor scrape on my leg where I grazed a tree about a quarter mile back. But I'm not stopping to bandage it now. I just want to get away. Away from the possibilities that aren't possibilities anymore. It hurts too much.

Everything hurts too much. My head aches, my chest burns.

The farther I get from Rex, the more I start to wonder if I'm doing the right thing, though. Rex is probably flipping tables, *Real Housewives* style. And while I enjoy him punishing me after a tantrum, this is nothing like those times. For one, I'm leaving him, not trying to get sex. Two, I've been built for our unique kind of relationship, but maybe Rex needs more time before he's comfortable being unapologetically...us.

I...did blacken everything in their world.

Rex's words drift back to me from this morning at the lake and my feet slow their peddling. It couldn't have been easy for Rex to bring me into a room full of people and have them stare so rudely at me. Treat me like some kind of freak. No, he would have felt terrible. He would have taken all the blame, too, even though I've been pursuing him. Even though I came here with the intention of seducing him. Lied to him since the very beginning about who I am, just so he'd touch me.

He tried to stay away because he's my step-uncle. He didn't want to blacken me and my reputation. But we went there. Went there and took it a step further, becoming something even more controversial. Something we've barely begun to explore. And it all happened before Rex even got over my status as his step-niece. At the first sign of people disapproving, he saw me being ostracized right in front of his eyes. I shouldn't have left. I should have assured him of one true fact—a fact that will always hold

true. Being an outsider doesn't bother me. It's who I am.

All I've ever wanted was to feel safe. He gives me that in spades. He's also helped me see the clear picture of where my fantasies have always been guiding me. But I expected too much too soon. I owe him time to get used to being on the fringe with me. It's where I live. It's where I'm comfortable.

All I need with me is Rex. I love Rex.

My lips spread into a smile and I hit the brakes...but I'm on too steep of a decline now and it doesn't stop. The skidding sound screams in my ears. A sixteen-wheeler comes flying around the bend.

It all happens in the blink of an eye.

Chapter Fourteen

Rex

There's a god-awful sickness in my gut as I slow the truck to take another turn, just in case Clara is on the other side. To get this far so fast, she would have to be flying down the goddamn mountain at breakneck pace. I'm sweating through my shirt, praying under my breath for a miracle. She wouldn't even be on this damn mountain if it wasn't for me. If she's hurt, if I'm going to go stark raving mad. At her. At life. At anyone in the vicinity.

I can't even consider something worse happening. Please. Please, dammit. Don't take her away from me when I just found her. Yes, what we have might be forbidden to some. I'm her step-uncle and a good damn deal older. But there's never been a bond more undeniable. It's one that people won't understand, but it's ours. She's wiggled her way into my soul and she's not budging until my maker takes me.

How could I have said those shitty things to her? She looked ready to burst into tears and I just walked away, hoping she would understand. I should have held her in my

arms and talked to her until we found a solution to our problem. What I wouldn't give to go back in time and wipe her tears away and say sorry. Tell her I love her and I'm never letting go, no matter the kind of judgment we receive.

She's worth every damn second of it and more.

If she believes I'm worth it, too, then I'll spend my life grateful. Spend it making her happy and being her provider in all things. If holding my hand in stores and calling me Daddy around strangers makes her happy, everyone can kiss my ass. She's the one I'm living for. Not them.

When I turn the corner and see her bicycle bent in half, beneath the wheel of a semi-truck, I don't believe it. No. No. No. It can't be real. God wouldn't be this cruel. Ice forms a layer on top of my heart, freezing it into a black ball in my chest. Acid spears up from the pit of my stomach and I slam on the brakes, roaring inside the cabin of my truck.

"Clara!" I stumble out of the truck, the ground blurring around me. "No. No!"

I've been holding the plastic bag of contact lenses in my fist since leaving the cabin and it's still there, useless at my side. She never got to wear them...she never got to walk around without fear of tripping or running into things. I failed. I lost her. I failed. She's gone. Jesus, she must have been so scared in those final seconds. And I wasn't here to save her. It was my job.

I double over and bellow at the asphalt road, my voice choking off when I see her black rubber skid marks. I might as well have died with her. Can't breathe...need to rage. Need to kill.

I'm going to murder whoever took my Clara.

Deadly purpose cuts through the misery and I stand, lunging for the truck driver who appears to be speaking—to me—but I can't hear anything over the cymbals crashing in my head. "Where is she? Where is she?" I grab him by the collar and I'm in the process of jerking his face down to connect with my knee...when I feel a familiar light touch on my arm. Clara's spirit come to say goodbye?

I let go of the truck driver and turn. There she is. Beautiful as I left her in the passenger side of my truck. "Ah, girl." I swallow hard. "Always knew you'd make a perfect angel," I manage, reaching out to touch her...and I find her solid. Solid? "Clara?"

"Uncle Rex, I'm fine. I've been telling you..." She swipes at her wet eyes and I see scratches and blood all down her arms. "You wouldn't listen. I'm okay."

"You're here," I breathe, not ready to believe what my mind is telling me. If she's gone, I would go crazy, after all. It could be a trick. "Your bike..."

"I jumped off at the last second. It bit the dust. I didn't." She glances down at her arms. "Well I wiped out, but that's nothing new—"

She doesn't get the rest out because I'm pulling her into my arms, trying to absorb her goodness into my body. I'm still so fucking cold, but as my sanity slowly returns, so does the heat. I'm holding Clara. She's okay. She's alive. I didn't lose her. My life is still flashing in front of my eyes, though. Christ. I lived without her on this earth for a full minute and it was the longest sixty seconds of my life. Never again. "I love you," I growl into her hair. "I love you and that means you have to stop getting hurt. Can't take it, girl. You're my fucking world now."

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My chest catches her sob. “I love you, too. I was turning around to come home. I’m sorry. I’m sorry—”

Moved by the revelation that this incredible girl loves me, too, I catch her chin and lift it. “You’re sorry, who?”

Awe transforms her expression, a new sparkle shining in her eye. “I’m sorry, Daddy,” she murmurs. “I won’t scare you again.”

Something clicks in place inside me. Something so unshakable, I have no problem meeting the truck driver’s eyes and daring him to comment. “Come on, girl.” I lay a possessive kiss on her mouth, letting my tongue taste her nice and deep. “Let’s get you home. We’ve got plans to make.”

Her hand slides into mine. “What plans are we making?”

“The kind that gets a ring on your finger.” I lift her knuckles to my mouth and kiss them, leading her to my truck. “And you in my life forever.”

Epilogue

Clara

A couple of weeks later...

I stare up at the house that I used to call home knowing my mother and stepfather are inside. I glance over at Rex. He gives my hand a little squeeze, reminding me he’s

here with me.

“You don’t have to go in, Clara. I can get whatever you need.”

I bite my lip, debating it. The last few weeks have been wonderful, but I know I need to face them. They got home today from vacation and are already blowing up my phone wondering where I am. I have to tell them I’m moving out and that I’m going to be with Rex.

I know things are going to be bad and I don’t want my stepfather to be mean to Rex. I think I’m more worried about that than what he might say to me.

I push the new pink glasses Rex got me back up the bridge of my nose. He smiles then leans over and kisses me. I’ve been doing so much better now that I have them.

“You go in and get what you need. I’ll talk to them.” His words leave no room for argument, so I simply nod.

He hops out of the truck and makes his way over to my side. He unbuckles me then lifts me by my hips and places me on the ground.

He leans down and gives me another kiss. “Say it.”

“I love you, Daddy,” I answer, giggling. It’s my favorite thing to say and every time it makes him smile.

He leans against his truck as I go in the front door and shout a hello into the living room. No one is in there, and the place is quiet so I go straight up to my room. When I get there, I grab my bag out of the closet and go over to my dresser. I open the drawers and begin filling my bag with the things I know I don’t want to leave behind.

Looking around the room, I see the bed covered in stuffed animals and I'm going to have to decide which ones to take with me. Just as I'm walking over to pick a few out, my door creaks.

"Where have you been?" my stepfather asks as he walks into my room. His face is red and little sweaty. "Your mother has been worried sick."

"Where is she? I need to talk to the two of you," I say, trying to remember that I'm here to make peace. I want this to go well so that I can still have a relationship with them when it's over.

"She went to the store. She'll be back later." He looks me up and down as he takes a step closer. "What are you wearing, Clara? You can't really be walking around in public like that."

His words hurt. I'm wearing a tank top and a skirt. I don't have on a bra or panties, but everything is covered. Rex said I looked nice.

"You really are just a little girl with daddy issues. Desperate for attention. I should have snuck in here at night like I wanted to. I should have given you what you've been begging for. You waved that little pussy around all over the place. Hell, every man I brought over here asked for a turn."

My eyes are wide with shock at his admission.

"Yeah, they offered me good money, too. I knew that sweet cherry of yours was tight and wet, but I turned them down. I did it to protect you."

I look down at his pants and see his belt buckle is undone. Was he jerking off when I got home? His erection is tenting the front of his pants, and as he gets closer I trip over my feet and fall back on the bed trying to get away from it.

My legs fall open as my skirt flies up and his eyes dart to my bare pussy. I try to close my legs, but he grabs both my ankles so hard that I cry out.

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“Fuck, look at that thing. It’s almost as pink as these goddamn stuffed animals you’ve got all over this bed.” He licks his lips as he wrestles with my legs and gets on the bed. “It’s okay, Clara. If you want a daddy so bad, I’ll give you one. Fuck, I might even make myself one, too.” He laughs. “There’s no way I’m pulling out of that sweet little cunt. It’s just begging to get bred.”

I cry out again, and this time when I do, my stepfather is gone. I blink and then watch Rex pull him up by his neck and shake him. Rex squeezes and my stepfather turns purple.

“Don’t kill him!” I shout, and Rex looks down at me.

“You okay, baby?”

“Yeah, Daddy, I’m okay.”

My stepfather looks between the two of us, and Rex tosses him to the ground. He coughs and spits as he tries to catch his breath. Rex stands over him menacingly.

“She’s mine now. You got that?” he growls, and my stepfather crawls back against the wall. “She’s packing her bag and she’s never coming back. I won’t keep her from her mama, but I’ll keep her from a piece of shit like you.”

“Fuck you, Rex! You just want her for yourself!” my stepfather retorts.

“Yeah I do. But I’m lucky enough that she wants me, too.”

My stepfather pushes off the wall and stands up. “Fine, take her. She’s nothing but a horny little slut anyway.”

I gasp as Rex hauls back and busts him in the mouth. Blood rushes out of his nose as he staggers back.

“You ever talk about her like that again and I’ll make sure it’s the last thing you ever say. People come on the crab boat every season and don’t make it back home. Try me.”

The look he gives my stepfather is lethal, but I swear to god I get wet watching it. Seeing Rex defend me and take care of me makes me want him so bad.

My stepfather doesn’t even look back at me as he leaves the room, slamming the door behind him.

“Rex,” I whisper, and he jerks around to look at me.

I’m still sprawled out on the bed with my stuffed animals everywhere as he walks over to me.

“You okay, girl?” he asks, running his hands up my legs. “Did he touch you?”

I reach for him to come on the bed with me, and he does. He climbs up and on top of me, pushing me down into the plush animal pile.

“I hurt,” I say, spreading my legs.

“Where?” he growls, looking me up and down.

“Here.” I reach between us and spread my lips.

Maybe my stepfather was right. Maybe I am just a horny slut. But watching Rex fuck him up has me ready for this dick. I want to thank my man for taking care of me and what better way to do that than to let him have my pussy.

Rex doesn't hesitate. He unzips his jeans and takes out his fat cock. "I always wanted to fuck you in this room. Guess this is my last chance."

He brushes the tip of his cock through my wetness before he thrusts all the way inside me. I'm so full as he fucks me hard and I cry out.

"Daddy!" I yell as the headboard of my bed slams against the wall.

The animals under me squeak as he pounds into me, the white canopy above the bed shaking with the force. It's raw, hard fucking and he's claiming me in my parents' house. He wants my stepfather to hear me calling him Daddy, so he knows who I belong to. I grab the front of his T-shirt and keep crying out over and over to make sure he hears it. All the while my pussy is drenched for it.

"Harder, Daddy! Deep, Daddy!" I whine as Rex makes the whole bedframe shake.

"Nothing like fucking this sweet little cunt on a pile of teddy bears," he grunts as he ruts into me.

My pussy squeezes him and then I cry out when my orgasm hits me. It's hard and I can feel myself release onto him.

"Goddamn," he snarls as he thrusts hard and comes inside me. He roars like a Viking and the sight of him, so possessive and wild, makes me come again.

Heat floods my body and my limbs are wrung out as I lie there, with him still gripping my hips. He leans down and places a soft kiss on my lips before he pulls his

cock out and gets off the bed.

“All right, girl. Let’s get you home.”

“Home,” I agree and smile.

He grabs my bag and pulls me off the bed, carrying me out of the house and to my future.

Epilogue

Rex

Two months later...

It’s been a long fucking day. It’s the first day of king crab season and already I miss Clara. Saying goodbye to her this morning was harder than I thought it would be. As soon as the boat shoved away from the dock, I knew it was a mistake.

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I'd been making plans for this to be my last season since the day I knew I wanted her to be mine. I'm a selfish bastard, but I've learned to ignore the guilt that comes with my sweet Clara and my needs. I've saved up a good nest egg for her and our babies. I've got a job—running the port—lined up at the end of the season. It's still good money, but the main thing is that every night I'll get to fall in bed with my little sweet thing.

I'm sore to my bones, but my cock twitches with need. It's only been hours since I've had her and already I wish I could fall on top of her and rut until she was full of come. I fucked her every hour before I had to ship out. I thought it would help me last longer than a day. I was wrong.

Thankfully this trip is short, and we caught most of our quota today. I'm on board with a bunch of men, including one greenhorn that's set to take my place after this week is over. It's all falling into place, I just need to hang on for a few more days. Then I can get back on land to Clara and keep her by my side.

It was strange that she didn't seem sad to see me go. Something like insecurity crawls up my chest and I try to tamp it down. She was just as greedy for me as I was for her the days leading up to me shipping out. I don't like to admit it even to myself, but it bothered me a little she wasn't more upset that we couldn't be together for at least a week. I was ready to throw her over my shoulder and carry her on board with me. But a crab boat with a bunch of men that need their dick tended to isn't the place for my girl. Now I have to lie down at night alone in bed and think about what she's getting into without me. I'm her daddy because she needs one. Trouble seems to find her, and that's one of the biggest reasons I didn't want to leave her. But one last time out on the boat and we'll be set for a long, long time. I'm doing this for her, I remind myself

as I hang up my gear and head to my bunk.

I'm the senior crew on this boat, which means I only have to share my cabin with one other man. Salty is a seasoned crab fisherman who never found the time to quit. He's an old man by boat standards, but he doesn't seem to like land. Salty is quiet and keeps to himself and only grunts when you ask him a question. I like bunking with him because he doesn't snore and leaves my shit alone.

When I make my way to the back of the boat I'm surprised to see Salty standing in the hallway smoking a cigarette. Normally he'd be getting some sleep before the night shift, but here he stands, wide awake.

"Can't sleep?" I ask as I get closer. I expect him to grunt at me, but I'm surprised when I see his duffel bag at his feet.

"Too crowded in there. I'm taking the crow's nest," he grumbles as he stomps out his cigarette and shoulders his bag.

"I didn't bring any more than usual," I say, thinking about my own bag that's smaller than his.

"Ain't gonna get a wink of sleep," he mutters, then pushes past me and heads up the stairs.

I shrug. I don't know what's got into him, but I'm beat beyond measure and need some shuteye. Maybe since I'm alone for the night, I can jerk off in peace while I dream of my girl's little pussy.

Opening the door, I flip the light switch then slam the door closed behind me. There on the tiny bunk is Clara, naked with her legs spread.

Anger floods me as I see all of her pink little holes out in the open, ready to be fucked. She's on a boat full of nasty old men that would take turns fucking her raw. She's got what's mine displayed out for anyone to walk in and see. Including Salty.

“What in the fuck are you doing here, Clara? And you better have a good goddamn excuse for letting that old man see what belongs to me.”

She bites her lip but doesn't make a move to close her legs. Instead she shows me she truly is the devil as her small fingers wiggle down her body and to her pussy. She spreads her cunt for me, showing me how slick she is for it. How ready she is for a deep, hard fucking.

“I missed you,” she whispers, and I fall to my knees in front of her.

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“You snuck on my boat and waved your little pussy around, ready to get fucked. I oughta roll you over and wear your ass out.”

I watch as she dips her finger inside her pussy and pulls it out. It's covered in her juices and, goddamn my soul to hell, I groan as she brings it to her mouth and sucks it clean.

I wrestle with the zipper on my pants so fast, I nearly rip them open.

The room is small, and it's closing in on me as my need for her beats down on my back. I don't think about how she got on the boat or what I'm going to do about keeping her hidden in here. I don't even worry about there not being a lock on the door. Right now, I just need to get my dick in her and fuck until I pass out.

Warm, wet heat surrounds my cock as I thrust into her and hold still. Exhaustion mixed with desire fills my veins, but I wait, needing a moment to feel home.

Clara reaches up to me, touching my scruffy face. I turn my face and kiss her wrist, then fall on top of her and kiss her sweet lips. I can't stay mad at her. Hell, I can't seem to do anything right but fuck her, and she still wants me. I don't know what I did to deserve this little angel, but somehow life keeps on working out for a fuck-up like me.

She tastes like sugar and her pussy and I growl as I start to fuck her. She clings to me and her little cries are driving me to the edge. I put my hand over her mouth and move my lips to her ear.

“You keep quiet in here, girl. This crew finds out there’s pussy this tight on board and they’ll be breaking down the door to get a turn.”

Her pussy creams with my words, and I fuck her harder. I stamp my ownership on her cunt with every thrust and make her remember who’s on top of her.

“You need a daddy twenty-four seven, don’t you, baby?” She nods and moans against my hand. “This boat has got some rough guys on it. Some of them don’t care you got a daddy or that your pussy is barely big enough to take a cock.”

Her cries are muffled as her pussy gets wetter and she’s close to getting off. Fuck, I’m exhausted, but this bed is too small for me to pass out on top of her.

“I’ll sneak your food down here and make sure you got my dick every hour on the hour. But you better not step a toe outside this room.” I grit my teeth just thinking about having her pussy ready for the taking whenever the need hits me. Just like at home, I can grab her up and bend her over every time my dick twitches. “You hear me?”

I lift my hand up a little and she licks her lips. “Yes, Daddy.”

Fuck if my cock don’t swell even bigger. Not even a whole day without her and already I missed her calling me that.

“That’s right, sweet girl.”

I lick her bottom lip then kiss her hard. She squeezes her thighs around me and I press my barrel chest against her tits as she comes apart in my arms. I thrust hard one last time and empty inside her perfect waiting body. I almost black out as her pussy clamps down on me and drains what’s left of my soul into her.

There must be a god, because I've got just enough strength left to roll us over on the tiny bunk so I don't smother her. She lies on top of me like roadkill and I'm half asleep when I feel her fingers in my chest hair.

"I'm sorry, Daddy," she whispers, and my chest tightens. "I just couldn't stand to be away from you."

"S'okay," I grunt, and wrap my arms around her. "I missed you, too. We ain't gonna be apart again. I'm making sure of that."

"I love you," she says, kissing my chest and then cuddling close.

"Love you, too, baby girl."

Epilogue

Clara

Two years later...

I keep looking at my watch and hoping Rex will be here soon. He texted me and said he was running late, but I know he doesn't want to miss the appointment.

This is our second pregnancy, but he's still just as excited as the first one. When they called me back, I said I was still waiting on my husband, but the nurse told me that one of their doctors had an emergency and they didn't have time to reschedule me. I debated for half a second before I decided to go back, hoping that he'd be here soon.

Now I'm laid back on the table with my legs in stirrups waiting on the doctor to come see me. I've gotten used to letting it all hang out after my first pregnancy, so I just try to get comfortable and pass the time.

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After a moment the door opens and I look up to see the doctor walk in. I gasp because it's not my normal female obstetrician, but a male doctor I've never met.

"You must be Clara. I'm Doctor Rogers," he says, walking over and shaking my hand.

I pull my knees together and try to sit up. I've never had a male doctor before and I try to think about how to politely tell him to get the fuck out of here before my husband walks in and murders him.

"Where is Doctor Pace?" I ask, looking through the half-open door. The nurse that's normally in here when the doctor examines me is talking to someone else.

"She's out today. I'm filling in with some of her patients here for routine exams." He looks at my chart and his eyebrows draw together. "Looks like you've gained quite a bit of weight since your last appointment."

"Excuse me?" I'm freaking pregnant, what else is supposed to happen?

"You're young, though, so I guess you aren't worried about your figure." He mumbles something about my metabolism slowing down, and anger makes my cheeks flush.

"Oh well," he says as he walks around to where my knees are firmly pressed together. "Now if you'll just relax we can go ahead and get started. We can discuss the weight gain after."

I don't like his guy, and I want Rex here with me. I'm just about to say he can't start until the nurse walks in, but the door bangs open. My hulking beast of a husband nearly knocks the door off the hinges as he stands there staring at the doctor.

"Get your fucking hands of her," he seethes.

Doctor Rogers backs away with his hands up. "Sir, I was just going to do a routine exam on your daughter. Please, there's no need for violence."

"First of all, that's not my daughter, that's my wife. Second, you can see by the way she's sitting there with her legs locked together that she's uncomfortable."

The doctor looks back at me and then to the door behind Rex. The nurses from the hallway are standing there watching him. My usual nurse has a smirk on her face. I'm wondering if she saw this coming.

"Unless you got a female doctor to look at her lady business, we're gonna be on our way." He moves between me and the doctor and I have to bite my lip to keep from laughing. Did he just call it my lady business?

"I was just—"

Rex cuts him off with a growl. "You were putting your hands on my wife, and you're lucky I'm not going to rip them from your arms. Now get the fuck out of this room and think about how you speak to pregnant women before you open your stupid mouth. I hear you tell my wife she's gained too much weight again and I'll make you eat your own asshole."

The nurses in the hall are snickering now, too, and they seem to be having a good time watching how this played out. They know how possessive Rex can be, always walking in with me with his hand on my belly. Always asking what they're about to

do before they touch me. He's crazy when it comes to who can touch me, so I'm not the least bit shocked he's acting like this. And apparently neither are the nurses.

Doctor Rogers backs out slowly until he's in the hallway. Then before he says another word he makes a break for it. The nurses are left in a fit of giggles as Rex comes over to wrap his arms around me.

"You okay, baby girl?"

"Yeah, I think you scared the poor man."

"I'm not gonna stand by and let another man see the heaven you've got secreted away down there. Hell, he'll take one look and be ruined for all other women. I can't chance it."

He leans down and gives me a kiss right when my nurse clears her throat. We look up and she's smiling at the two of us.

"He's only here for the day and we can't stand him. Thanks for the entertainment. Your chart looks good, and Doctor Pace will be back tomorrow. You're all set, Clara." She winks at me before she whispers a "thank you" to Rex on the way out. I breathe a sigh of relief.

"Now let's get you home so I can show you just how perfect your body is," he says, picking me up in his arms.

"I might take a lot of convincing," I say, picturing his head between my legs.

"It's a tough job, but I think I'm the man for it."

He sure is.

Epilogue

Epilogue

Eight years later...

I put my truck in park when I get to the dance studio. It's a little place on Main Street that I converted for Clara a few years ago. When our daughter was old enough to ask for dance lessons, Clara knew she wanted to be the one to teach her. That led to her getting her certificates and then opening this studio. I like to come by after working at the docks and watch her teach. She's so happy and lights up whenever she sees a child learn something she's taught them.

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“Daddy!” my youngest daughter shouts as she comes bounding down the hall and into my arms.

“Hey, princess. Did you have a good day?”

“I did. Mommy said we could have ice cream for dinner if you said it was okay.” Her big eyes are pleading and she knows I’m a pushover when it comes to the women in my life.

“Oh, did she?” I ask, looking past her to where Clara is standing.

She turns, as if feeling my eyes on her, and gives me a wink. She comes over and gives me a kiss on my cheek before she moves her lips to my ear. “Please, Daddy.”

She knows how to get what she wants, and she knows all she has to do is ask.

“I suppose so,” I sigh, loving how I can make them light up so easily.

“Yay!” they both cheer, grabbing their bags.

Our oldest daughter pops her head out of one of the studios smiling ear to ear. “He said yes?”

They all start to do an ice cream for dinner dance around me, and though someone might look in the window and think I’m a big pushover, I wouldn’t have it any other way. They’ve got me wrapped around their little fingers, and I don’t want to be any other place.

Life on the docks is good, and I get to come home to my family every night. Meeting Clara wasn't part of my plan, and having a family wasn't anywhere on my radar. But it all worked out exactly how she wanted it, and I never realized that's how I wanted it to. I was just too damn afraid to hope for it.

I grab Clara by the waist and this time I'm the one whispering in her ear. "You can thank me later."

"Oh, I plan on it," she says, licking her lips and winking at me.

Her hands trail down my big chest and to the buttons on my shirt. She's a tease and she knows it. But I don't have any complaints. Teasing her is half the fun. The other half of the fun is bending her over and fucking her until she can't walk. But I'll save that for when the kids are asleep.

"Love you, baby," I say, kissing her on the forehead and then helping the kids get in the truck.

"Love you, too, Daddy," she says, before slapping me on my ass.

THE END!