



Going Dark

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Category: Romance, Crime And Mafia, Thriller, Action

Description: Months after Alex 'Ace' Sokolov helped to take down an international human trafficking ring and stopped a corrupt senator he is now retired and back in his mom's house. It's a long way to fall from flying some of the world's fastest planes to sitting and waiting around for something exciting to happen in Suburbia Hell. Until he sees one of the reasons he's been going so hard and so fast for so many years.

The little neighbor girl who has always had his heart is all grown up now and since Ace isn't doing anything dangerous anymore it's the perfect time to claim what has always been rightfully his. But is the danger that's been Ace's constant companion ready to let him just walk away or is he risking pulling the woman he loves harms way.

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Ace

Suburbia...the hell hole of normal. This is where all things underwhelming go to die. How the hell am I supposed to be okay with this? Sitting out here on the front porch watching the sunset and the shadows dance around the white picket fences like strippers around their poles makes me wonder if it would have been better to be shot down in a burning ball of steel and good intentions. Now my death is going to be from high cholesterol and boredom. Yeah!

I guess I should be thinking about what the hell I'm going to do with my life next. Some men in my position turn to commercial flying but damned if that doesn't leave a bad taste in my mouth. After nearly ten years being in the air and working with men who did impossible missions like they were fucking line dances it would be the equivalent to taking the hottest, sexiest girl and fucking her stupid one night and the next night you had the girl everyone in the barracks had been with and you weren't even the sloppy seconds. Uh, no! And eww!

No commercial flying for me. I shouldn't even have to be asking myself what to do next but some fuck head Senator sold the names of men doing covert missions and shit to the people on the other side of the missions. Bastard. I really hope he's burning in hell right about now. Because of his dumb ass, they shit-canned all of us so we wouldn't get blown up or shot down. I guess they just get rid of the old guys and dial rent-a-spy and order two hundred new one. Two hundred men and women have to

find new ways of life because of one greedy, flesh peddling, sawed-off cunt nugget. I'm so glad that fuckers dead.

I pop a new sucker in my mouth and wait. I gave up smoking a few years ago. Turns out if you're ever shot down over Syria and smoke you make a hell of a target for some jackass to shoot at. I tried pen lids for a while but my commanding officer got furious when he couldn't find one that didn't have Ace marks all over it. One good scuffle with Jim and I was taking up suckers. I'm easily an eight to nine sucker a day kind of guy unless they're the big ones then maybe more like five.

The guys in my Special Forces unit like to give me shit about my oral fetish. Bastards. I miss those fuckers. I mean I understand I'll see them again but not like before. When you spend every day with someone for years and live through the hell we've lived through together you grow close. The men in my unit aren't just co-workers or fellow soldiers, they're family. But now I have my other family to think about and take care of, my mom and sister.

It kind of sucks that all I have to go back to is the same room I've had since I was twelve in my mom's house. Not to sound ungrateful. I'm thankful as fuck for my mom and sister but it would have been nice to have had a woman to come home to, a nice warm body to cuddle up with at the end of another routinely boring old day. For now, it's just me and my hand doing the cuddling. Turns out I am not very romantic - I didn't even take me out before I was blowing a load. And that takes me to another problem. How the hell do you get busy with yourself when you're in a house with your mom and sister...ewww.

Maybe I'm thinking about finding a woman now because of my uncle - the fucker. I love the man, after my father he is one of only three men I look up to and admire in the world. I helped him and his girl out recently and saw how much they love one another and it kind of made me want what he had. Not with his girl or anything. No, I couldn't be with someone who thought I was a Russian god the way Kat thinks of

Ivan. I want a girl who will knock the fuck out of me if she thinks I am getting sideways or who will keep life interesting with all of her unpredictability. Hell, I make my living flying -I have to have that hint of danger and unexpectedness.

A car pulls in across the street and the timing couldn't be better if I had scripted it. Out pops a cute little redhead in heels with an ass that was made for loving for days. No, I don't just want someone to worship the ground I walk on. I want what's across the street, my next-door neighbor, Evie. Only one problem with that - a few years back I might have been a dick to her when she made it known to me that she wouldn't stop my advances. But god damn it, I did it for her own good.

I'm off the porch and walking across the street before I can stop myself. She's leaned back into the car to reach for something in her floorboard so she's gracing the world with her cute little ass up in the air. I've known Evie for years. Her family lived across the street when my family moved in. I was twelve and she was five. She fell in love with my sister who was just a few years younger than she was and my mom fell in love with her. She would often joke that she was a missing Sokolov, with her red hair and light skin.

When we were all younger it wasn't anything for me to think of her like she was another little sister. She was always hanging around and she and Ana were inseparable. When my Dad died her and her mom slept over for weeks to help my mom. When her mom got sick and Evie had to take a few years off from school my sister took a year off too so she could help her take care of her mom.

I couldn't make it to the funeral when her mom finally passed but Ana and Mom were there with her. I was a world away shooting down bad guys and saving the world. Still didn't make losing her mom hurt any less. Maria Spencer was a good woman who loved kids almost as much as she loved to teach them. Evie spent a few weeks with Mom and Ana after and every time I called I couldn't help making comparisons to when Dad died.

I've always kept tabs on her, asking mom or Ana how she was doing and listening when they talked about her during conversations. Little Evie Spencer from next door is going back to school, little Evie Spencer from next door is going to be a teacher just like her momma. I kept waiting for the 'little Evie Spencer from next door is getting married' but it never came. Little Evie Spencer.

Only Evie wasn't five anymore and she damn sure wasn't my sister and all those years of wondering if she was married or with someone had made me want her like fucking crazy. Hell, I've wanted her since the night she walked her young ass into my bedroom and professed her undying love for me. When I turned her down I did it because I didn't want to leave a wife and kids behind so all they could do was grieve for me. It's hard to raise a kid when you are dead. Me doing what I did for a living wasn't fair to her or to any kids we might have had. But now... here we are, her ass bobbing up and down right in front of me like a red flag waving in front of a rabid bull and me all out of bad guys to kill.

"Hello, Evie." I get a sadistic kick out of seeing her jump in surprise and make a little shocked squeal as she backs out of her car.

"Alex," she is the only person besides my mother that still calls me by my name. Unless my uncle is mad at me and then I get the full name. Everyone else uses my moniker. When we were younger she used to get a kick out of calling me Sasha. It used to piss me off so bad when she did it but now as long as she is talking to me I don't really care what she chooses to call me.

"Hi, you haven't been hanging around very much. Not like you used to." It's not really a question but I want to know why she stopped coming over as often in the last month, which is right around the time I came home. I've heard my mom and Ana comment on it.

"I'm not sure how you would know what's normal for me since you aren't around a

lot. But if you just must know I have stuff I have to do. You know like work, school, that sort of stuff. Adult stuff."

She goes back into her car for a bag in the floorboard and comes up with her arms full all while not looking at me.

"Evie, are you not coming around because of what happened five years ago?" I watch as her face morphs into one of shock and disgust, her cute little mouth opened and spread for me.

"Alex," she looks up into my eyes and I see the haunted look in the brown swirls. I don't know if it's because of me and what happened five years ago or if it's her mom's death still affecting her or a mixture of both, "that was a mistake. I've grown up, I lost my mom," her voice breaks and she looks away, "I don't have time to make any more mistakes."

She walks under my arm holding her car door open and to her porch with her keys already out. I slam her door hard enough I worry about the window but it doesn't make her turn back around. Before she goes inside she does do a half turn to look back at me, "I'm glad your back, your mom and sister worried about you and now they don't have to."

Well, fuck me running. She didn't say anything about her missing me or worrying about me. Just my mom and Ana. Still, I have to wonder why she doesn't come around if she's completely over me. If she's over it she shouldn't give two shits if I embarrassed her five years ago. I need to ask these questions and find answers from a true expert on women - my aunt. Surely she knows if there is a hope I haven't killed what lies between me and Evie.

Aunt Kat is a romance writer, at least she is now. Before she met my Uncle I have no idea what the hell she did for a living but after she met and fell in love with him she writes romances now. Really kinky shit too. Or so I'm told - no way in hell am I going to read that shit. Not because I wouldn't read a romance, that has absolutely nothing to do with it. No, I just know she gets her inspiration from my Uncle and that is gag-worthy just thinking about it. I couldn't scrub my brain hard enough if I actually read some of the shit they actually do.

But because of her new profession, she is the perfect person to ask about Evie. She picks up right before her voicemail comes on, or at least it feels like it takes that long.

"Hey stranger, how are you?" I hear my Uncle in the background ask her who it is. I guess if I had what he had I'd be jealous as fuck and protective of it too.

"I'm good. How are things with you guys? Everything running smoothly at your place?"

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She fills me in on the latest progress to their new home. I never thought I would see the day my Uncle wasn't in a city.

"Listen, I need to ask you a question. It's pretty embarrassing so I would appreciate it if you didn't tell Uncle Ivan about any of what I'm about to tell you." I hear him mumbling in the background asking her what I want. And the little turncoat yells, "Ace wants to ask me about a woman."

"You know I was nice to you when we first met and my Uncle was a dick to you. You remember, right." I remind her of the first time we met. When she was young and unsure of herself. Now my uncle makes her confident in herself. It could also have something to do with killing a man BUT that's another story for another time.

"Yes and now he gives me dick so you see where my loyalties lie." Jesus, he's also taught her how to trash talk. It's like talking to a female Ivan, which is trippy in and of itself.

"Fair enough. How did you know?"

"Well, you certainly wouldn't call me to say, build a bomb or assassinate someone. You know lots of people you can talk to about that and you would be asking for your Uncle and not me. So I just assumed because it embarrassed you it had to be about a girl. Who is it? Do we know her? Is she sweet? How did you meet her?"

"Jesus Kat, can you just slow down for a second. I just need to think for a second. Maybe rethink calling you."

She calls me a dirty name and tells me to move on and ask my questions.

"About five years ago I was hurt during a mission. It was rough and my plane went down I broke an arm and fractured a bunch of ribs but I got fucking lucky. This girl, I've known her for a little while, but this time she was being really...weird around me. Not like I was used to her being." I really got to walk on this path slowly because she has a direct line to my sister so if I tell her too much she is going to run right to Ana and Ana will know I am talking about Evie.

"So anyway while I was confined to my room this girl walks in and sits on the bed beside me and man she was beautiful too. The moon was coming in all around her and making her look like a fucking dream. An innocent dream at that and I'm laid up because I just killed a small nation or something you know."

"Yeah. Guilt for not being worthy of her. Let me just tell you no one does guilt like your uncle. That mother fucker can guilt himself into damn near cutting his own hand off."

I laugh out loud. Hearing her talk about him like this is funny as hell.

"So she comes to me and tells me that she's been in love with me for years and that she's ready to give me her...uh," damn, I really don't want to tell Kat about Evie's virginity. "Well the point is she wanted to give me all of her and I was fucking too young and scared to be nice to her. I didn't want to leave someone and die in another fucking country while she's over here having to grieve for me. I made a fucked up choice between her and my career and chose my career."

She puts her hand close to the speaker and lowers her voice, "Is this about the girl across the street?"

"God damn it!"

"You want to know if she still has a thing for you because now you don't have to choose any longer but you did choose and that isn't going to go away just because you're bored now and need to make a booty call."

"She's not a booty call, god damn it." I don't want to be mad at my aunt but I don't want anyone to talk about Evie like this either.

"Well, well. You do care for her. That's about the only thing you got going for you because a woman wants to be the most important thing in a man's life always and you really fucked the pooch." Silence falls on the line for just a second before she goes on. "I mean like right up the ass kind of fuck. With a stick."

"Gee, remind me not to come to you if I'm ever depressed about something."

"Oh, you mean like being a washed-up spy/Ops guy who doesn't have anyone or anything and lives in his momma's house and doesn't really know how to communicate like a normal person with anyone who isn't covered in battle scars?"

"Yeah, something like that. You know you've been hanging around that damned Russian bastard for too long. You're about as salty as he is and you didn't even have to work for the prison record."

"Touché." Her laugh tinkles over the line.

"I don't want to give you false hope, Ace but I also will tell you that if the two of you love each other, I mean really love one another then nothing can keep you apart. Not time, or space, or circumstances. If she really loved you she never stopped. So don't hurt her a second time, okay. Women are strong and able to do some amazing stuff but we also love with all of us and when that love isn't given back bad things happen to us." Her voice is so strong and authoritative that I have no doubt about her expertise in this subject.

I talk to her a little more before hanging up. I heard what she was trying to tell me but all I care about is the part where she said if Evie loved me she still does because I know she loved me. And I intend to make up for all the time we lost because of my stupid ass.

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Evie

So last night shook me a little bit. Seeing him after so many years of trying to avoid him yet keep up to date on what he's up to was...crushing. I barely made it through my door before I allowed all of those years of unrequited love I had for him to come rushing back. And on the heels of that the disaster of a night when I let my stupid naïve heart lead me down the wrong path straight to his bedroom. I still die a little inside when I think of how innocent that nineteen-year-old girl was.

I make myself remember every second of the humiliation I felt when he all but threw me out of his room and told me to grow up. Funny thing is not long after that my mom got sick and I did grow up. I don't blame her being sick on what Alex said. I know he didn't cause the cancer that took her away from me. She had it even as I was making a fool of myself in front of the boy across the street; she just hadn't told me yet. She always wanted me to grow up and marry Alex. I think she and his mother dreamed about it for years, even before I saw him as something other than Ana's annoying older brother.

God, he used to get so mad at me for calling him Sasha. I had overheard his mother call him that once and asked why she did it. It was an affectionate nickname for his full name Alexander. But once I had said it and saw the reaction he was having from it I started using it all the time. I pause when my lips move up into a smile at the old

memories from a long-ago time, a time before I did something stupid like try to fuck my best friend's brother.

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My cheeks flame up again and from the way my face is heating my whole head must be red. How stupid can one nineteen-year-old be? If you look at my past, a fuck ton of stupid, that's how much. What sucks so much is the painful, bitter memory always comes back to taint the others so even though I start out remembering a good time my mind takes me back to my colossal fuck up. Every time.

This is why none of the women in the romance books me and Ana read do this sort of shit. They proceed with caution and worry about their hearts. I can't give a big enough huff of air to convey how stupidly annoying that is. Because I wasn't like those women. I didn't get my man at the end of the story. I didn't try to protect my heart when I went into his room. All I was thinking about was losing him and how I wanted him to know how much I loved him, how much he mattered to me.

Stupid, stupid girl! I got what I deserved for not being like those women. I got my heart squashed. Like the slime kids play with, it just smooshed under his feet, and then to make matters worse I had to learn why all those women were cautious. I had to live with the fact that I was told to grow up and put my clothes back on while I watched him go off and do who knows who. I had to stay and wonder if any day I was going to have to listen to his mom and sister talk about him being killed or worse, married to someone else. I had to grin and bear the fact that a part of my life - a big damned part - was over.

I also had to change the way I lived because of that night. No more stupid sister's-brother-turns-into-lover-hot-romance books. Ever! When he is home I am 'busy' and try to make Ana come to me. I take precautions to be around him as little as possible and when I do happen to be in the same place as him I quickly find a reason to leave. It has meant giving my best friend up for a few days every now and then but Alex

never stays for long so it was just something I needed to learn to handle. Except now, he isn't going away. Now he is staying and I worry Ana and I won't have the closeness we once had and it's all my fault. If I had just kept my big mouth shut about how much I loved him both of us could have gone on living like nothing was happening but no! I had to tell him. I had to let him know. If someone was looking at the biggest regrets of a lifetime then me telling him how much I love him was the biggest and dumbest.

I flop down on my bed and wait for the pain of the past to ease. Having him next door is not going to be easy. Luckily Alex never stays in one place for long. He says he is going to stay but Alex never stays in any one place for too long. I just have to wait him out. I roll to my back and think of all I have to do tonight to push out thoughts of the boy next door.

I reluctantly stand up and rummage for comfy nightclothes. The day could not have been over soon enough for me. I had four classes and two meetings with my advisor. I want to make sure I can graduate early. I don't think about what I am doing when I yank my shirt over my head and start walking around the room to gather the stuff I am going to need for my shower. I lose my pants next and walk around in my bra and panties. I'm about to reach for the hooks on my bra when my phone stops me. Not only did it ding it also lit up. I reach across my bed where I threw it when I came in.

On my screen is the smiling face of Alex. He isn't in my phone as Alex but as Ace. One, I want to know how he got my number and two, why the hell would he be calling me.

"What do you want?" I'm not going to pretend to be nice when I have to deal with him.

"Not that I am not loving the show but I am mad as fuck that you don't close your curtains, baby!"

"What?" My mind is completely blank on what he is talking about.

"You really need to back off your bed and walk to your window and close your fucking curtains before I come back over there and when I do I won't be leaving."

"Oh! My! God!" I finally realize what he is talking about but I swear I am frozen exactly where I am. My head turns and I can see that I forgot to close my curtains and with my light on someone can look right through my window. That someone being Alex since his window is right across from mine. It was never much of a problem because he wasn't ever home, damn it.

I forgot that he can look into my bedroom. There was a time I used it to try to provoke him into telling me he wanted me as much as I wanted him. I would purposefully stand in front of my bare window and undress just to see if he would be watching. I never really got the courage up to go all the way during my little stripteases. I would wait until my bra was about to slip off my shoulders and move out of the way.

Now after years of not giving anyone a show this night has to fucking happen. I am just doomed to make a fool out of myself around him and do it naked so my death due to embarrassment is so much worse.

"Sweetheart, listen to me, okay. You're going to back off the bed and walk to the window to fix the curtains. It's not that bad. Like being in a bathing suit and I've seen you and Ana in hundreds of bathing suits over the years."

Did he really just liken my lacy pink bra and panties to seeing his sister in a bathing suit? Yeah, all of a sudden I don't feel so mortified about this. I stand and walk to the window.

"Quit looking into my room, you fucking perv." I really need to think about finding a

boyfriend. Having someone to think about other than him, someone who thinks of me as something other than a kid sister would do my ego wonders. Maybe I could hint to Ana about finding someone and see if she knows anyone. I fight with the ties to get them undone. I resort to just yanking them from the wall.

Doesn't matter if they are torn and will never hold the curtains back again. As long as he is home I am never going to open my curtains again.

"Now, darlin', there was a time you enjoyed putting on a show for me nightly."

"There was a time someone else had to wipe my ass for me but guess what Alex, I grew up and I don't need that anymore!" I hang up on him before he can say another word. I think his whole job in life is to try to cause me to commit murder. What the hell am I supposed to do if Alex decides he wants to play with me while he has time to kill? Will I be able to resist up against someone I once wanted so very much? And what happens if I can't? Am I just screwed, doomed to a broken heart because of him? I flop back on my bed as the questions without answers swirl in my head. Damn it, I need to make sure Alex can't fuck my life up ever again.

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Ace

It's been a fucking week. A week of waiting for her to come home every night so I could try to make it across the street before she goes in. Trying in vain to get her attention. If I was a lesser man I would have given up by now but all this has made me do is want more. She thinks she is so fucking sneaky coming in late and leaving early but the shit I've done trained me for this kind of thing. I know the second she gets home. Probably because I put a little sensor under her gravel when she was gone

one day that pings my phone when she leaves or comes home.

I've tried everything short of asking mom and Ana to intervene on my behalf and I'm about to be that fucking desperate. The only reason I haven't is that I don't want to force them to take sides. One, I worry they would choose me over her and I want her to have people on her side, wanting what is best for her. And two, I'm not so certain if they will take my side. What if they think we shouldn't be together for whatever stupid fucking reason? What then?

No, I have to do this on my own. A solo mission. That's what has me out here on her porch so fucking late. If I'm here she can't run away from me. She can't run and hide with a polite smile and a shitty excuse about being busy. No more excuses. No more beating around the bush. Evie has always been a stubborn girl, her not seeing what is right in front of her is her way of getting back at me for the time I shut her down. I see that. So I am going to have to do something to make her realize this time I'm not going any fucking where.

Her headlights flash across the porch and my heart starts picking up speed like it does when I'm ready to take off in a fucking jet. I'm not sure what this girl has done to me or if it's always been this way between us and I just shoved it aside but things have changed. The adrenaline rush I used to get flying is now the same as when I see her or when I'm about to go toe to toe with her.

She comes up on the porch with her arms full of bags again. For a brief moment, I flashback to the first night and when she shut me down at the door. My mission tonight is to have her let me inside her damn house. I have to get her to let me in. If she lets me in I won't leave. I just won't leave. I know Evie and I know she isn't going to do anything about it either. IF I get inside I'm good.

Fuck being cool under pressure, fuck trying to figure this out. I want Evie and somewhere inside of her she still wants me too. She takes her time walking up the

path to her door and the stairs of her porch. I see her phone in her hand, the light from the screen casting her face in a glow that softens her features until she looks like a tiny fairy. She starts to mumble about the message and tries to juggle her phone, her bags, and her house keys.

"You want some help?"

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She screams and drops the bag sending the things inside of it rolling. Her keys are in her hand like she's going to use them on me to defend herself. It's more cute than menacing but I'm not going to tell her that.

"Sorry." I bend down to help her gather the things at her feet. Our hands land on a bag at the same time but I'm quicker. I stand to see what I scooped up before she could and come up with a bag of pads.

"Oh my God! Give those to me." She yanks them out of my hands and I make a note of her cycle. It will come in handy in the future. Every man should be able to tell when to prepare himself with chocolate and foot rubs for his woman. "Why the hell are you creeping around my porch anyway? Haven't you got a country to bomb or something?"

"Ah, darlin', you know I retired." I can't stop the smile that flits across my face at her smart mouth. I am going to enjoy putting it to use doing something else besides burning me down. "Besides I'd much rather conquer you if we're talking about war here."

She goes still in the dark and I curse the dark that surrounds us. I want to look at her face, to find out what she is thinking. Evie wasn't very good at keeping things in, at least not from me. I want to know if that's changed. If I can still read her like an open book.

"Go home, Alex. I think you might be drunk again."

"That was one time. One time, Evie." I smile at the memory. Her mom was so mad

and my mom slapped the shit out of me the next morning. I had gotten the houses confused and walked into their house. It was an honest mistake since we walked into each other's houses all the time without knocking or asking permission. This particular time when I tied one on I wound up in Evie's bed and her mom was pissed when she found us the next morning. Thinking about it now I wonder if my body knew Evie was mine before my mind got on board.

"Well, you seem to be all about repeating mistakes, something I don't do. Go home." She turns her back on me like I'm going to do exactly what she says. Evie has no idea about the man I've become. She has no idea the man she is turning her back on.

"Evie, look at me." I give her one more chance. She has her key in the lock and unless I just shove myself in my chances are running out.

I finally have to take her by the shoulders and spin her, pushing her up against her door. I can tell from this close that she is wearing a look a surprise. I yank the bag out of her arms and stand in front of her. My hands go to her hips before I can stop them. One of them trails up to wrap around her throat causing her eyes to grow big. I can feel the thump of her pulse under my fingers.

"Evie, do you know what I studied when I was in the Navy?" She looks like she doesn't have a clue how this is important or why it led to me putting my hands on her. After a while, she shakes her head no. "Among other things, biology. I studied biology. Do you know how many muscles and veins are in your neck, baby?"

Having her neck in my hands definitely unleashes the more dominant side of me. I like having her this way. Not sure if that makes me a sick fuck or not, the jury's still out. She shakes her head no again.

"A fuck ton. In fact, it's really stupid how we as a species don't take better care of our neck. It's so easy to kill someone there. It's why wolves protect their mate's neck

when they are in a fight with another animal."

"Alex?"

I just found out I really like hearing Evie say my name all breathy and moany. "Yes, baby."

"What the hell does that have to do with me?"

My lips tilt up in a Cheshire grin knowing this is going to piss her off, "Just wanted to tell you, darlin'," I move in closer to her so that my body has hers trapped. It's the closest we have been in almost ten years. "Because when I have you under me, holding you by the neck while I pump my cock in and out of you there won't be any time to talk."

When I pull back to look into her eyes they are all sorts of stormy and I just found my new thrill. Who needs being shot at when you can have daggers thrown at you with a look! She raises her hand to encircle the one I still have wrapped around her neck. She pulls and I almost laugh out loud at the thought of her being strong enough to yank my hand from her throat but I don't. I give in and move back, dropping my hand as I go. Before she can pull her hand away from mine I have it flipped over and holding hers.

"Just wanted you to understand where the lines are drawn." I hold her hand up to my mouth and use my tongue to split her fingers apart in a move I would like to be doing to her pussy. Her eyes are fucking huge when I do it too. Much bigger than when I had my hand around her throat.

I turn and walk away. I might not be getting into the house tonight but now when I do she can't say she wasn't warned where this is going. I start to whistle as I take a sucker out of my back jean pocket. It's been a good night!

Evie

It's been over a week since Alex ambushed me outside my own house. I have made sure not to 'get caught' again. It hasn't gone unnoticed that I am trying to avoid him either. Ana asked me two days ago if there was something going on between me and her brother. I assured her there is absolutely nothing between me and him but he doesn't make the whole thing any easier on me. He's been asking about me a lot more according to Ana and he calls or texts me at least once a day, stupid texts too, like 'good morning, sunshine' or 'sweet dreams, baby'. And yesterday I came home and found a large bouquet of flowers lying on my porch with a note asking me if I wanted to have dinner with him. I figure he's pretty adept at catching hints since he's in an elite military group so I wrote on the back of the card in big red letters -NO- and left them lying on the hood of his jeep.

I have been doing more of my studying with my class group. A lot of that doesn't have anything to do with Alex. It just so happens that I am struggling in one of my math classes and the woman puts us in small workgroups anyway. We all agreed to meet at a café in the city so none of us had to entertain the others. The people in my group are...different.

Britney is younger than me and is dating the only male of our group, Joe, who apparently lives to give her sex all the time. They go at each other like bunnies and half the time when they sneak off to the bathroom and leave me and Tammy, the other member, sitting for thirty minutes it's because they are in there fucking. They take PDA to a whole other level. Tammy is older than me and seems just as driven by sex as Britney and Joe are. She has a new man every weekend.

I am the only virgin of the group, not that they know that, and don't really want to have sex with anyone. There was a time I tried. Right after Alex rejected me and I went back to college. I finally gave up on my dream and said fuck it. I just wanted the whole virgin thing over with. My roommate had a friend who was a nice guy I guess. He was everything Alex wasn't so I thought that was good. I knew I wouldn't do something stupid and hurtful like say Alex's name when I was with this guy which would be a complete mood killer.

One night when my roommate wasn't there we started making out and kissing. He took my top off and I was pretty confident it was going to be the night I lost my v-card. He didn't last long enough to take it out of his pants and called me Karen. I was still in my bra. I wore less at the beach when I went with Ana. Afterwards he went home, and a few days later I found out he was 'practicing' losing his virginity before he actually did with some girl named Karen 'who he really liked'. I vowed I was staying a virgin forever. The two times I tried to lose my virginity ended like a bad punch line to a comedy on a Friday night lineup of TV shows. One laughed at me and one couldn't remember my name and wanted to use me as training wheel sex. Whoever Karen is she wasn't missing much though.

I'm not even sure why people want to have sex. What makes it so special? I've masturbated. A lot after my mom passed away. Never really before that just because my mom was always around and I didn't know how loud I was going to be. There was no way in hell I was going to try with her room right next to mine and doing it during the day seemed too...open. I felt too exposed to even try. But not too long after she passed I tried.

I wasn't very loud I don't think. It feels good sure. I know how to get myself off most of the time. But nothing that I would write a poem about or say I would die for. It's more of a stress reliever now. I do it when I am too wound up to sleep or I am super stressed about a test that's coming up. I even thought maybe I was doing something wrong so I researched and watched porn and I am very sure I am doing it right. It is

way better than doing it with another person. Sex is something you do with someone you trust and I trust me just fine. I don't trust others at all when it comes to making myself vulnerable.

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The professor calls on me just as I'm going down memory lane and I know I am turning red just from knowing I am thinking about the things I am. I give her my answer and she smiles at me. We worked extra hard on getting this through my thick head. Just then my phone buzzes so hard it almost falls off my desk. I want to pick it up and find out what is so important. I can see it's a photo from Alex without even turning it on. She's gone on to Britney sitting behind me so I could peek now to find out what it said.

I bring it under the desk and tap the text. Oh! My! GOD! A picture of Alex sitting on his bed completely naked comes up. The only thing keeping his...special agent from showing is the flowers I sent back to him.

You left something here that belongs to you.

"Oh my God!" I realize I say it out loud when the class goes quiet and the teacher looks at me like I might have lost my mind. I have the phone clutched to my body so tight I'm going to have an outline imprinted on my boobs. "I have to leave."

I stand up before someone can try to come help me. God knows the last thing I want right now is for someone to see my text message. I cannot believe he sent me a dick pic. What the fuck was he thinking? When I get a hold of him I am going to bust more than the vase those things were sitting in.

"Are you okay, Ms. Spencer?"

My teacher's concern for me touches my heart but I also can't tell her what made me so upset.

"My house has been broken into. My neighbor called. I have to go."

Less than a fire more than a dick pic, that should suffice as a plausible excuse for me to leave.

"Oh goodness, that's terrible! Do you need one of us to drive you home?"

"Oh, no," She really is too sweet. "My neighbor is special forces he'll...hold it down until I get there." At least he better 'hold it down' because I'm not in the mood to deal with little Alex making an appearance just because big Alex is bored and looking for something to do. I'm already packed up and out the door before she can offer to help again. I hate to lie. I hate it. I hate it. I hate it. Not only did he make me lie to my teacher, skip a class, and break a speeding law just so he could get a rise out of me but he also had the nerve to look incredible in the text. Damn the man is built with abs for days. If I saw all of him I don't think I could take anymore today. I might lose my mind and actually go on a date with him.

I don't even think about what I am doing when I pull in. I can tell Alex's mom isn't home because her car is gone and he wouldn't have the nuts to send that when she was in the house. "Alex, you ass hooo...", I come through the kitchen door and pull up hard. Alex is still shirtless but he's put on jogging pants. What he has on is not the thing that makes me stop.

Alex has his arm around a guy who has a gun in his hand pointed at another guy on the stairs who also has a gun. Alex is gripping the man who he is holding by the hand the gun is in. When I come through. Alex takes his attention off the man on the stairs just long enough to see who came in. When our eyes meet he heaves a sigh like I am going to mess things up. In the blink of an eye, Alex shoots the gun and hits the guy on the stairs while snapping the other guy's neck with his bare hands all at the same time.

I know I am standing here with my mouth open but shock doesn't begin to cover what I am going through. Alex just killed two men in under a minute since I got here. My Alex just killed two people! "Ooo," I'm still stunned speechless.

He starts picking up weapons the other guys have dropped before he comes jogging over to me. For a split second, I worry he's mad at me for coming. Not that it really matters now that I'm a witness to his two killings. He uses the hands he just used to kill someone with to cup my face and talk to me.

"Evie! Evie, are you okay, baby?" I want to nod my head for him but I'm feeling a little out of it. I might not be okay. He sounds like he's talking from far away and I am fighting with the urge to throw up. "Baby," he tips my head back and looks into my eyes.

Curses rip from his mouth just as a round of bullets rip through the room. He takes me by the waist and rolls us over the island until we fall on the other side. He lands on me and all the air is knocked out of me. Even though he fell on me his hand is still holding my head keeping me from hitting it on the floor. I realize I'm pressing against him using him as a shield about the same time I realize he doesn't have a shirt on so I can't grab onto anything but his skin. The bullets stop and everything goes deathly quiet.

"Evie, open your eyes, baby." I didn't realize I had them shut until he asks me to open them. When I do I'm met with the prettiest green eyes I have ever seen looking back at me. If I'm going to die at least the last thing I see is so beautiful. "Evie, god damn it."

He shakes me a little but I can't seem to get my whirling thoughts in order so I can speak to him. He cusses again, and this one is a really colorful one, right before his head dips down and takes my mouth in his. His lips on mine act like a kiss waking me up after a long sleep. I can feel again. His soft, full lips pressed to mine, his

wicked tongue demanding entry into my mouth. I'm not sure which one of us moans but I can hear it so clearly.

I also realize that I have a death grip on his shoulders with my arms wound up around him and my legs wound just as tight around his waist. Holy God, I have this man in between my thighs. The thin cotton panties and his equally thin jogging pants are no match for how hot he is against me.

I could laugh at the fucked up idea of all of this. I tried for so long to make Alex see me, to be with me, and now that I'm about to die it's his lips that are on mine, it's his heart I feel beating over my own. His body is lying in between my thighs and his dick is cradled in the vee of my open legs.

He finally pulls away from me and I become aware of more than just Alex. For the first time, I realize the kitchen is fucked up and not just from the hail of bullets it just endured. Chairs are broken; the table is flipped over on its side. Glass is lying all around us but I can't tell if it is from before or after the bullets. I don't need to be told that a fight was going on in the kitchen before it moved to the stairs where I came in.

"Hi baby." It feels so odd being under him and even though I am scared shitless for my life right now I'm really happy I got to do this before I died.

"Hey."

"You remember when we were little and used to run the streets playing against the kids from the other street over." I nod my head. It's been a long time ago but I remember the summer that the kids on the two streets decided to have a war to find out who was king of the neighborhood. It was one of the best summers.

"Remember how you were always my second in command and always had my back." I nod again. "Well, I'm going to need you to do that again for me. Stay low, stay here,

and stay safe. Just like a really lethal game of cops and robbers. We're the good guys and everyone else is the robbers." He moves off of me and that sense of safety he offered with the protection of his big body is something I am missing badly.

He presses a gun in my hand. I start to shake my head no but he grabs my chin and makes me look at him. "Yes. You have to do this, do you understand? You have to have my back." I give him a quick nod and take the gun even though my hands are so sweaty I almost drop it. "You're my only backup, baby."

His eyes hold a wealth of feeling in them. Concern and worry bleed from them but also determination and something I can't identify.

"It's just you and me." I nod, that seems to be all I can do now, even though it sounds like he's talking about so much more than what is going on around us. That's stupid though. Of course he's talking about me being the only person he has to help. He's a trained soldier; he stays focused on the job at hand.

He leans in for one more kiss. It's light and brief and over before he comes to his knees. I reach out and grab the edge of his pants, using them to pull him back to me. Why the fuck not? If I'm going to die I might as well get what I can in now. I crash my mouth onto his and tongue fuck him like I would have done to his body if he'd let me all those years ago. I nip his lips and suck the hell out of his tongue until he groans and pushes me back away from him.

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Both of us are breathing hard and his eyes look a little wild. I wonder if mine look just as wild as his does.

"Don't you dare die!" and he's gone. His last words to me are a command. That is so Alex. No, Ace. I realize I have no idea who this new man is. It certainly isn't the boy I grew up with. This man is bigger and bolder and more confident of himself and his world. Nothing like the boy he used to be.

I close my eyes for a split second. Damn it. Alex grows up to be braver and better and I'm still stuck here being his neighbor. Nothing changed with me. No wonder he didn't want anything to do with me. I'm not sure why he is trying so hard to make me his now unless it is just sheer boredom. Guess he won't be bored anymore. Not after today. He probably won't stay after today. Kind of glad I got that kiss in now.

5

Ace

I am so fucked. I'm not sure what the fuck has happened to my life in the last thirty minutes but shit is getting real messy up in here. I was lounging on my bed after sending Evie the text in nothing but a pair of jogging pants. One, I knew she would be coming over to talk about the picture I sent her and two, I knew I wanted as few clothes in the way of my seduction of her as possible so why not just let it all swing free.

Mom and Ana were going to spend the day in the city so they wouldn't be around to see the way I tented the damn pants whenever I thought about Evie and how pissed she was going to be at me. I wanted her coming in hot and bothered. I wanted her all fired up so I could turn the situation around and make her all hot in a different, better way. I had just got down to the kitchen when I heard the front door open.

Something had made me go on alert instead of calling out to whoever came in. Mom and Ana wouldn't use the front door and I was pretty sure Evie wouldn't stand on ceremony either. Hell, the only time we ever used the front door was for Girl Scouts and people we didn't know.

I walked down the hallway until I spotted the first guy and then I took off, going back to the kitchen only to be waylaid there by a big fucker with fists the size of hams. One refrigerator door to the face and the guy wasn't so badass anymore. Then his friends came and I was in the fight of my life. When Evie walked through the back door I felt my heart drop. The look of shock and fear on her face was enough to kill me but then those stupid fucks had both turned their eyes on her and I wanted to kill them both with my bare hands. I had to make do with just one and shooting the other though because it was more important to go to her and make sure she was safe than to stay and fuck with the goons sent to kill me.

What the hell even? Why the hell are people even trying to kill me? These guys are pros too. I have to go through the house and make sure all of them are dead or dying and then figure out what the hell I am going to tell the local police. I hit two of them on the stairs and stop the gunfire from happening again. I take out two more at the top of the stairs and one more in my mom's room. Going through rooms kicking in doors and shooting people is not how I thought my morning would go. I'm fucking retired after all.

One more guy comes out of the hall closet I always forget about and tries to choke me out but I am so pissed I can't really feel anything. I throw my head back and clip

him in the nose. I can tell it's his nose because of the crunch and the feel of it breaking. When he falls off my back I turn and kick the ever-loving shit out of him. If he isn't dead he's going to wish he was when he wakes up and has to spit his nuts out of his mouth.

I get to the end of the hall and my room and wait to go in. My sixth sense warns me someone is in there. When I kick the door open I am met by a face I have seen before. One I have worked with on missions. His mask is up not even trying to hide his face from me. He is holding his arm so I know he must have gotten hit during the first round of fighting. In his hands is a cell phone. My cell phone. Fuck me, he has my phone. I raise my gun but what he says has me hesitating.

"You should watch out for that little girlfriend of yours." He walks to the window and looks out of it. "She's going to get hurt in the game we're playing." He dives out the window and I break my stance. I have to go make sure Evie is alright. Someone should tell that son of a bitch I'm not playing when it comes to Evie's safety. I'm not playing at all.

I run down the stairs making as much noise as I can now. One, if someone has Evie and knows I'm coming it might buy me the precious seconds I need to save her and two, I really don't want to be shot by friendly fire because Evie can't tell it was me coming down the stairs. When I hit the bottom landing I yell for her. I hear sirens in the distance. Looks like the fucking Calvary is here. I'm so glad they finally decided to show the fuck up.

"Evie, I'm coming around the island, baby. Don't shoot me alright." I skirt around the broken shit and see her scrunched up in between the wall and a cabinet. She has her gun pointed out and I can tell even from here her eyes are glazed.

"Evie, honey, are you alright? No one touched you when I was gone did they?"

She makes a quick, jerky head shake but doesn't lower her gun. I walk very slowly to her not wanting to spook her. She gives me big watery eyes and for a minute I want to shoot myself for putting her through this. Now I understand why my uncle hesitated to make Aunt Kat his. Guilt may kill me before whoever the hell these guys are have a chance.

She uses the wall to stand, sliding her back up until she gets to her feet. She doesn't lower the gun though. She keeps it steady on me the entire time. Her lips move and I can clearly make out the word 'move'. I dive to the side just as she shoots. Behind me, a man drops to the floor with a bullet hole in his head. Evie always was the best shot in the whole fucking neighborhood.

She shot the guy and I wasn't even aware he was behind me. She looks at me for just a second like she's asking me if she did alright before dropping the gun and looking down at it. I'm up and by her side, gun in hand before she can sag against me.

"You did good baby. You did real damn good." I swing her up in my arms, stepping over the broken glass and furniture. "Of course you know this means you have to marry me now, right. It's tradition in my family. When a woman kills for you, you have to marry her and keep her always."

She hides her face in the crook of my neck. I'm not sure if it's because she doesn't want to face any more death or because she doesn't want to face what I just told her. When I get to the living room the front door slams open and four men dressed in tactical gear stand in the entrance. I would start to panic but I spot green eyes almost the same color as mine but lighter and I know those eyes.

James Archer takes off his mask and stares at the litter of destruction I've left in my wake.

"Damn I hate being late." You couldn't tell by his face. It hardly ever changes when

he's in this mode, serious, somber, and deadly. It's the face a lot of the men he's killed has sworn was the face of death. Thus his moniker - Kronos, god of time. If he is hunting you, you are already out of it and you just don't know it yet.

"Did you leave any for us?" Sharp blue eyes almost too dark to tell their blue blink back at me from the man asking. Jack Thornton -Thorn asks but most of it is muffled because unlike Jim he hasn't taken his mask off yet.

Evie tenses up in my arms and I remember she doesn't know who these men are. "These are the men from my unit, baby. It's alright; everything is going to be okay now."

"Baby?" All four of the men say at the same time and I realize I am going to have more than just the assassination attempt to explain to my friends.

6

Evie

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I can admit to being shocked. Hell, maybe I'm in shock and that is why all of this seems so surreal. I knew Alex...no, Ace, I can't really call him Alex anymore. He isn't the same boy that left this neighborhood, pulled my pigtails, and beat up neighbor boys for me because they called me 'a girl' in one of those tones. It has become blindingly obvious that I don't know who this man is anymore.

I was aware that Ace had a violent career; any soldier has to be prepared to not only handle that violence but meet it head-on at any given time. I understand this. I just didn't understand how...hands on it would be. I guess I always assumed that he would be sitting in an airplane shooting at people like on a video game. I never really stopped and thought about him having to know how to kill someone with his bare hands - face to face.

Since the police came and his friend, Jim, kind of took over he hasn't left my side. The Sheriff wanted to take both of us downtown and talk to us separately. It was settled that we would all go across the street to my house because it wasn't shot all to hell with dead bodies everywhere. The Sheriff wasn't thrilled. He doesn't like Ace very much. From the beginning, you could tell by the way he was talking to him it was going to be a pissing contest. The guy even referred to Ace as 'flyboy'. I think his exact words were something along the lines of him knowing how 'flyboys' like Ace operated, bringing bad things to the people who love them, tearing up towns, and flying off into the sunset like nothing ever happened.

A small part of me agreed with the Sheriff so I kept my mouth shut. I couldn't tell if the guy was talking about me or Ace's mom when he was referring to the people that love him. I tried to maintain a certain distance but Ace wasn't having it. By the end of the conversation Ace had told the guy he was just jealous because his fat ass couldn't

fit into a plane and made a bigger target to hit from above and I wound up in his lap.

In fact, I kept my mouth shut pretty much the entire time. As soon as the blue and red lights hit the room Jim looked at me and told me not to say anything. So I didn't. Every question they asked me I would either let Jim or Ace answer. And didn't that just piss the Sheriff off. Good enough that he threatened to arrest me for aiding and abetting a murderer, which I assume he was talking about Ace and not the other guys.

That had three large, pissed off men growling the room quiet. Ace actually moved me off his lap so he could stand in front of me while Jim and the dark mother fucker who just recently took his helmet off and seems to be Jim's shadow also steps in front of me. Some words were said and then Jim and the big guy took the Sheriff outside I haven't seen any of them since. I think they might have killed him. I wouldn't be sad about it. He's a dick.

"Baby," Ace doesn't put me in his lap again but comes to sit beside me. "I really wish you would say something. I'm freaking out a little bit that you aren't saying anything."

A high, strained laugh jerks out of me. He's freaking out about me not talking but not the ten men he killed that are littering his mom's shot-up house. At the sound of my laugh, he takes my face in his hands and forces me to look at him. I try to pull away from him but he won't let me.

"Don't pull away from me, Evie." I go still. I'm not afraid of him. Neither one of the people he is, Alex or Ace, doesn't scare me. I stop because the way he says it is dark and dangerous and I feel my body reacting in ways it shouldn't. Scary ways.

We both hear Jim come back into the room and I want to thank him. I know from watching and from being around Ace that if these men don't want you to hear them coming you won't, so the fact that he made noise to alert us was a kindness. I push Ace's hands down and seeing Jim he finally lets me. But he doesn't let me go. He

turns my hold on his wrists so somehow he ends up holding one of my hands in his.

Jim sits on the other side of my coffee table and gives me a kind smile but I'm not fooled. This man may seem kind and concerned but he's even darker than Ace and the big, scary bastard in the corner. The fact that he can give the illusion of a soft, gentle man is way scarier than the other two in the room who aren't trying to hide it.

"I can tell you don't trust me, Miss Spencer." Greenish blue eyes assess me like a big cat watches a mouse.

"Should I?" I wrap my blanket tighter around me. It's itchy but I don't have one fuck to give. Its purpose is not so much to keep me warm and comfortable as it is to hide me and keep what is happening inside where it is mine to deal with.

Jim's lips quirk up at the tips. "Ace does."

"And I'm still waiting for you to give me a reason for me to trust you when I'm not even sure if I trust him."

That gets me a dry laugh and a head nod. I've never felt like something so small in my life. This guy is going to eat me but first, he is going to tear me to bits. After he's done playing with me.

"That's not entirely true is it now, Miss Spencer? A woman like you doesn't shoot a person dead for a man she doesn't trust. Does she?"

Holy shit, this guy sees right through me. I mean he is picking up on things in my head I lie to even myself about. Ace is off the couch and giving Jim some weird hand signal that makes Jim stand up and follow him out, leaving me in the room with tall, dark, and I-can-kill-you-with-my-eye-lasers. Every man who has come through my door tonight has been carrying big, gnarly-looking guns; except for this guy. He

handed his off to one of the other men. Probably because he wants to kill someone with his bare hands and bullets are too quick and easy. This guy looks like he thinks of death as an art form and he's fucking Picasso.

Jim and Ace finally come back in and I swear the guy hasn't blinked the entire time they were gone. Jim carries a file under his arm when he comes back and takes his seat in front of me again. Ace doesn't sit but stands right beside of me.

"Ms. Spencer, I'm afraid we need your help. I know you care for Ace, that he's been a friend of yours for a long time, and the men who came tonight aren't going to stop. We need your help to catch them."

He's being too soft-spoken again, trying to mollycoddle me into getting me to do what he wants.

"Why don't you just cut the bullshit and tell me what it is you think I need to do for you."

Jim looks over at Ace and again the two men silently communicate. I wonder if it's where they have been together for so long or if they're that close because of the situations they've been in together. Jim finally smacks the folder on the table and opens it. Inside are pictures of three men that he lays out on the table.

"These men were in my team. They were under my protection. They're all dead." He spreads more pictures out and I can see men lying on the ground, bloody, with bullet wounds in them, most in the head. I shove those back under the ones of the three men alive. I'm not stupid. He doesn't have to tell me someone is killing men from his team and Ace was on some list. The pile of dead guys and the rain of bullets kind of gave it away.

"I thought Ace retired. Does this have something to do with his past? Someone from

his past?"

"Hell if I know. Technically we are all 'retired'. The team was officially dissolved and my men went back to the lives they left." He pauses to look at the men in the pictures too. "Then two days ago someone came to kill me."

"I'm guessing that ended like Ace's ended since you're here talking to me."

"I never let my guard down. Once you've honed that particular skill it never goes away. It just so happens that the men who came didn't realize that and it cost them their lives but two of my men's who were not as alert. One of them had a family who was also killed. A wife and daughter. All dead in a matter of seconds."

"I'm not sure what I can do to help you. I don't know anything about these men and I didn't see anything so...", I spread my hands to show him I have nothing that will help him.

Jim's eyes flit to Ace's. His hand, warm and strong, moves to my shoulder. "They have my phone Evie." The way he says it sounds so solemn but I don't understand why it is so important that the bad guys have his phone unless it is about his mom and sister.

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"Are you worried about your mom and Ana? Are they going to be okay?" I start to stand but his hand stops me.

"They have someone watching them and my mom is going to stay with my Uncle and Aunt. She's pregnant with their first child so Mom is...tickled that she gets to stay with them as long as I stay safe. Ana has a man on her, if she's not at school she'll be with my Uncle too. Or here."

"Here? Why would she be here? How are you going to take care of her if she's here?"

Ace comes in front of me and hunkers down so we are eye level. "They have my contact information and all of our text conversations." He gives me a minute for this to sink in before he says anything else. My brain is running super slow, probably because of the events of the night. "They think you're my girlfriend."

Now I get why it is so awful that they got his phone! He's been sending me goodnight texts and just sent me a picture with flowers and his semi-naked body telling me to come and get what belongs to me. Oh my God!

Before I can really think what I am doing I am in the floor on top of him with my hands around his neck. Something like a pinkish-red haze has come over my vision and all I can think about is how this jerk made me the target of people wanting to kill innocent people just to hurt these men, who are in no way innocent. Jim stands but Ace waves him off. He has me flipped over and my hands in his wrists before I can do any real damage.

"Clear the room."

Ace doesn't have to shout for it to ring in my ears. They are leaving me alone with him. The one thing I didn't want to happen is happening. I don't really count the last time we were alone because there were people shooting at us so we weren't actually alone. We will be now. Jim gives a signal to the scary guy and he finally moves. He didn't even move when I went for Ace's throat.

Ace puts my wrists together so he can hold them in one of his hands leaving his other free to grasp my chin so I can't move my head.

"I realize this isn't how things were supposed to go. I get what I did but I'm going to make it better, Evie. I'm done running. I'm done pretending. And this is just an opportunity for you to have time to get behind what is going to happen one way or another."

I shoot death eyes at him. "What the hell does that even mean? You talk in riddles like a freakin' half-assed fortune teller who doesn't know what the hell is going on and you put me in harm's way. Why? Because you're fucking bored!"

I yank at my hands but he doesn't let me go.

"None of this was because I was bored. And I might have put you in harm's way but I plan to get you out just as fast. I'm telling you I'm not leaving again. This is it. I save you and I'm done."

7

Ace

Damn, I am a sick fuck! I know right now is not the time to realize just how good

Evie feels under me but I really can't think of anything else. When she went for my throat it was hot as hell. Most women realizing someone put them in danger would have cried or maybe even passed out but not Evie. She tries to kill me. Now that is a hell of a woman. And the perfect woman for me.

Her hair is spread out on the floor around her like a halo of blood and her eyes are spitting sparks that could ignite a forest fire. She's the most beautiful thing I have ever seen. The fact that she wants to kill me right now is just foreplay.

"So you're done when this is all over and you 'save' me. Like done with me, as in your done trying to make my life hell so you'll leave to go wherever it is you go when you aren't home? Or done as in just with me and this stupid game you're playing?"

"Why do you purposefully misunderstand what I am telling you? Is it fear, baby? Are you afraid of us being an "us"?" If it's possible she gets even more pissed off. Her little body is so tense and tight she is going to break if she doesn't loosen up soon. "I will never be done with you. I meant what I said when I said I am not running from you and me being together anymore. We're happening and I'll keep you safe now," I lean down and brush my lips against the corner of her mouth causing her lips to open in a gasp for me but I don't take advantage - this time.

"And," I brush her mouth again on the opposite corner, "forever."

This time when I bring my mouth down it is right in the middle of hers. The last time we kissed both of us were a little distracted but now we have all the time in the world. Yeah, men are still going to come to kill me and Jim is outside the door waiting for me but none of that shit matters now. We aren't being shot at and no one needs killing. We have all the time we need.

I can't believe how god damned soft Evie is. Her lips are like silk or rose petals. My hand travels down to circle her neck, which seems like its new favorite place to hang

out lately. She has a small neck and the skin there is just as soft as her lips. I bet her pussy is soft like her lips too, if not softer. The thought has me groaning on her lips.

"Open your lips for me, baby." She shakes my head and rolls her lips in between her teeth. I wonder if she knew how hard her sass makes me if she would still give it to me like she is now. She's fighting me but I've known Evie too long for me not to be able to tell how to get around her sassy ass.

I release her throat and run my hands down her front. Not to grab a boob or to be flirty. I have other ideas. Her dragging in a deep breath when my hand trails in between her tits is just a bonus for me. It tells me how much I affect her even if she is fighting it. I run my hand around her body to circle her rib cage - right before I start tickling the hell out of her. It doesn't take any time before she's squirming under me and calling out for me to stop.

"No! Stop, Sasha." Hearing her call me by the nickname I used to hate does something to me. It makes me warm inside my chest like my heart is finally waking up after years of being frozen. I dig my fingers into her ribs and go harder at her, running my hand up under her armpit. She's pulling at her wrists to try to free her hands but I have her good and trapped. "Oh no! You're going to make me pee you ass. ACE!!!!"

I swoop down and take her mouth with mine, pushing my tongue in deep. I only stop when I'm inside. Everything, absolutely everything, phases out and she is all I know. The taste of her, the feel of her tongue dueling with mine, the feel of just how soft her body is pressed against mine. Her.

At first, she doesn't respond but the longer my tongue coaxes hers the more she melts under me until at last she runs her tongue over mine and her legs wrap around my hips. This is one of the reasons I told the men to leave. No other man is ever going to see Evie like this. I break away from her mouth and trail kisses and small bites down

her jaw and under the soft skin right below her ear.

"Evie, are you still a virgin?" I want to know. I have to know. If she's not it's not going to stop me from claiming her as my own but it might mean one less hole I have to dig before we get married. "Evie, baby? You still got your innocence, baby?"

She stiffens under me. Her eyes clearing up as the cloud of lust I had her in vanishes. She rolls and I let her roll me over and watch her get to her feet. "You don't get to ask me if I have my innocence after all that's happened. You don't get to ask me anything about me." She turns to walk away from me but I grab her wrist and contemplate jerking her back down to the ground again.

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"Just answer my question, baby."

"I lost my innocence two years ago. Right around the time my mom died and I had to put her in the ground. Is that what you want to talk about, Ace?" The way she says my name tells me I'm not going to get anything out of her. She's a stubborn little thing and if you don't handle her right you'll never get anything out of her. I don't know if she is telling me she lost her cherry right after she buried her mother or if she still has it and isn't the little girl I once knew. I want to stick my fingers in her pussy and see for myself but if she's not willing to give me the answer I can't imagine she's willing to give me permission to check for myself. But I will find out.

When Evie doesn't allow our past to cloud her mind she gives me who she really is, soft, sweet and a body telling me she is my woman with everything she does. Evie will soon realize I'm not the same boy who wanted what I wanted when I wanted. No, now I am a man who is patient and who will wait for what is mine. I watch as she runs. There is nothing I like better than a good chase.

Two days later I realize I have been lying to myself. I am not a patient man. This new man that I am is being driven crazy with the thought of the little girl across the hall from me. She allowed me and the guys to take over most of her house downstairs. One of the men will stay awake at all times while the other one sleeps on the couch before they switch. I took the guest bedroom that she used as a storage area. I spent the first day cleaning it up and making some kind of order out of it and putting a bigger bed in it.

It's right across from her bedroom for fuck's sake and I've only seen her briefly. She's a slippery woman. But her time is running out. She has to go to school tomorrow and I'm the one taking her there, waiting for her to come out, and bringing her home. We should have plenty of time to talk. She has done everything she can to ignore and avoid me but soon she won't have the option.

It took some fast talking from me, Jim, and finally Ana to make her agree to even let us inside her house. Even when she realized how much danger she was in she wouldn't agree to our help. Finally, I had to call Ana, and when they talked she threatened to tell my mom about what was going on.

"I'll have to tell her about all the weirdness between you and Alex and then she'll want to know all about why it's like that and what happened and why you won't let him protect you. You know she'll dig until she finds out what is going on with the two of you."

"Fine, I'll let them stay but only downstairs. None of them are allowed upstairs. And only until they find the men who think I have anything to do with your brother." She huffs out and when she gives her ultimatum about the upstairs she glares at me.

"Thank you, Evie. Knowing that you are being taken care of so well means that me and mom won't have to worry about you as much."

She turned and wheeled around glaring at me and that was two days ago. I thought for sure that she would come out of her room and say something about me moving and rearranging the guest/storeroom but she didn't. If she doesn't cooperate soon I'm going to be in the bathroom whacking it like mad every day.

I unfold myself from the bed and walk out into the hall. I can tell she just spent a couple of hours in the bath getting ready for tomorrow. I plan to go in there so I can smell her when I cum but when I step out in the hall I'm pulled up short by the sight

of her door slightly opened.

The latch on her door doesn't always catch causing her door to sometimes pop back open like now. I can see her stretched out across her bed on her belly with her legs bent up in the air occasionally waving back and forth. From what I can see she is reading a thick book that looks like a textbook. Her phone is lying next to her but she isn't paying it any attention. She writes in a notebook every now and then but for the most part, she is reading.

What has me drawing to a stop and calling out for Jim is the fact that she is laid out on her bed wearing only a tiny sleep shirt that barely covers her ass. In fact, when she moves from reading to writing her shirt comes up some and I can see the soft curve of her ass cheeks only covered by a thin layer of silk that does nothing to hide the sweet globes of her ass.

When I yell for Jim she jumps and rolls over to her elbows to find out why I am shouting her house down. When our eyes meet realization dawns on her that I've been standing there for a while, long enough to have seen her sweet innocent ass on full display. Jim comes up to the landing and stops out of respect for my girl.

"None of the men are allowed up here. Ever. Unless I'm dead and she's in trouble, otherwise every male in this house goes through me to get to her when she's up here."

Normally I wouldn't be slinging orders at my commanding officer but we aren't working anymore and this very much is mine to command. This is my neck of the woods. This is my girl. And this is my place. Jim allows a smile to stretch across his face at my order. He tilts his head in an agreement, "I'll let them know how it is."

I turn and find a pissed off Evie leaning against her door. "What was that all about?"

"You're finally talking to me again?" I shouldn't poke at her but damn if I can't help it

when she's made me this damn hard in nothing but a thin nightshirt that's just a little too short and sweet little girl underwear in pretty pink. She might as well be wearing a fucking lace negligee.

"Don't be a dick. Why are you yelling at the top of your lungs for no one to be up here unless something dire happens? I thought I made it clear what my preference was and that even you aren't really supposed to be up here."

I walk closer to her and the scent of cherry blossoms fills my nose, "Because baby, if one of the men I work with came up here and saw you on your bed with that sweet ass laid out for anyone to see I would have to kill one of my own and I would feel awful about it. But I would still kill them."

Her face tells me how much I've shocked her. I don't know if it's because I was looking at her ass or if it's because I would kill a man for looking at what belongs to me and only me. She's always belonged to me and I am beyond ready to claim her. She's going to have to make peace with that. I leave her standing there looking at me as I go to the bathroom to take care of the erection she's caused.

8

Evie

I have no fucking idea what last night was all about. Since he's killed people in front of me it seems Ace has become another person, one who is...possessive and protective. I can't make sense out of it. Why now? Why does he come on so strong after so many years of treating me like I barely exist or I'm nothing but an extension of Ana?

Because of his little shouting incident, I slept like shit last night. It didn't help that I was painfully aware of Ace being in the room right across from me and that he would be the person taking me to school. But when we got in the car this morning neither of us said very much. He looked pissed, like he slept the way I did, and I couldn't bring myself to make myself vulnerable to him another time. When someone tells you to go home and grow up when you are standing in front of them completely naked it tends to have a lingering effect on you.

As soon as I hit the classroom, my teacher and friends are all asking me about the 'break-in'. I try to keep to the truth as much as I can. Everything was fine, it was a misunderstanding, and it wasn't my house but my neighbor's house that was vandalized and destroyed. I conveniently leave out the part where my neighbor is a highly trained killer who is now residing in the bedroom across from mine.

"That's still scary, what with it happening so close to you. Do you have someone you can stay with for a couple of days until they catch who did it?" Tammy asks but I see Joe's eyes light up and wonder what the hell is up with him.

"Um...", so much for not lying because now is the time I have to tell them about my 'boyfriend'.

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"I mean you could stay with me. I have a pull-out couch that you could crash on if you needed to."

"Oh, thank you, Tammy. That's so sweet but I think....," I pause not really wanting to tell everyone about Ace.

"You could always stay with me and Britney, right babe?" Joe looks too eager and Britney looks a little put out. They fall into a whispered conversation and I think I hear them mention something about looking for a third person to 'be with them'.

"Oh that's sweet too, Joe," I look to Britney who does not look like she is all about this three people thing, "And you too, Britney, but my boyfriend is actually staying with me. He and his sister are watching out for me during all this."

"You have a boyfriend?" Of course, Joe would be the one to push for more information. I just nod my head. The less I say the better.

"You never talk about him." Fuck! Even Britney is questioning me about this and when I look to Tammy she seems really interested too. Do these people not have anything better to do with their time than try to figure out if I am or am not dating someone?

"He's been away for a while. It's been an on-again-off-again kind of relationship."

"Was he in jail?" Tammy loses me. "Is that why he's been 'away'?"

"Did he have another family, like a wife and kids?" Britney asks. Who the hell have

these people been dating?

"No, he was in the military and he recently retired."

"Retired? How old is this guy? I mean what can he really do for you if he's old enough to retire?" He would ask about the sex which is nonexistent for me.

Shit, I am not handling this right. Thankfully my teacher starts class and I say a grateful prayer that I've been saved from answering any more questions. All during class, I try to come up with answers for them and still pay attention to what my professor is trying to say. Today is one of my lighter days; all I have is this math class, so I won't have to worry about focusing much longer.

As soon as the teacher dismisses us I am up and out of my seat. But I'm not lucky enough to shake the three who want me to tell them all about my 'boyfriend'. I try to stave off questions until I walk through the doors and then all the chatter stops. Standing in front of the building is Ace, looking every bit the lead out of Top Gun. He is leaning up against a motorcycle in a dark leather jacket with sunglasses blocking his eyes. When he sees me his face breaks out into a smile and I hear Britney mumble to my side, "Damn, no wonder you didn't tell anyone about him. He is hot. I would want to keep him all to myself too."

"Babe?" Joe looks a little put out.

Before I can say or do anything else Ace is in front of me wrapping me up in his arms and giving me a hug. I automatically hug him back because I'm an idiot and it comes natural for me to hug back when I get hugged.

"You going to introduce me to your friends, babe?"

"Ace, this is Tammy, Britney, and Joe from my math class. Everyone this is Ace." He

shakes hands but seems to linger a little longer with Joe.

"Her boyfriend." He states the obvious before he releases Joe's hand and goes to pull me into his side.

"Evie tells us you are retired. You look too young to be retired. You fuck something up and they force you to retire?" I bristle at the question Joe asks. What the hell kind of dick measuring contest are these two in and why?

Ace laughs and pulls me closer. "Special Ops is a game for a younger man than me. You don't do it for long." He explains. Like this makes all the sense in the world. "And you don't fuck up or you don't come back - at least not without a toe tag and a body bag."

All three of them look thoroughly awed. But Ace isn't finished. "Besides, I got tired of making my girl wait on me and worry about what kind of dangerous shit I was up to. It was time to come home and start a family." His hand goes to my stomach and I see three pairs of eyes follow him there.

I might kill him before he can get me home. I cannot believe that he just implied I might be pregnant. That asshole! The jerk! I knock his hand away from my stomach or at least try to but he has a tighter hold on me than I realized.

"We said we didn't know for sure if we were going to start a family right away - remember." I grit out. "I want to finish school first."

"No, I remember me telling you I'll take care of you and the baby so you wouldn't have to worry about choosing between being a mother and finishing your degree. Besides it isn't like we've been careful, love."

My mouth falls open and my face goes red. I want to turn and run from what he just

implied but I also want to bury my face so I don't have to look at any of these people again. Ace takes the decision away from me by pulling me into him, "It was nice to meet you all. I'm gonna get my girl home and pamper her for the rest of the day. Bye."

He turns us around and walks to his bike. Under my breath, I ask him what the hell he thinks he is doing.

"Just putting my claim on you, babe." He takes his jacket off and puts it around me, putting my arms in the sleeves when I don't do it myself. He zips it up. "It still gets cool and I don't want you to be cold when we're on the road."

"I don't understand, Ace. Who are you showing off for? No one there was a terrorist or assassin or whatever?"

"I wanted to make sure Joe wouldn't be looking at your ass again. Now he understands I will bury him if he ever does it again. And if he doesn't, he soon will."

"What? Joe wasn't looking at my ass!" I whisper as I look back at the three people we just kind of left standing. Sure enough, Joe doesn't look happy. Out of the three, he seems the most miffed.

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He throws his long leg over the bike and waits for me to get on behind him. "You ever rode on a motorcycle before, babe?"

"No! They seem dangerous." He seems dangerous and I want to ride him. What? No I don't! What the hell am I thinking? I cannot allow this man to worm his way back into my heart when he is only going to hurt me again.

"You can either hop on behind me or I can put you on in front of me but if you want to be safe, behind me is probably better. And Evie," he pushes his sunglasses back on, he had taken them off when he was meeting everyone, "don't make me kill him. Don't try and pretend there isn't anything between me and you or get him to thinking he can try to make a play for what belongs to me or he'll wind up in a hole in the ground."

I hop on, stunned at what he is saying. "You don't have to be such a dick."

"I'm not trying to be a dick, baby. I'm just stating the facts."

The only good thing about him coming to pick me up on the motorcycle is that we don't have the opportunity to talk. Everything else is a feat in keeping my patience. I have to wrap my arms around his waist to hang on, the vibrations of the fucking thing and the scent of Ace is enough to guarantee that I will have to change my panties when we're home.

As soon as we get there I hop off and run for my room. I don't want to think about what happened outside of school or how my body reacted to him when he was in my arms. Hell, I don't want to think about how much what he said last night in the hall made me want to fall back on my 'stress reliever' which is a no go with all the guys

walking around my house and Ace right next door. I would die if one of them heard me getting off.

I order a pizza for everyone and take my share up to my room so I can finish my work up there. Then I call Ana and talk to her. A part of me wants to talk to her about why her brother is acting this way but another part of me worries she's going to tell me he does this with all of his conquests - burning hot until they burn out. I think if she told me I was just another name on his long list of women he did this to I would have to kill him and since he doesn't need more people trying to murder him it's probably better to just not say anything.

When I wake up it takes me a long time to realize I actually got to sleep. I laid in bed for a long time just staring up at my ceiling. I tried to read but every time I tried to read over a sex scene I had to stop because my mind would wander. It got so bad that I couldn't read a sentence without thinking about Ace and that wasn't doing me any good.

It pisses me off that I can't find comfort in my reading. It's what I have always fallen back on to give me an escape from all the real-life stuff troubling me. Now Ace has taken that away from me. What else is he going to take from me? What more do I have to give?

My leg stretches across the bed enjoying the cool sheets. I'm not sure what woke me up. To be honest it kind of pisses me off because I was sleeping so good and my bed feels so wonderful after the day I had. I run my foot up and down the sheet again and start to dose off when my door is flung open making me sit straight up in bed.

I don't have a chance to speak or ask questions even. Ace is running to me and diving into the bed spinning me around so that I am nestled up against him. He was under the covers before I could stop him. He isn't wearing anything but boxers and that's unfortunate because my nightshirt has ridden up around my waist and the only thing

keeping his penis away from me is our underwear.

His hand is covering my mouth so I wouldn't be able to make a sound if I wanted to. I don't even know if I want to. I'm so confused and addled about what is going on that I don't have a clue how to feel just yet.

"Don't say a word baby. Just lie still and I will explain everything I promise." His hand drops from my mouth to cup my chin, his whispered words scaring me more than anything.

Ace wouldn't just come running into my bedroom in the middle of the night. He wouldn't just spoon up around me. So why is he doing it now? The only reason I can think of is something's going on concerning the men trying to kill him. My body tenses at the thought.

"Shh, don't say a thing." He whispers so low I almost don't hear him. His hand leaves my waist and moves to his back. When he wraps the arm back around me it is holding a gun. It is a positive indication that I am right about the bad guys being back. The longer we lay here the more my body becomes aware of his. His cock is pressed up against the cotton covering my ass and his arm is banded around me right under my breasts. Our bare legs are tangled up with each other.

I close my eyes and try to control my breathing. Hopefully if he realizes I am breathing like I ran a marathon he will think it is out of fear. He nuzzles into my neck and takes a long, deep breath. The thought of him smelling me has me trying to fight back a moan.

"You smell good, baby." He says this louder than the first things he said to me but it's still a whisper.

I don't know if I should say thank you or not. I mean he did pay me a compliment but

he also told me not to say anything. He buries his nose back in the bend of my neck. Something wet going up my neck makes me shiver uncontrollably. I think he just licked me.

"You taste good too."

When he does it again I can't help but let a whimper escape. This time when he goes up my neck with his mouth he adds in his teeth. I have to roll my lips between my teeth and bite down to keep from moaning. His hand drops to my lower belly but not before he transfers the gun from his hand to just up under the pillow right beside us. My skin jumps under his touch. He's so close to the top of my panties.

"Ace?" I whisper it because I don't know if there is still a threat or where it is coming from or anything other than his hands on my body.

"Shh, you stay quiet like a good girl. I'm not going to do anything too sexual. Just going to explore some."

I don't understand what he means by that but when his big hand dives under the band of my panties both of my hands fly to his wrist to stop him from going any further. My body is melting down and turning into nothing but a puddle for him. I don't really want him to realize just how wet I am for him. Again he shushes me and runs his mouth over my neck in little closed-mouth kisses until he gets to my ear and his teeth bite down.

The sound of my gasp is so loud in the quiet room it is almost deafening. It gives him the opportunity to sink lower until his fingers cover my mound.

"Sasha?" it comes out sounding like a question. I don't know why I fall back on using his nickname when he has his hand cupping my pussy. It just kind of fell out.

"Fuck, you're so wet for me. I'm not going to do anything, baby. I just want to feel. Let me touch you. You trust me, don't you baby? I won't do anything more than touch."

When he uses his palm to add pressure my hips grind down and start moving. My breath is coming out in fast little sobs and pants as I try to find the friction I need. When his hand drops from my neck to my breast my back arches before I can stop myself. My body is betraying me. He isn't moving his hands or doing anything more than just holding me. It's me who is trying to ride his palm and who is arching up so more of my breast fits in his hand. It's my quick pants and fast breaths that are filling the air instead of the silence that is supposed to be filling it.

"Please!" I half moan, half whisper it out. I'm not really sure what I'm asking him to do for me. I don't know if I want him to spread my thighs apart and sink his cock inside of me so deep it hurts or if I want him to use his fingers to make me cum. I just don't want him to leave me like this.

"If I do, you have to be silent. You understand?" I nod my head quickly.

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He doesn't make me wait as his long finger slides inside and finds my clit right away. I turn my face into my pillow so I don't cry out. His fingers start to speed up and the hand cupping my breast starts to knead it with the same rhythm. When his fingers close around the tip and squeeze I can tell I am about to cum for him. I bury my head further into my pillow and scream as I grind down on his moving fingers and my world explodes. Everything behind my tightly shut eyes goes white and I can't hear anything until I come back down from my orgasm.

Then regret hits me. Oh my God, I just ask Ace if he would get me off. He just did what no one else had ever done before. He's touched places on me, inside of me that no one but me has ever touched. I watch as he takes his hand out from under the cover and sucks his fingers clean. When he groans I almost ask him to do it all over again.

"Fuck you taste good! I can't wait to eat your little pussy."

I stiffen at his words and then feel him stiffen as well. He puts his hands to his ear and presses on something. "Are they gone? You sure?"

Oh! My! God! How could I be so stupid? Of course he has an earpiece so he can keep in contact with the rest of the team so he knows when or if something is coming towards us. I just had an orgasm while everyone else could hear me. I must squeak or make some noise of distress because Ace's arms tighten up around me.

"Goons are gone." He yanks the earpiece out of his ear and lays it on the table beside my bed. "Don't worry baby. I would never let someone else hear the sound of you cumming. That's for me and me alone. I had the mic muted."

A sob trembles out of me at his words. I'm a wet mess and too relieved that no one heard anything. His arms keep holding me to him and neither one of us move. I don't know if I can move just yet.

"Don't cry, baby. You did so good cumming for me. Your little body knew exactly what to do. It was hot as hell." He grinds his cock into the softness of my ass and I can tell he is rock hard. He rolls us so I am more under him than before. He brushes my hair back from my face and rubs the tears off my cheeks before he drops his mouth down on my lips and gives me a little kiss.

"You need to get used to cumming so hard, baby. I am going to be on you morning, noon, and night, making you cum for me until you can't stand it anymore and you beg for my cock. I'm not done with you; I won't ever be done with you. And soon, baby, I'm going to have my head buried in all this hot, wet pussy."

I'm saved from answering him or even getting to reply when someone knocks on the door. It's open and I am painfully aware the person could look in if they wanted to but they are standing with their back to it. I can't tell which guy it is but I am fucking thankful they are being respectful enough to not look.

"It's all clear. Jim wants the two of you downstairs in the next five minutes." The shadow walks away, never looking back at us. I am kind of glad I have no clue which man came up here because now I don't have to worry about acting like a freak in front of just one of them. As it is I don't know how I am going to look any of them in the eye after what just happened in this bed.

I finally made it to the weekend. Thank God! I don't know how I got through that night when the enemy came to do recon. I stumbled down the stairs with Ace right beside me and sat listening to what exactly happened while Ace was giving me my first orgasm with another person in the room. I don't think I heard half of what was being said and the other half I didn't understand. But Ace didn't just let it go. He had the men explain things to me that he thought I might not understand and he would tell me little things to help me keep up with the conversation. It was almost like he was taking care of me.

A group of men had been sent to find out if Ace was staying with me and just how close we were. I guess they were looking to see if they could grab me to use me against him or something like that. That's why he came running in. They don't want the bad guys thinking they can breach the house and take me before Ace can know what is going on. They also wanted the men to know that others were here. All of them cleared out except the two men downstairs who pretended to be playing cards.

The bad guys had a thing that could spot heat signatures in a house so they could tell where we all were and even what we were doing. That part had me looking up and growing uncomfortable. Ace squeezed my knee and leaned in closer to me so he could whisper in my ear.

"I made sure they wouldn't be able to make out what we were up to. It looked like we were just sleeping or maybe making out a little bit but that is all."

I flick worried eyes up to him. He seems like he knows what he's talking about.

"I've used the tech before so I'm aware of how it would have looked. The guys have used it before too. That's why they were 'playing cards'."

I nod. It is a little unnerving that men could have things that will look inside houses right through walls. It makes me feel like I have no privacy. It makes me think I've

lost something important. This whole situation makes me feel like I lost something, freedom maybe, or something bigger -the ability to choose for myself.

Either way I am glad today is Friday and I don't have to worry about Ace picking me up from school. Those rides have become hard for me. If we are on the motorcycle then I am so horny by the time we get to where we are going I can't think straight and if we are in the car together we both seem to be too wound up to say anything. Ace has tried a couple of times to start a conversation up with me but I'm honestly not sure how to act around him anymore. I can't stop thinking about what he did to me under the covers that night.

Ana is with me tonight and planning to stay the weekend. Ace shouldn't do anything with his sister here. It has always been an unspoken rule between us that we don't drag Ana or his mother into the twisted little game that we seem to be playing. One decade I'll want him and push myself on him, the next he comes after me and I don't want him. In another ten years, I guess I'll go back to walking around naked for him and begging him to fuck me like I did that night.

My cheeks heat up at the thought of the night I slept over at Ana's and woke up late to sneak into his room and pull my nightdress over my head so he could look at me. I was so stupid. I just wanted his eyes on me; I just wanted him to see me. I didn't stop to think about what would happen if he didn't feel the same way I did.

A note comes flying through the air and lands on my notebook. I look up at Ana who is sitting with her back to the chair and her feet drawn up. Our books are out on the coffee table and even though the television is on, neither of us is watching what's on. It's pretty much just there for background noise. I'm not sure where the two men that are supposed to be keeping an eye out for anyone are - maybe the kitchen.

I unfold the note and see a message written in Ana's pretty handwriting.

You're blushing, what are you thinking about?

I quickly write back and sail the note back to her. I lie of course. I tell her I am thinking about something embarrassing that happened to me during class this week. She reads it and looks at me. I understand being like Ace is something you train for and not something you are born with but sometimes I swear that girl can read me like an open book.

The note comes sailing back to me.

I thought it might be because of all the eye candy running around. ME-Oww.

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I look over at her and give her a face. She giggles and I am once again reminded of why I love her. She can always make me smile.

Not my type. What about you? Are you distracted by one of your brother's coworkers?

As soon as she reads the note the blush hits her cheeks. I mouth my o.m.g. and ask who. Now I'm dying to find out who. She mouths back telling me to guess. Damn it! I'm no good at these kinds of games. I try to think of all the men. She throws the note back to me.

Not Jack - he's too dark. Right?

I sail it back to her. She makes a scrunched up face at what I wrote and gives me a head shake, sending it back to me.

Dante is just as dark and Remy is a flirt. I don't think either of those guys is the one you are crushing on.

After I give it back to her she tells me I am on the right track. It is neither one of them. Out of eight men, I narrowed it down by four. I think about which one of the men might have caught Ana's eye. Jim is too old and I was only briefly introduced to Gauge and he scared the shit out of me with his dead eyes. That only leaves Duncan and Steve. Both of them are here today so she had to have her eye on one of them.

My eyes widen and my mouth drops as pink washes over her face because she suspects I have guessed. I write his name down and sail the note back to her but right

before it lands Ace steps in the way. Oh shit!

"Are you girls passing notes when you are supposed to be studying?" he gives us a tisking sound with his tongue. Ana looks like she could die at any moment and for once I am thankful Ace's eyes are on me. Ana looks like she's about to cry when she jumps up to try to take the note out of her brother's hand. He doesn't really pay any attention to her, instead looking at me. "That's very naughty. I wonder what secrets you have in here."

Ana finally gets his attention as they fight for the piece of paper around the couch. Ace just barely keeping the note out of Ana's reach. He starts to unfold it and I don't think about what I am doing as I stand up on the couch and launch myself at his back. It's the only way to be tall enough to reach when he holds it up so high. I have to live by the friend code Ana and I made so many years ago. If one of us tells a secret the other will do anything to protect it. She's Russian so...secrets are important to her.

I wrap my legs around his waist and my arm around his neck and use him to push myself higher so that I can knock the paper out of his hand and into the waiting Ana's. The noise has drawn the attention of the other men, in-particularly Steve. He looks young; they put him with Ana when she is at the university because he seems to be able to blend in a little easier than some of the men who look like they kill and eat college kids before breakfast daily.

"Is this a family squabble?" He sees the piece of paper and laughs, "Oh, you been bad, cher? And here I thought you were a good girl." He gives her a charming smile dripping with his Cajun accent and I see her go all stupid over him for a minute.

A minute too long, because I finally knock the note out of Ace's outstretched arm only to have it fall on the floor and Steve dive for it. Me and Ana give each other the look that says we went from fucked with dinner first to fucked with no lube. Both of us have big eyes and both of us understand how mortifying it is going to be if Steve

reads that note.

I'm still on Ace's back and now I can take a minute to realize - I'm on Ace's back! He has his hands under my ass holding me to him and he's got a sucker sticking out of his mouth like James Dean used to have his cigarette. He's warm in between my thighs and thick, I know my thighs are going to be tender tomorrow at the stretch I have to do to keep my legs around him. He smells so fucking good too. I have to fight the urge to run my nose up his neck.

Ana reaches the note first and gives me a triumphant smile but Steve picks her up around the waist and the battle is back on. I laugh and loosen my hold I have on him with my legs. Ace lifts me higher for a moment before moving his arm in some ninja move and all of a sudden I am in front of him with my legs wrapped around him. He's carrying me like I'm a baby. The front is even nicer than the back because now I can look at his sexy face with his half-cocked smile and his laughing eyes.

"What's in the note?" his hands go to my ass but in a lot of ways it feels like old times when we used to wrestle and play with each other physically. Before we both realized the other was different.

"Not my secret to tell." I have no intention of sharing Ana's secret with him. He would forbid her to be around Steve and make Jim remove him from watching her and then she wouldn't get to be around him anymore.

"I have ways of making you talk, little girl." He brings one of his hands up to my side. He plans on tickling me until I can't breathe anymore. "I'm a highly trained soldier who's carried out more than one interrogation in my past."

I roll my eyes hard, "I'm sorry I had to unfuck my eyeballs before I could pay attention to what you were saying. Tell me how highly trained you are again," I lean closer to him, making sure my boobs brush up against his chest and whisper in his

ear. "When you're the one not smart enough to take the sucker out of your mouth when you're in a wrestling match with girls."

He shivers and all of a sudden I feel powerful like I never have before. I caused him to do that. I made him react to how close I am to him. I take the sucker out of his mouth. The thing was just barely hanging on anyway. "Somehow I'm not afraid of you." I pop his sucker in my mouth. I watch him follow the sucker with his eyes and give me another shiver.

"Hey, that's my last one until I can go to the store." He reaches for it but I take it out of my mouth and hold it over his head much like he did with the note to Ana. His hands burn into my jeans and I can feel the heat of the palm of his hands on my ass cheeks. I want this to remain innocent and fun but I can't deny how having him between my thighs makes me wet. I stretch higher and his green eyes drop from the sucker to my breasts that are at face level.

He gets a mischievous look in his eyes and I hyper-aware I should be worried. Ace has never, ever done anything in front of his sister to give us away. He wouldn't start now. Would he?

But he does. He nestles his nose in between my breasts and starts blowing bubbles on my chest. I give a shocked yelp before I am laughing too hard to hold my arm up very high at all. A shadow falls over us and when me and Ace look over we spot Jim standing in the doorway of the living room and the whole room goes quiet. I am pretty sure Ana and Steve have spotted him also.

"Can you tell me why two of my best men are assaulting the women they are supposed to be protecting? I mean I can understand if this was Remy." He looks back at me and Ace, "Or Ace." I am acutely aware of Ace's big palms under my ass, so close to where the edges of my shorts are. All he would have to do is wiggle his fingers a little bit and he would be touching me again. Not something I want to do

with so many people in the same room with us.

"I can understand if it was Ace but what the hell are you doing Steve?"

Ace tenses up under me. Both of us turn our attention to where Steve and Ana are. Steve is in between Ana's legs and Ana has her hands up under his shirt. Before I have a chance to work on breaking the tension in the room, Ace is setting me on my feet. Ana takes something out from under Steve's shirt and I am one hundred percent sure it is the note that started all of this. She runs from the room and up the stairs without saying anything.

I'm torn between going to her or staying and making sure Ace doesn't kill Steve. For the first time in almost a month, his attention isn't on me. Everyone left in the room is waiting, holding their breath to find out what happens next.

"Keep your fucking hands off my sister!" Ace is the first to break the tension by exploding the warning out.

"Hey, I understand. I didn't mean anything by it, brother. You know I wouldn't do anything like that to you."

I find myself not liking Steve as much as I did before he opened his mouth.

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"She is a beautiful girl, Ace. One day you're going to have to make peace with someone taking her home with them though."

Well, I like him again even if he doesn't have the sense God gave a goldfish.

"You shut your mouth, Roche!" Ace moves closer to Steve. Steve doesn't take the bait instead raises his arms in surrender.

"All I'm saying is she is too pretty a girl to think she isn't going to be snatched up by someone wanting a hot wife to keep them warm at night."

Steve must be suicidal. That has to be why he is pushing Ace. Ace jolts at Steve and the two men go down with fists flying. Both men are about the same height and weight and are evenly matched. It is going to be a toss-up on who is coming out the winner. They tumble into each other and all I can see are fists and shirts being grabbed. I see them roll towards an end table that my grandmother gave my mother and let out a scream that would bring down a house. Both men look at me.

"Oh my God! Not my furniture! If you two idiots want to fight take it outside." Ace yanks away from Steve and stands to look at me. His lip is busted and the skin around one of his eyes is swelling and turning black. Steve has a cut above his eye which is gushing blood so badly I don't know how he can see to fight and a bruise is blooming on his jaw.

"I would spit but I have too much respect for her." He looks over at me for a second. "That and my momma taught me better."

He turns and walks off leaving Ace looking at him with hell in his eyes. Ace isn't done.

"I want him off the assignment."

"Can't."

"What do you mean you can't? Take him off of watching my sister! Put someone else on her." Ace is so mad he has a vein popping out of his forehead now. He isn't paying any attention to me again. I don't want to be bratty but I can definitely tell I have had his attention all on me, nonstop, for weeks.

"I can't. And I won't." Jim walks off and Ace follows behind him still asking him to take Steve away from Ana. And I'm left standing in the empty living room with papers scattered everywhere and a chair flipped over wondering if this is what being with Ace is really like. Is it going to be all fun and laughs one moment, violence the next, only to be left empty and destroyed in the end? Is it worth it?

10

Ace

I'm coming back late as fuck to the house. I couldn't make Jim take Steve off my sisters protective detail and that burns me up inside. The last thing I want my baby sister to do is to fall in love with someone like me. I don't want her around someone who has killed and will kill again given the situation. I know it's fucking stupid for me to be all upset about it and to be such a fucking hypocrite about something like this but I am.

Hell, I want better for Evie. It's what kept me away from her sweet ass for so many years. Those two girls deserve better than men like me and Steve. They deserve someone unfucked up without any baggage. Were it not for my Uncle Ivan and Aunt Kat I wouldn't even think of being with Evie. I pushed her away for years, hurting her in the process. But Ivan and Kat make it work and Kat is happy with my uncle. If someone like Kat can be happy with Uncle Ivan, who's way worse than I am, then maybe someone like me can make Evie happy too.

Granted, today wasn't the best example of showing her I'm mature enough to handle big people problems. I acted like a fucking asshole. I finally chased Steve down and apologized to him. He wants my sister. I can tell by the way he talks about her and his eyes when someone else talks about her. They light up and get intense as hell. I know the look because for the past five years I've been walking around with a matching one on my face any time someone mentions Evie.

We went out together and got a drink before I went to the hanger where I keep the plane I'm restoring in. It's a vintage World War II fighter plane I've been working on for years and I am nowhere near finished. One day though, maybe, I will have it up in the sky again. I figured hitting something metal might go a long way in helping me let some shit go. But it isn't metal I want to hit. I want to be pounding into a soft body made just for me. I want to watch as my dick disappears in her fresh little pussy she's kept safe just for me.

By the time I get back and say hello to my two friends working downstairs all I can think is getting to Evie. It's not a good thing that my control is teetering dangerously close to the edge. I slowly walk to the door of her bedroom and look in. Ana is staying with her tonight. It is the only thing keeping me from going into her room, crawling in bed with her, and finding out if she is as innocent as I think she is. Only one person is lying in her bed though and I can tell by the shape that it isn't Evie. So where the hell is Evie?

I look at the bathroom door and the pull to find her is all-consuming. I walk to the door and listen. I hear what sounds like someone taking a bath and try the door. It's locked but locks won't keep a man like me out. I hear a small, sweet voice on the other side of the door.

"Um, can I help you?" Evie is in there and even though the door is locked I am getting through this door to my lady. I bend down and start picking the lock. It is really too simple a lock to offer any security. In no time I have the lock popped and the door open. I slip in and see her back is to me. I'm not sure if she realizes I've gotten in yet but she soon will.

The tub is something Evie's momma splurged on; huge, round, and easily able to fit two people in it. It is in the middle of the room with a shower on one side and the toilet on the other. The tub is surrounded by a curtain which cuts off a good part of the visibility towards the door so she might not have seen me yet. I walk quietly towards her hoping to get to her before she sees me and screams. I bend down behind her just as she turns her head.

The little yelp I stop with my palm would have been enough to wake the whole house. She stiffens up for just a minute until she realizes it is me who has her.

"Relax, baby, don't be too loud. The last thing we want is for everyone in the house to come running in here and see this glorious little body."

Her arms had already gone up to her chest to try to block my view of her breasts and her knees have come up out of the water so I can't see anything else either. She has her hair piled on top of her head and some of the candles that are spread out all over the room are lit. The light is dancing across her face making her even more beautiful than normal. All of her creamy skin is on display for me and my mouth is actually watering with the urge to lick and suck all over her.

"Ace, what are you doing here?" She turns her head to look at me.

"I live here now, baby. Or did you forget that."

"I meant what are you doing in the bathroom...with me!?" she hisses out.

I run my hands up her arms and over her wet shoulders so I can squeeze and massage them for her. I run my lips over the smooth line of her neck and nip at her ear with my teeth. She shivers and I don't know if it is the massage or the nibble that has her worked up.

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She turns her head back, straightening up her neck so my hands can rub harder. A moan slips out of her mouth and makes my cock drip for her. I take one hand and yank my shirt off over my head. I throw the thing somewhere behind me, completely unconcerned with where it goes. All I care about is Evie and making her feel good.

Her skin is so smooth and warm. I have no idea how I kept my hands off of her for so many years. As I go lower and lower down her shoulders I eventually reach her cleavage but she doesn't stop me. God, her breasts are even softer than the rest of her. The farther I go down the more she leans her head back giving me a view to die for. She doesn't realize her arms have loosened and I can make out the cherry tips of her nipples and the pink ring around them. If she knew I am sure she wouldn't be so relaxed right now. Her eyes are closed showing me how much she trusts me. It's something that makes me feel high, knowing that she trusts me this much.

"Me and you have so much history, don't we, baby? You remember that time you and Ana thought it would be smart to try to sneak into the city without anyone knowing so you could go to a club?"

Her lips curve up in a smile at the memory.

"Do you remember who they sent to bring you girls back?"

"You, they sent you." She whispers but I hear her, our heads right next to each other.

"And what did I do when I found you," I whisper back, making the little hairs around her temple dance.

"You threatened to kill the guy I was dancing with." Her voice is coming out in little huffs as I run my hands around her breasts so I can lift them in the palm of my hands before completely covering them.

"What did I tell him, baby?" her arms have completely fallen away from her now and her knees have sunk back down in the water.

"That we were yours and that anyone who touched us would die."

"Not we...," I wait for her eyes to open and look at me, "just you." One of my hands runs under the water and down her belly. "Even then I knew you belonged to me and only me. Even when you weren't supposed to, when you were still too young to realize what it felt like to have a man between your legs and inside of you. I wanted to be the one breaking your little cherry in two."

God, having the freedom to talk dirty to Evie after years of holding back is like just taking off and landed some test plane that no one else has ever heard of. She makes me feel like I did when I was up in the air shooting at bad guys and saving people.

"Did you save it for me, baby? It's okay if you moved on. It isn't going to stop me from claiming you."

I'm not dick enough to think that someone as beautiful as Evie wouldn't have a love life. She's a gorgeous woman who has needs that I wasn't able to meet. I don't hold her past against her at all. But if she doesn't have a past, it means I have to slow down and take a softer approach than I would if she has one.

Her eyes are large when they meet mine. She looks so fucking innocent like a Disney princess. I hold my breath waiting for her to answer me.

"I'm...," her eyes close and a blush hits her cheeks, "a virgin, Ace."

And I just came! There was no help for it. As soon as the word virgin passed her lips my dick was shooting off.

"I've never been with anyone." She sounds almost worried like I might not want her because of it.

"Can I touch?" her brows furrow in confusion about what I am asking her. My voice came out deep and rough so maybe that might have something to do with it but I think it is more that she is just that innocent. "Can I touch you? See if I can find and touch your innocence? Don't worry, baby. I won't break it and I will never hurt you."

I want her to tell me she wants it. I haven't done anything other than hold her in my hand but when she looks at me and licks her lips before giving me a nod I stand taking my hands away from her. I can tell she doesn't understand what is going to happen. Not until my hands go to my belt. Her cute little mouth pops open in the perfect pink 'o' when she realizes what I am doing.

"Oh, um, Ace, maybe, um, we should wait." I'm in the middle of shucking my boxers when her words make me stop. If she has doubts then we need to pause this and figure out what would make her not have those doubts. "There are people here."

Her whisper hisses out and I realize why she wants to hold back. This isn't about being afraid of me or worried about our first time together. She just doesn't want everyone in the house knowing I have my hands on her. I can't hold back the smile that blooms on my face as I drop the last of my clothes on the floor by the tub.

Her eyes are big and round as she takes me in. Six months can't do shit to the body being in the military gave me. Not to mention I still workout daily because you never know when someone is going to be sent to kill you - naturally. I realize I am probably bigger than she is used to seeing. Or maybe she hasn't ever seen one.

"Sit up." She does as I tell her and I slide my body in behind her. The water in the tub gets higher and floats dangerously close to the rim. I pull her back by her shoulders until her back is nestled against my front. As soon as our skin touches both of us moan causing her to giggle and me to chuckle. "It's good to hear you laugh, baby. I missed it."

I'm not lying to her. Over the years of not hearing it I felt like I was doing without something pertinent to my happiest and I didn't know until just now.

"I haven't had much to laugh about." She's talking about her mom but she might as well be talking about us too. It wasn't just me who lost us when I pulled away. She lost too. I nuzzle my face into her neck and run my hands down her body. Kissing her makes my split lip burn but I'm not about to stop. I love her against me and want more. I want her slipping down over my cock and encasing me in all that softness.

I cup both of her breasts in my hands rubbing my thumbs over her hard little points. She gasps and pushes herself into my hands telling me she wants more. I want to play with her tits for a little while so when I rub her little pussy she'll be good and worked up. Twisting the nubs gently and plucking at them has her hips dancing for me. I have to remind her to be quiet.

"Not too loud baby. Even if it is just Ana here with us I still don't want anybody to hear the sound of you coming undone for me. That's all for me, isn't it. Tell me, baby. Tell me the sound of you cumming is mine alone."

"Yes! Oh God, Ace, yes! Just you." She whispers out between her clenched teeth. My hand drops down her body and I rub her right where she needs it the most but not on the inside like I did the last time I had my hands on her. I want to work her up until she is so lost to the pleasure that she is begging me for it.

"Ace! God, I need more! Harder. Do it harder! Please!" she moans and I have to take

my hand off her breast so I can put it over her mouth when I dip my finger inside of her tight lips and stroke over her clit. Her hips push into my touch and she cries out into the palm of my hand as her body explodes with her climax and her tiny body shakes. Water has sloshed over the edge of the tub and I'm going to have to be careful getting her and me out without killing both of us. Before I pull us out of this tub though I am getting my feel of her virgin pussy.

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I tease the edge of her opening before using one of my fingers to sink into her tight sheath. I wasn't lying when I said I was going to have to break her in. I struggle to work just one of my fingers inside of her even a little bit. She starts to tense up on me, something that isn't going to make this any easier. I bite down on her shoulder and give her nipple a tug to take her mind off of what is going on under the water. She cries out and I use the chance to slide in a little further.

My cock has been leaking cum up her back this entire time. Now feeling how tight her cunt is makes me so damn ready to fill her full that the water is going to be more spunk than anything else if I don't get control over myself.

"Let me in, sweetheart. Stop tensing up and let me take my feel."

"I don't know how to." Her voice comes out strained and I can tell by how she is acting that this is all new to her. I take my finger away and she whimpers thinking I'm going to leave her. "Please don't. I'll try."

"Not your job to relax you, sweetheart. It's mine." I move around her, sloshing more water over the rim. I rise up out of the water until I can sit right in front of her the way I need to. I take her by the hips enjoying the fuck out of how slippery and smooth her skin is to the touch. I raise her hips out of the tub until her bare pussy is at the top of the water. She gasps and grabs onto the sides of the tub. I don't think she realizes what I am about to do yet.

"No matter what I do, don't scream." She gives me a look of utter confusion before I drop my mouth down on her and start eating the hell out of her little pussy. "Put your feet on the rim of the tub and spread your legs wide." Her tiny feet go to the slippery

edge of the tub on either side of me and I go back to licking and sucking her cunt. She is delicious - tart and tangy but sweet too. I spread her lips apart with the hand not holding her up out of the water so that I can go further in, wanting as much of her in my mouth as I can get.

Her hands tighten on the lip of the tub and her head is thrown back so that her hair drifts out in the water. She's fucking beautiful. If this is the only reason I lived through every gunshot, knife wound, or being shot down more times than I can count than it will have been worth something good. I would make it my life's goal to bring her pleasure if I could eat her pussy. Her hips are doing a fine job of working her up and down on my face, riding me. She's not aware of what she's doing, completely lost in her own pleasure that she doesn't realize she's fucking my face. I take the hand spreading her apart and move to her tight opening before slipping in.

Her moan is too loud. Someone is going to hear us but I'm too far gone to give a fuck. My dick is so hard and so fucking needy that it's a color I've never seen it before and each desperate moan that comes out of her mouth makes me leak and drip. I work my finger in until I come to her barrier. I back off some; I don't want to take her fucking virginity with my finger. No. My cock waited long enough for it, it belongs to my dick.

I hook my finger up until I find the bundle of nerves that seems to be almost vibrating for my touch. It doesn't take long before her thighs start to tremble around my head.

"Oh God, oh God, Sasha!" Her toes curl and her feet arch almost as much as her back and then my mouth is flooded with her desire. Her body goes completely limp and I have to catch her before she splashes back down into the water and makes a bigger mess than I already have. I pull her into me so that she is lying on top of me, her head tucked under my chin and then I use her sweet body and my hand to find my own release before I die from blue balls.

It doesn't take me long at all. Hearing her scream the nickname she gave me is enough but so is feeling her body against my own. Poor Evie is so exhausted I don't think she even realizes what I am doing. When my cock has emptied but hasn't gone down since it can't be in her tight, little body, I wash her and then me before I reach for the towel she laid out. I throw it on the floor and use my shirt to mop up the rest. Then I step out and grab us two more towels. I carry her into my bedroom and lay her on my bed.

She's just barely awake but she still gives me the world's most beautiful smile. I dry us both off and work on getting her hair dried before I roll her over and crawl in behind her. This might be the first night since I retired that I feel whole again. I bury my face in her neck and hair and fall asleep with her scent wrapped around me and my body wrapped around her.

11

Evie

Waking up naked is a new experience for me. I don't wake up until late either which is not like me. But then again I don't normally get eaten out in my bathtub within an inch of my life and pass out in a climax comma either so I guess this is a weekend full of firsts. When I wake up Ace isn't in bed with me but I can tell he spent the night wrapped around me because at some point he woke me up to rub himself in between my thighs and cum on my...my hands drift down and find the evidence of just where he came.

I'm not only wet between my legs but also on top of my mound all the way up to my belly button. It couldn't have been too long ago that he was here because the sheets haven't had a chance to soak up what he left behind. I don't have any clothes in this

room so I'm not sure how in the fuck I'm going to go back across the hall and dress without Ana knowing something is definitely up with me and her brother.

I grab the sheet and sit up. When I look around I see a neatly folded pile of my clothes lying in a chair by the window. I slide off the bed and go to them. A note is lying on top of them.

Didn't want you walking around naked...not until the guys leave anyway. See you soon.

I throw my clothes on in record time and crack the door open just a little to listen for Ana. I don't want to be coming out of a room her brother sleeps in when she finds me this morning. Thankfully I don't run into her until I'm downstairs. She's sitting at the table with Ace sitting right across from her and my damn traitorous cheeks give me away, flaming hot and red with the blush I can't hold back.

As soon as I make eye contact with Ana I can tell she knows. She gives me a big, broad smile that lights up her whole face.

"So...I woke up and you weren't in bed this morning." I try to ignore her comment and make my way over to the island so I can make myself a plate of food. I'm not much for cooking but these guys never miss a meal and they eat a lot and since they've been here my kitchen - and my belly - has been full.

"No matter where I looked I couldn't find you." Damn, she isn't going to stop. "Finally Ace came downstairs with a big, happy grin on his face and told me you hadn't been snatched in the night, you just spent the night with the other Sokolov."

As much as I would like to act cool and collected right now I fail epically. My plate would have hit the floor if Ace hadn't been right behind me reaching around to catch it. "She caught me coming out of the room this morning and apparently I smell like

you." He gets closer to me and whispers to me, "Personally I think she's part bloodhound but I wouldn't tell her that to her face."

He takes my plate completely out of my hands and gives me a kiss before taking my arm and steering me to the seat in between him and Ana. "I didn't tell her but I wasn't about to deny it or pretend it isn't happening either."

"AHHH!" Ana all but shouts out. "This is awesome! My best friend and my brother. I mean I don't really want to think about you all having sex 'cause that makes me want to vomit a little bit but it doesn't stop this from being completely awesome! Besides it isn't like you two can deny it with the matching hickeys you all are sporting." She falls into a fit of giggles as I turn my head to see if she is right about the hickeys. Sure enough on Ace's neck, I can make out a faint bruise right below his ear. My hand goes to my own neck, to the side he was biting and sucking on causing Ana to giggle some more.

I spend the day trying to dodge questions from Ana and listening to her laugh about me having a crush on her brother. It's sweet that she is so excited about this but all I can think about is what is going to happen if this all blows up in my face. What then? Will she still be my friend or will she feel pressured to end our relationship too? If this thing goes sideways with Ace I don't just get my heart broken by one Sokolov but by all of them.

By the end of the day, I have talked myself into telling Ace what we did was a momentary lapse in judgment and we can't do it again. It's the only way I can be sure to save what I have without losing everything. He meets me in the kitchen right before me and Ana are getting ready to go upstairs and watch movies and binge on pizza. I really wish he wasn't smiling at me like he is. I really wish this was easier than what it is. I wish a million things that I can't have.

"I think we need to slow down. I can't do this." I word vomit the smile right off his

face. He is on me before I can turn and run away.

"What's going on? Did someone say something to you about us?"

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"No, who would say something to me? What does that even mean?"

"I don't know, it just seemed like maybe someone said something because you definitely didn't want to slow down last night. I was just wondering why you want to slam the breaks on all of a sudden."

I don't know how to tell him that I'm scared. I'm not even sure if I want him to know how badly I want what he's trying to give me. He has family in this world and I don't have anyone but Ana and his mom and even him. Even during the time we tried to keep our distance from one another I knew he would be there for me if I needed him. But if we break up that will all be gone.

"I need time to think about things. I just..." I can't finish.

"Time to think about what? I'm all about giving you time, baby, but not to let you talk yourself out of you and me which is what I think might be happening."

I forget sometimes that he knows me so well. "I just need to stop this. I can't anymore. It was all an accident. I'm sorry." I jerk my arm out of his hold and run up the stairs before he can say anything else or ask me any more questions.

By the time I'm at the top of the stairs I'm a mess of tears and snot. I took the smile off his face and all because I'm a coward and an idiot. I have to go to the bathroom to get myself under control before I meet with Ana. I text her and tell her I'm going to be a minute as I try to control the flow of tears. God! If it hurts this bad to break things off with him now what would it be like if it was later on in our relationship? It would kill me.

I come out of the bathroom and can only hope that I don't look as bad as I think I do. When I look in the mirror one last time before I leave I can tell I've been crying but maybe Ana won't realize something is wrong as soon as she looks at me. Before I can take two steps to my room arms wrap around my waist picking me up until my feet don't touch the ground and a big palm is over my mouth. For just a split second fear rips through me until I take a breath and recognize Ace's scent.

What the hell does he think he's doing? He carries me into the room he's staying in and uses his foot to shut the door. He lets me go so he can lock the door. I turn around to give him a piece of my mind when he stops me by taking the back of my head in his hand and pulls me into him. His lips crash down on mine, his tongue pushes inside my mouth before I can fully understand what is going on.

I try. I try to hold on to the plan I have. I try to remind myself to stay strong and that this has to be done. All of it does no good and I fall into him and lose myself.

"I'm not letting you run away because you're scared, baby." He starts walking me backwards to the bed. His words make me gasp. He knows exactly what's wrong. Why I am pulling away. "You got in your own head didn't you? Scared yourself. What was it...Ana? Mom?"

I try to pull back from him because he's too close to the truth, too close to what is going on in my head. "Ace...,"

"Don't, baby. Don't take this away from me because of your fear of us not lasting. Don't make me do without you after years and years of being stupid and denying myself, and you, what should have happened the day you turned eighteen." He takes my face between his hands so he can study me. I don't hide what I am feeling very well. If I were a spy I would be dead within a day. "Forget Mom and Ana. They have nothing to do with this, with us."

"How can you say that?" I pull free of his grasp and duck under his arms. "They have everything to do with this. If we don't work out you just go on with your life, you still have your sister and your mom but I won't have anybody anymore." I shut my mouth before the sob that is nearly choking me can burst out. It's bad enough the sting of tears burn my eyes and any minute now I'm going to be a leaky mess again.

"That's bullshit! And we both know it. My Mom would rip a hole in my ass a mile wide if she thought I was hurting you and Ana wouldn't speak to me ever again. I left and you stayed. You were here for Christmases and birthdays. They are more attached to you than they are me. So your reasons are bull shit!" He pushes his hands in his hair like he might pull it out at any minute.

"You were keeping us safe! It's not like you just left everyone to find yourself or some shit. You had a job to do. They understand that. So your reasons are bullshit."

"Yeah, and what good did it do anyone. My mom's house got shot up, I put all of you in danger, and....," he stops so abruptly I don't know if he's looking for more negative things to go on his list or if he's keeping one from me. I think it might be the latter.

"And?" I push because I have to know.

"And I still don't have you. I did the one thing I never wanted to do - bring this shit to your door; all the dark and the death and the danger - and I still don't have you. So what the fuck did it all matter? What was I fighting for?"

Ace never wanted this part of his life to touch me. The fear, the worry, the stress were all things he tried to keep away from me by pushing me away from him. "You didn't want me to leave that night."

I don't know if it's a question or a statement. I lean more towards statement. One I should have seen before now. "Fuck no! It nearly broke me sending you away but I

couldn't offer you a life where I might not come home one day."

The sob wins and escapes but I can't worry about that. All I can see is Ace and all that he put up with to keep us safe while he did what he thought was right. I'm not sure which one of us moves first but both of us clash together in a flurry of kisses and hands yanking at clothes. His shirt is gone and tossed somewhere behind us. My shirt is ripped off of me, literally. Ace's big hands yank on either side of it until it is nothing more than rags he can jerk off of me. My pants are gone and he's ripping his belt out of the loops before my brain catches up to what we are doing.

"Ace," I have to talk around his kiss because he won't let me pull back too far, "we should slow down." He growls at the words. "I'm not saying stop, I just, um..." But if I wanted slow and easy I shouldn't have poked him with the idea of us not happening.

"We did slow, years and years of slow." He's backed me up to the bed again and this time I fall back on it with him following me down. His jeans are off and we're both in our underwear rubbing against each other and moaning at the sensations. He rears back and yanks the sides of my panties and they give much like my shirt did. "Fuck you have such a pretty, little pussy, baby. So soft and tight for me."

I can feel his hot gaze on me. His eyes are roving over my pink parts and making me wetter knowing he's looking at me. He's got my bra unlatched and off of me in no time. His mouth falls on mine like he's starved and I'm his last meal. His mouth drawing on first one and then the other has me moaning and pushing myself up so he can take in more of my boob.

I have always hated my breasts, they've gotten in the way a lot and I was such a tomboy growing up that it felt like they were more of a con than a pro but with Ace, for the first time I am super happy I have them. He seems to like them a lot. And I love the fact that he likes to touch and nibble on them. They seem to have a direct line to my clit built-in because when he is playing with them or sucking them I get so

wet and needy for him.

He runs his hands up my body before coming up to kiss me again. It's a hungry kiss that makes me achy and leaves me restless. His hand cups my pussy and I am so needy for him that I orgasm before he can really do anything more. He drives me crazy in the best ways. My body knows his and gets me ready for him without him ever having to do anything. He doesn't take his mouth away from mine so when I cry out the sound is eaten up by his kiss.

"Fuck, you're beautiful when you cum." His words make me feel sexy and beautiful. I'm not some dorky little kid who only hangs out with his sister. I feel like he sees me for me.

"I want to see what you look like when you cum."

"Baby," he doesn't stop kissing me long enough to finish but it sounds desperate. He sounds desperate. Open-mouthed kisses trail down my body as he makes his way to my bare pussy. His mouth is on me before my body can settle down from the first orgasm. The man's tongue should be registered as a lethal weapon. It swipes up my middle before lingering on my clit. He puts just the right amount of pressure on it to make my thighs start shaking all over again. I throw my head back and let the sensations take me away. I've been waiting for so long for him to notice me and now he is here eating my pussy. There is definitely a sense of unrealness about it.

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Ace pushes one of his fingers inside of me and this time I can tell my body takes it better than in the tub. He can tell too because he tries for two. Two burns but I fight through the stretch so that I can take him. His mouth is still on my clit helping me, working me up and getting me excited. My pussy stretches to take his two fingers with some ease finally.

"I don't want to try for three because I'm afraid I'll stretch you too much and break it without meaning to." When he works his way back up I want to cry.

"Why are you stopping?" Is he a mad man? Doesn't he realize I'll explode if he doesn't finish what he's promised with his mouth?

He uses one of his free hands to push me back down on the bed where I sat up on my elbows when he stopped. His giant palm runs up my chest and settles around my neck. The tip of his cock brushes against my overly stimulated skin. I have to gasp to find any breath. I might come apart for him again just from him brushing it against me. The shaft and head of his cock is getting wetter and wetter because of me.

He transfers his weight to his arm and watches me the entire time he pulls back for one more long, slippery ride back but this time he doesn't stop when his cock dips into my opening like he did before. This time he keeps pushing until the stretch from his head is too much. I have to put my hands on his thighs to stop him from going any further.

"Fuck, you're big! I don't know if all of it will go in without killing me."

He chuckles and because we are connected even if just barely I can feel it through my

body. "I'll fit, sweetheart, remember I was made for you and you were made for me and both of us were made to do this. A lot of this." He buries his head in my shoulder and starts whispering Russian words to me, some I know and some I don't. He says the word love a couple of times but I can't concentrate on how he is using it.

I want to believe he is telling me he loves me but even if he is saying he loves what I am doing for him I will take it. He gives a steady shove that causes the muscles that surround him to finally give and his head pops in. He doesn't waste his gain and slides a few more inches in me before he stops. I can tell by the way he's breathing and how tense he is that he's at my barrier.

"Aw, fuck! You just wait on me, baby. I'll make this so good but first I have to do something." He straightens up and wraps his hand around his cock. There is still so much of him left that he can still reach his fist around himself. He jerks himself off while waiting to take my innocence. His thumb of his other hand goes to my clit and starts to rub me causing my own orgasm that was denied me to come raging back.

"I just want to soak that cherry in my cum before I break through. If I hadn't been so stupid I would have done this a couple of times before I actually busted it open. Give me your cum, baby. Give me what I need!" both his hands are moving so fast it's hard for me to see them and I'm so close that I wouldn't care where he unloaded in me as long as he keeps doing what he's doing long enough for me to reach my climax.

"Don't stop, Sasha. God, please don't stop again." My back straightens up and I push up with my heels as my toes curl; it's so good.

"Never, Evie. I'll never stop. I'll be on you morning, noon, and night filling this little pussy full. It will be the last thing I do before I die an old man in our bed and I'll die with a smile on my face. I'll never let you go, milaya."

Him calling me sweetheart in Russian is enough to push me over the edge and I give

in to my orgasm letting him have it. I would give him anything, everything. Having an orgasm with him inside of me is different from having one on my own. The more I tighten up around him the more I can feel him moving inside of me and the friction is amazing. I'm lost in my own ecstasy but the moment his hot jets of cum spray inside of me I know.

Both of us moan and Ace doesn't shrink but instead thrusts inside of me all the way, breaking through my hymen and touching my cervix in a matter of seconds. The pain wasn't as intense as I thought it would be.

"You took my cock so well, like a champ, baby. I'm so proud of you. This amazing body was made for me. God you feel good, so fucking good."

He's right; I have never felt this good in my life. Having him inside me, thrusting in and out is a feeling like none other. It makes me feel almost drugged. High. This is a high I could get used to having for the rest of my life. This is something I am going to become addicted to - him!

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Ace

Fucking into Evie is the best thing I have ever done in my life. Even in the air, I have never felt so free and so excited. Her pussy is so tight around my cock that it is almost too much - almost. I let her get used to me diving into her this way before I change our position slightly. I hook her legs over my forearms and slide even deeper than I was. She gasps and then moans as she grinds her pussy on my dick.

Evie is fucking hot. I knew she was sexy and smart but I had no idea that her passion

would match my own. She truly is my equal. She was made for me.

I reach around so that I can play with her clit while I ram into her hard. She tightens up on me and I can tell she is close. Her little body squeezes the cum from my balls but I don't want to give in and let this be over yet. I want to make it last. I pull out of her before she can find her release and roll her to her belly. I lift her hips and when she starts to come up on her hands I push the top part of her body down on the bed so just her hips are sticking up. I want to go fucking deep when I unload in her.

I slide back in but it's still a fight to get inside. She's tight, maybe more now that I've been in her and she's swollen. I push all the way in and wait for her body to adjust. She pulls away from me but I grip her hips to stop her. "Shh, it's alright. I'll go slow...for a while." I can tell I am hitting the bottom, right up against her cervix. I won't last long feeling it kiss the tip of my cock so I wrap my arm around her and find her clit. She is so wet she is dripping down her thighs.

Her thighs start to shake and she starts making little mewling sounds that tell me she is close. God I feel like a fucking king lunging into her and curled around her body like I am.

"Sasha, Sasha, oh my God! I'm so close."

"I know baby; you're squeezing up around my cock. I can feel you tightening up around me. You're going to be a good girl for Sasha and cum aren't you, milaya." I smack her clit and put more pressure on it as I lean into her and go deeper than I ever have before.

"Oh God! YES!"

She comes up on her hands and I can see her in the mirror over the chest of drawers. Her eyes are unfocused and her cheeks are flushed. Her lips are swollen from my

kisses. I'm pushing into her so hard her breasts are bouncing back and forth with every thrust. Our lovemaking looks wild and rough. It's the most beautiful thing I have ever witnessed. I wind my hand in her hair and pull her face back as her body erupts in pleasure and her sweet little pussy convulses around me.

"You belong to me, Evie. I'm never letting you go! Ever!" I allow my body to release the pent up cum into her waiting body, shooting my seed deep into her. I hold her close in my arms. Her head flops back on my shoulder and her wild red hair goes everywhere.

Both of us collapse onto the bed and I roll so I'm not crushing her. I rearrange her where she is hugging my side and wait for her to say something. When she doesn't, I look down and notice she is breathing soft and deep and sleeping hard. Pride goes through me at having worn my girl out and giving her what she needs to find rest.

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This shit with the assassins isn't over and the danger is still high but for tonight I find peace in the arms of the lady I love. Nothing can be better than that. I move my hand down to rearrange her leg and my junk. I run my hand down my dick and realize how wet it is, not just from my cum but from hers as well.

Fuck! I wasn't thinking of wrapping it up when I fucked Evie. I don't even know how she will handle the fact that I took her bareback and dumped so much cum in her fertile little womb that there is a better chance of her being pregnant right now than her not being. I want a family and I know one hundred percent I want that with Evie but will she be alright with starting one now. And I can't let my baby come into this world with so much danger lurking around the corner. Something is going to have to be done - a message sent to whoever is behind this.

I need to fix this mess and make Evie fall in love with me enough that she wants to stay with me forever and give me that house full of babies. I reach for my phone and shoot off a text. Things have changed and Jim needs to understand that. He needs to realize there is a timeline for taking these fucks out. When I get a message back I finally allow myself to fall asleep with Evie's warm, soft body wrapped around mine.

I wake up alone. The only evidence Evie was in my bed is the little dot of red blood in the center of the bed. A really shitty archaic part of me wants to hang it from the upstairs window showing everyone around that she is mine but I don't think Evie would look very fondly on that. I dress as quickly as I can and make my way over to her room but all I find in there is my sister sacked out across the bed. I cut the television off so it doesn't wake her up and close the door back to let her sleep some

more.

Where the hell is my Evie and why is she not where I left her? My heart pounds faster in my chest. If this is what Uncle Ivan went through when he was worried about Aunt Kat I don't understand how he survived it. I might die from this. I have never been this anxious before in my life.

I take the stairs so fast I nearly fall down the last three steps and into the kitchen. Standing in front of the stove wearing sleep shorts and one of my t-shirts is the best thing I have ever seen. The morning sun is hitting her hair and making it glow like a fucking halo around her. I think I hear my ancestors singing about visions of the Holy Mother and all that. She looks like a religious experience to me.

She turns and slides pieces of bacon out of the pan and onto a paper towel covered dish. I'm not sure if she's noticed me yet so I just stare at her, taking all of her in. She's humming. I wonder if that is because of me and what we did last night. God, I hope I can make her that happy.

Not being able to deny myself any longer I go to stand behind her and wrap my arms around her waist. She lets out a little yelp before settling back down into my arms and clicking the stove eye off. I nuzzle her neck leaving sweet kisses all along it.

"You weren't in bed this morning." It comes out sounding exactly how it is, disappointed and a little pouty if I'm being honest.

"Was I supposed to stay? Maybe you should do it harder and I won't be able to leave next time."

Oh, that saucy minx.

"Really? Maybe I'll just cuff you to the bed instead and keep you in there all day

having my way with you. Is that what you want? Me making sure you won't be able to do anything else but me?" She shivers and my cock gets harder. It was already hard when I saw her in the kitchen making breakfast.

"And here I was being nice and making you breakfast when all you want is sex."

"Oh it's not all I want baby." I roll my hips so she can feel my cock and how hard I am. "But for now, I'll take my snack and then breakfast."

I pull her shorts to the side and slide my fingers through her slit. She's wet for me. Being like this with Evie is more than I thought I would ever have. I can't wait until this is the norm for us - Sunday mornings with breakfast and a quick fuck right before and in the afternoon slow sweet love that takes hours. Yeah, I could totally get used to this.

I rub her clit before I spin her and sit her on the counter right beside the stove. I hit my knees and pull on her shorts again. She's not wearing underwear under them so it makes it easier for me to get right to her wet center. I put her foot on the opposite side of the counter so she is spread wide for me and take a deep breath of her before I bury my face in her sweet cunt.

Evie's head falls back and she grabs on to the little knobs that stick out of the cabinets. "Don't make a sound, baby. I don't want the men in the living room to hear how sweet you sound when you cum."

She covers her mouth with both of her hands and I go back to eating her pussy. God damn, I could spend the rest of my life with my face buried in Evie's cunt. I hold her legs open so she doesn't try to close them when she starts to cum. Even though she is covering her mouth I can still hear her little noises of pleasure and it has my cock dripping for her. I work two of my fingers inside of her and find that special spot that makes her go crazy for me.

She pulls one hand down from her mouth to dig it into my hair and the feel of her tugging on me just makes me want to cum harder. There are a lot of things we have to talk about but for right now all I want to do is give her pleasure. I work my mouth over her clit as I use my other hand to play with her asshole. Just lightly rubbing it so she knows nothing is off-limits for us. She squeals into her palm so loudly that I can hear her. I stop and give her a little nip on the inside of her thigh to remind her to quieten down before I go back to eating her again.

It doesn't take long before she is cumming around my fingers and riding my tongue to completion. I stand so fast I'm dizzy but don't stop until I have my cock out and slide into her warm, wetness. Both of us let out a loud sigh as we connect in a deep, intimate way. It's still a fight to get into her and I worry about hurting her.

"Tell me if I hurt you."

She whispers back, "I have no doubt you will cause me pain but right now you feel fantastic."

I don't like that she thinks I will hurt her. I know she is talking about her heart and it pisses me off and makes me sad.

"Evie," I stop and look at her, "I am not going to hurt you ever again, baby. Making you happy and keeping you safe is the only thing that matters to me now. You are my new career."

I pump into her as she wraps her legs and arms around me. Her scent wraps around me and makes me move my hips faster. Feeling her little pants of breath on my cheek is yet another added stimulation that goes straight to my cock. "Ace."

"When I'm in you, you call me Sasha. You are the only person who gets this from me and you are the only one that's ever going to call me that again. This is just ours."

"Sasha, fuck...I'm close. So close. Feels so good, baby." I turn my head to take her mouth in a fierce kiss that turns into a melody of moans and sighs as I dampen her scream when her body tightens around mine. I follow close behind her shooting yet another load into her unprotected womb. Damned if I can pull out though. As our kiss ends and we stare into each others' eyes it doesn't matter one way or another, I will love her no matter what happens and she will be a wonderful mother when the time comes. One way or another our family will happen, whether now or later.

"This has to be a health code violation or something. I think I'll skip breakfast and just take a coffee if that's not too much trouble." Hearing Jim's voice makes Evie stiffen up in my arms and I can see her cheeks bleed red. I slip my cock out of her and pull her shorts back in place before I even think of putting my dick up. Once both of us are decent I stand back and see Jim sitting at the table waiting.

Evie

Getting caught fucking in my kitchen by Ace's boss is maybe one of the most embarrassing things that has happened to me in a long time. I don't think it can get any worse. Maybe if his mom had walked in, but that's about the only way. Ace doesn't seem fazed by it at all. Other than being slightly pissed that Jim might have seen me naked or heard me moaning. Two things I refuse to think about.

Ace pulls me down to sit in his lap when I'm done bringing them a cup of coffee to the table. I have no idea why Jim is here. I have only met the man a hand full of times but usually, when he shows up it is because one of his men has found something or something big is about to happen. Two things I'm not sure I am ready for today.

"You find out who it was yet?" I'm shocked that Ace sounds like he was expecting him to come today.

"Yep."

"I figured you did. It doesn't usually take you long." I feel like the two of them are talking in some kind of code that is purposefully designed to go over my head and I don't like it.

"Figure what out? Did you know Jim would be here today?"

"Yes, I did. I want to find out who has the order out on our team and who is working

on it so I can put this shit to rest, Evie."

Why now? Why does he want to move so quickly now? A couple of days ago he was fine letting them make the first move so why now? Is he tired of living here with me? Does he need his space? It certainly didn't feel like he needed his space just a few minutes ago. But Ace is like a cat sometimes - he needs that freedom that comes with doing and being his own thing.

"Don't look so upset, baby. I want to get this done and put it behind us. Things have changed and I want this gone so you don't have to worry about the threat anymore." He mentioned change so maybe he is just tired of sitting and waiting for something to happen. "This isn't how I want our life together to start and it isn't how I want to bring a kid into the picture either."

Kid? Kid. He mentioned children. It takes me a whole minute to process that he is talking about wanting to start a family with me. The man who leaves at the drop of a hat and who can't settle down wants to have children. With me. He keeps talking like he's not dropped a bomb on me.

"It won't be good for you if you are pregnant to have to put up with this shit and I just want things done."

"Why are you thinking about kids now?" I don't know where to start with my questions but this one seems as good as any.

"Because, Baby," his eyes widen in an expression that says I should be able to tell why but I'm not following. His hand drops to my stomach and a sinking feeling begins to form in the pit of my stomach. "I took you bare both times."

How could I be so stupid! Thank God he whispers low enough that I don't think Jim can hear our conversation. Enjoying what Ace did to my body made me go

completely blind to the biggest concern I have right now. I jump up from his lap. "No! We are not having babies!"

His eyebrows shoot up so high they go missing under his hairline. His green eyes look at me and take me in. "You're just saying that because you're scared. I know. I'll fix this so you won't have to worry about someone coming to hurt you or our babies. I will."

"No!" God damn it, why can't he see that I can't start this family with him and then lose it. It doesn't even matter about what is happening with his career right now. Anything can take someone away from me; fires, car crashes...assassins, sure. "I don't want a family. I don't want...I don't want that. I thought..." Fuck I'm not sure what I thought because I wasn't thinking. All I could process was I had something I had wanted for years finally.

"Are you kidding me right now? What happened to you wanting to start a family with me so badly you can almost see the babies swinging in tire swings from the tree out back?"

"That was ages ago. That person doesn't exist anymore." I spit the words at him. At one time I wanted children so my mother and his could play with them but my mom is gone and so is that dream for me. I refuse to love someone so much it breaks me when they go.

I can tell by the look on his face that I must have said the last out loud. "So what the hell was last night? If you don't love me than what the fuck were you doing in my bed?"

I can't give him an answer because I don't have one. This was one of the things that had gotten me up so early this morning. He's up out of his chair so fast it falls back and hits the floor.

"What the hell? You just thought you could spend a couple of days fucking me and I would move on. No questions asked no worries or attachments. Is that what this was? Just a convenience thing for you. What? Were you tired of hanging on to the old cherry and thought I was the perfect candidate to pop it for you?"

I gasp at his words and quickly look over to where Jim was sitting but he must have gotten up to leave because all that is there now is an empty chair and a steamy cup of coffee. Thank God, since Ace clearly doesn't comprehend how to keep his fucking mouth shut.

"You don't have to tell everyone what happened last night? Can you lower your voice please?"

"Oh so now I'm a secret too. Tell me, Evie, is there any part of last night you aren't regretting? Because let me tell you, waking up to the person you really are makes me regret a whole hell of a lot."

My mouth falls open and my mind stops processing what he is saying. He's not a secret. I just need time to process what happened and to figure out how I feel about this. I didn't really think we were serious, like a girlfriend/boyfriend thing. I don't know what we were...are. I just thought I would have time to figure it out before he jumps to making babies and moving in permanently.

"It's not like that, Ace. I just...don't want...I just wanted something that wasn't complicated for a few days and then we can have the talk about where both of us see this going."

"Yeah," I can tell he is upset by how turbulent his eyes look. "Well, it was getting pretty damned serious for me until I found out you just wanted to see what you couldn't have five years ago and then move on."

Why can't he understand?

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"It was never like that..." before I can go on he is closing in on me. He gets so close I can feel the heat coming off his body but he doesn't touch me.

"You know I knew five years ago there was something telling me not to fuck with you. I should've listened."

Old hurt flares up in my chest at his words. Something told him not to mess with me five years ago. When I was the one wanting what he wants now?

"Really? Five years ago, when I would have given you fucking anything you asked of me. But I'm not a girl now; I can't build a life on fucking fairy tales and a man who doesn't understand what the hell he's doing. It just takes him five years to figure it out. How did they let you ever fly a plane when you can't figure shit out fast enough to get one up in the air? Did you have to have one of your friends tell you when to start the thing and how to fly it too? The only decisive thing you've ever done your whole life was give me time to figure out who the hell you really are."

He looks at me for a little while before he backs up. "Wow, I wish you would have returned the favor. Guess we both fooled each other into thinking we actually knew who we each were."

He turns and heads to the stairs. I turn and go for the living room before I remember there are people in there that have heard everything, every word of what was just spoken, every hurtful, barbed comment made. I don't stop myself in time and find three pairs of eyes turned to me, judging me. They are his friends after all. I charge upstairs without saying a word or giving them another look.

They came into my home. They set there stupid little toys up in my living room and I should have the right to tell them all to leave. I don't care anymore. I don't care if someone wants to kill Ace and might kill me in the process. What the hell does it matter anyway? They would be putting me out of my misery. I storm into my room and come face to face with Ana. She has so much sympathy in her eyes that it eats me up inside. The last thing I want to face is someone who is sorry I fucked everything all up because I'm scared of getting close.

I yank clothes out and put them on. She tries to talk to me but I'm not listening. I don't have time for her to tell me how this will all work out and how he is hurting because of what I said about not wanting his babies when deep down inside that is all I have ever wanted in my whole life. I grab my keys and my purse and take off. Ana follows me.

"Where are you going? Evie, it's not safe to leave by yourself." She's trying hard to keep up with me and I can hear how badly she is concerned.

I don't listen. I need to get out of the fucking house. I need to be free from all of this shit that keeps dragging at me. I go out the back because they won't be looking for me to leave that way and skirt around the house...right into the arms of someone waiting for me. Ana, not far behind me, is grabbed too. She gets a scream off before they wrap a hand around her mouth to silence her.

"Thank you, Evie. Now I don't have just one person to bait my trap with I have two."

Talking about having a really fucked up morning!

Ace

I hear them leave almost immediately but hang back until I hear the scream. It shatters me in a way I never want to remember. I'm not far behind them so the guys that have them don't make it to the end of the driveway before I am raising my gun and shouting for them to let the women go. Steve and Jack are here today and I have to say a little prayer for that. Especially Jack being here. He's a scary mother fucker even on a good day. Jim is outside with gun raised too. All four of us are telling them to stand down and let the women go but they just use them as shields keeping us from getting a clean shot.

Jack lowers his weapon and I see him start to fade into the background like he's a fucking chameleon. I start shouting to give him cover and to take the assholes attention off of him. I know what he is doing. I just need to give him time to do it.

"Well, well. Looks like I got lucky today on so many levels. Not only will I get to spend some quality time with these two beautiful women but I get to kill all four of you at the same time. I couldn't ask for a better day."

"Let them go, Merrick. What the hell happened to you? You used to be one of the good guys?" He wasn't much of a soldier so I might be stretching the truth about him being good. Most of the team and a couple of the other guys we were working alongside called him a blue falcon - military for buddy fucker, someone who would fuck a buddy over to get ahead. Guess we all pegged him right, huh. I only knew him by sight and have never talked to him until now.

"What can I say? Bad guys pay more."

God what an asshole. He has his forearm wrapped around Evie's neck and is slowly backing up with her. He's trying to reach a black van parked on the other side of the street. One of his men has Ana around the waist and mouth and two more have guns

trained on us. Those are the easy ones to hit. They don't have anyone to protect them. Dumb asses.

"Actually, all that money you had wired to you by whoever is yanking your strings - it's all gone," Jim speaks in clear tones making Merrick's gaze turn to him with something akin to fear in his eyes. "Oh, were you going to use that to go away so no one could follow you after you took out my guys. Sorry."

Merrick swallows like he might have a lump in his throat. Jim attacked them in the one place he knew it would hurt them the most...the wallet.

"You lie!"

"I never lie. Let the girls go and drop the guns and I'll think about putting it back where I found it so no one knows what happened."

"Fuck off!" his words are big but I can see the sweat start to bleed out of his forehead. "Give me back my god damn money!"

Steve moves off to the side hoping to separate and draw one of them to him. He is trying for a clean shot at the one with Ana in his grasp. I am kinda glad my best friend has a crush on my little sister right now. I know he is more invested in what happens to her and he is a dangerous man when he feels something is his and someone is trying to hurt it. We all are. I let him take care of that guy and stay focused on the asshole that has my girl. He has a gun pointed at her and it makes my stomach turn thinking the bitch might put a bruise on her from pressing it there so tight against the sensitive skin of her temple.

"Don't make me kill you. Walk away. Find something better to do with your life than taking orders from shit heads that don't do the dirty work themselves." I train my gun and focus on keeping it straight. Not letting him see how scared I am for her.

Merrick laughs and keeps the gun pressed on Evie. I can't look at her. I see her out of the corner of my eye but if I look at her I'll break and that won't help anyone.

"All that money. Gone!" Jim snaps his fingers. "Like that. You working for free now? You killing for the joy of it because the money isn't there anymore."

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"Give me my god damn money or I will kill her! Or maybe I'll end you and find out if I can make some of that money back by putting your bitch to work for it. Is that what I should do, Ace? I mean she said she didn't want you so maybe she wants to try out other men and see how she likes being the camp whore."

Son of a bitch has a death wish if he thinks he is touching what's mine and walking away. My fucking ghost will come back and kill him before I let him hurt one hair on her head like that. My eyes catch hers and I see her lips move. She mouths the words I'm sorry. Tears are coming down her cheeks and I could kill this fucker with my bare hands - rip his fucking heart from his chest and not think twice about it.

"I love you." The words break my heart and cause my hand to shake.

"Aww....," Merrick is about to make fun of her vow to me when a cry beside him takes his attention away from me for a split second. Beside him, Jack has one man dead at his feet and the second wrestled to the ground. Steve uses the diversion to attack the man holding Ana by all but flinging himself on him taking all three of them to the ground. Merrick senses the time for monologuing like a supervillain is over and takes the gun away from Evie's head and points it at me. She elbows him in the stomach while at the same time pushing his hand away so I am not the target when his gun goes off. She drops to the ground and I take my shot putting a hole in the guy before he can take his next breath.

Given that there were so many guns it's amazing how quiet the end is. Only two shots were fired the entire time, mine and Merrick's. I run to Evie and take her in my arms before I check on the others. My first need is to make sure she is alright. When I get to her I slide to a stop. She's still sitting in the dirt with tear stains on her cheeks with

a bruise forming on her temple - the bastard. I look over and see Jim grabbing his arm and blood coming out from between his fingers. I'm about to go help him when he waves me off.

"Flesh wound. Nothing to worry about. Is he alive?"

I check on Merrick, taking Evie with me. I can't let her go now that I have her safe with me. Merrick's chest is moving rapidly and he's giving off a wheezing rattle. "Yeah, but he won't be that way for long."

I look over to make sure Steve has Ana and he's doing the same thing I am with Evie. Checking over her to make sure she's not hurt. She's crying and falls into him to hide her face and he looks over at me with round eyes that look a little scared. The guy can take down a three hundred pound man barehanded but seeing my sister cry is scaring the fuck out of him. The guy who had her is lying beside them with his neck at an odd angle and I am one hundred percent sure Steve broke it for touching Ana. Jack is standing over the two he took out, his gun back in his hands. He's looking up and down the street to make sure no one else comes to try to finish what Merrick couldn't.

Jim is right next to Merrick. "Who hired you?"

"You know." His voice is thin and thready and sometimes no sound comes out. "You...took...the money."

"Actually, I didn't. That was a bluff. I lied my ass off." I feel more than hear Evie's gasp. Hell, even I am impressed with this one. I could have sworn Archer was telling the truth about having this guy's money. "Anyone who's worked with me understands I'll do anything to get the job done - especially when it comes to protecting my men. Now, who hired you?"

Merrick grins and his teeth are covered in bright red blood. Fucker is drowning on his

own blood and it couldn't happen to a better person. Blood gurgles up out of his mouth and he loses his grin right before the light goes out in his eyes. Jim lets loose a string of curse words that would make a sailor blush.

"Sorry, boss."

"Never be sorry for protecting what's yours, Ace. More will come and when they do we'll find what we need."

His words about more coming make me pull Evie closer to me. She buries her face in my chest and clutches me so tight my shirt will never be the same and I wouldn't change a fucking thing. I pull her head up so I can check to make sure she is alright.

Big wet eyes meet my own. "I lied. I want all of that with you," I know exactly what she is talking about without her having to go into detail, "but I'm so afraid of losing someone else again. I love you. I'm so sorry I was so mean and I lied to you."

"No baby, it's me that should be sorry. I left you alone when you needed me the most and I'll spend my life trying to make up for that." I'm not just talking about this time but every other time I wasn't there for her. "I'm so fucking sorry I brought this to you. I'd like to say I'll leave and let you go back to your safe, normal life," her fingers curl into my shirt harder and she shakes her head hard, "but I'm not going any-fucking-where, baby."

"Will you give me another chance? Will you give wanting a family with me another chance?" her eyes plead with me.

"What did I tell you baby, we waited long enough for us. I'm not about to let you being scared keep us from having what's ours for another second."

She wraps herself around me and kisses me, telling me with her body that she loves

me. Whispering the words into my ear just in case I might not understand what her body is saying. I let her keep kissing me out on her front lawn as Jim goes into Commander mode and starts making phone calls to have the bodies removed and the evidence that anything happens to break up the suburban monotony that I am looking forward to getting back to.

It's not over. Like Jim said more will come but that's someone else's fight. I'm done fighting. All I'm doing is making sure my Evie and any growing family we have is safe and taken care of. I look around at the men standing around us. I don't have a moment of doubt that they will find who is behind wanting our team put down or that they will handle the situation when they find out. All I want to do is start planning a nursery and maybe adding on to the house so we can fit more kids in it one day.

Epilogue I

Ace

One month later:

I stroke into Evie as she sits in front of me in the cockpit of the airplane I am working on. She's out of school for the summer and spends a lot of her days here with me, watching me work on this thing to make it flyable again. The threats to the men have been more targeted now. Word is out that whoever they send to try to kill us better be good or desperate. Jim had a lot to do with that. I'm not sure what he did with the bodies, nor do I really want to find out, but the word is definitely out there now.

Her little moans and cries make my dick throb harder inside of her. Having her on my lap like this is more than I could have ever hoped for a couple of months ago. Mom's fucking tickled pink. She is already planning the wedding. I would like to wait until

things calm down a little before I say I do but things may not be able to keep that long. I wrap my hand around Evie's stomach. I still haven't wrapped it up and she hasn't asked me to. In fact, she has been telling me to cum inside of her more and more like she can't get enough. It's bound to happen one day and when it does me and my Evie will handle it just like we do everything else. We'll fight over who knows better and then we'll love each other until both of us want whatever makes the other one happy.

"Oh Sasha," when she says my name like that she is close. It makes my balls draw up tight to my body ready to give her my load when her body asks for it.

Feeling how warm and wet she is makes me fuck her harder. Lately, she's been soaked as soon as I have her panties off of her, ready for my fat cock to plow through her tight, tender little pussy.

"I'm close, baby. I'm so close, Sasha."

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Fuck, yes! This is the best part of my day. And making love to her at night until she can't move is the best part of my night and making love to her in the morning over breakfast is the best...fuck, she is the best thing - period.

Her legs are on either side of the control stick in the front and there isn't much room but I don't need much to take her where she needs to be. I reach around and play with her nipples with one hand as I trail the other down to finger her clit. I am an expert at what my baby needs to get her off. I slap her clit lightly but hard enough that she knows she belongs to me and her body tenses up around my cock.

"Oh yes," she writhes her hips on top of me like a fucking snake charmer when I do it. I give her another and in a heartbeat, she is convulsing around my shaft and pulling the seed from my body into her waiting one. When the love is over and her body has calmed down she lays back on my bare chest and I move her sweat-dampened hair off of her face dropping a kiss on her temple.

I don't need the thrill of being in the cockpit any longer when I have a firecracker like Evie in my arms. She is all the excitement I could ever need.

Epilogue II

Evie

A couple of months later:

I sit on the toilet and stare at the two pink lines looking me in the face. I have no idea how in the hell I am going to tell him about this. We haven't talked about it since we had our epic kitchen blow up. I'm not even sure if he still wants to have children with me given how awful I acted.

I don't know how I feel about this so I can't pretend to know how he will take this. The threat to the men has actually calmed down a lot. There was some trouble with Jim a few months back but after the men took care of that no one else has come for them. Even the one that had to do with Jim was of the men's own doing. They are actively searching for the person or persons who tried to kill them.

This is the start of our family and I should be excited and happy but all I can think about is our fight and how he is going to react to this. What if he thinks I'm a hypocrite for not doing something to make sure this was a little more planned out? I hear him walk into the room we are staying in and my heart starts pounding against my chest harder.

We are spending the summer with the guys in the compound they built to better keep everyone safe. It's no joke that it is a freakin' compound either. The men have a lot of land and some of them are talking about building houses on it. I think because me and Ace have been together and seem to be working out pretty well some of them are hoping they find what we have. I hope they do. Everyone should have someone to love. I didn't always think that way but I wouldn't trade a second with Ace for anything in this world. He was definitely worth waiting for.

"Eve, baby, where are you?" I hear him root around and can tell he is taking his shoes off and getting comfortable.

"I'm in here." I yell back at him and hope that the way to tell him magically pops into my head in the next few seconds.

"You okay, baby?" I hear him sit on the bed right after he asks me. It's probably going to be the best time to do it - when he's sitting down.

I walk to the door and open it. His green gaze automatically comes to me and the blood rushes out of my head. God I hope I don't faint before I can tell him. He senses something is off because his smile drops off his face and worry starts clouding his eyes. Before he can ask I hold the stick out to him. He looks at it for a few seconds before taking it from me. I grab the door frame to hold myself up.

"Evie...," I can't tell what he is thinking. His head is down and I can't see his eyes to tell if they are stormy or soft and sweet.

He's up off the bed in no time and at my side wrapping me in a hug. "Baby, are you alright? How do you feel about this?" his voice is so soft and so gentle that tears prick my eyes.

"I don't know. I'm scared and I'm worried that you don't want to have a baby with me now. And that maybe I messed up." I burst into tears. I really hope this is the hormones.

He lifts my head so I can look into his clear, green eyes, "Baby, I want to shout and swing you around and yell to tell all the guys and celebrate with soft, gentle sex but I want you to be alright too. I can't wait to see what we've made together. Our little baby."

When he says the last words I can feel my lips tilt up and the tears I was trying to fight off pour over the brim of my eyes again. He wants our baby. A weight has lifted off my shoulders because of his words. "Our little baby."

He leans down to kiss me and softly lifts me in his arms. We spend the rest of the night 'celebrating' the way Ace wants us to - with slow, soft, gentle love.

The End!

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Continue reading for a preview of my next novel,

Black Site and a look back at Dark Redemption.

Black Site

Coming Summer 2020

Jim

Two weeks after the events at Evie's house...

This small town is the perfect place to draw out more of the men they sent for me and my boys. The fact that Merrick got his hands on one of my men's women was too close a call for me to just let it go. Over the past month that we have been around Evie we have come to love her like a sister. My men love just as hard as they fight; it is what makes them such great warriors. When Ace told me he was done - no more missions, no more fighting, no more needing to find answers - I was alright with that. I can understand wanting to give this life up for something else, something softer.

I watch as the waitress my men love giving a hard time comes walking by swaying her tight little ass in front of everyone in the restaurant. Seeing her sweet little cherub face makes me flex my arm deep inside the cast I have on. They all think she is the most angelic thing walking, making her laugh and giving her smiles but I can see in her eyes she has the potential to be lethal, to be a danger. I've already warned the men off of her. Not that they listen to me.

She stops by the table with a jug of sweet tea and offers to refill the glasses sitting on the table in front of everyone. She does mine last. It's only a small slight but when our eyes meet I know she is doing it on purpose. I've killed men for less. So why am I not thinking about killing her? In fact, killing her is the furthest thing from my mind. No, I don't want to kill the spiteful little redhead with the cool brown eyes who's standing in front of me. I want to drag her down to the ground and fuck her in front of all the people in the restaurant to teach her a lesson...and probably to maybe show everyone that she belongs to me.

For the first time in twenty years, I am so fucked! And to make matters worse I think the Russians just walked by. SO FUCKED!

Dark

Redemption

By:

JISA DEAN

Dark

Redemption

By:

JISA DEAN

Gunfights, dead bodies, and one pissed off Russian is not Kat St. Claire's idea of a good time. But that's exactly what she has on her hands all while trying to stay alive long enough to become an old cat lady. The next time she prays for excitement in her life she's going to give herself a swift kick in the a\$\$.

Ivan Dragomir's entire world is a repeat of nothing but vice, blood, and death. He left Russia to start a new life, one that didn't include the violence of his past, but violence wasn't done with him yet. Now he's on the run in his new country with a woman more used to dealing with paper cuts and printers than knife wounds and getting blood out of denim.

These two are on a collision course with a dark fate if they can't figure out how to

work together to take down a very powerful Senator before he gets away with more than just bad political moves. Hot Russians, violent murder, and sex so hot it could melt Siberia; this full-length romance has it all and then some.

1

Ivan

I realize how close winter is when the slap of cold hits me in the face like an angry lover. Normally I don't mind D.C. in the winter but I've been thinking of moving somewhere warmer lately. The cold reminds me of things I would rather leave buried in the icy ground of Russia. American winters are never going to be as bad as Russian winters but sometimes when I'm in my apartment and I've been holed up for days working I'm reminded of where I came from. It's usually then I have to leave and head to my favorite café close to my apartment.

Most days I take a break to walk there for a large black coffee and to people watch. It helps remind me that I'm not back in a dank cramped cell. I've made a life for myself here in D.C. One of the best things about D.C. is the influx of so many people and cultures and languages in one area. That and it is really easy to hide in a place that is constantly changing faces from day-to-day.

Today, when I swing the door open and the smell of coffee hits me I make sure to stare down each person in the café. I am just a moody bastard today I guess. Not that I'm not normally moody. I stand at the back of a line and wait my turn. In front of me are the two older women who have been trying to get me to tell them my story for months. Both of them are fighting the battle of the gray and yoga mats and weird green drinks are always in their hands. I've joked with them and called them cougars much to both of their delights. They come up with stories when I don't give them

anything on who I really am.

This week I'm a Romanian Duke who had to flee his motherland because of a government upheaval. Last week I was a spy for the USSR that had to go into hiding. I wonder if they would still flirt and find me appealing if they knew how close to the truth they were.

Behind them is another regular, the lawyer. He's a total dick waffle to everyone who doesn't make a certain amount a year or wear a business suit. I've threatened to cut him plenty of times for talking down to the pretty, young barista that always makes my coffee. If he isn't talking down to a woman, he is trying to hit on them.

When cold air from the swinging door hits my back I find the other regular standing behind me. I've had to threaten the lawyer about her more than once. Fucking pervert. If he isn't eyeing her tits with his hand in his pocket playing the one dick shuffle then he's leering at her ass making rude sounds loud enough everyone can hear him. Not that she gives him any attention at all.

The only reason I know this fuckwad is a lawyer is because he tells me every time I threaten to end his life. It's a tired song and dance and eventually one day I'm going to have to come through with some of the stuff I've promised to do to him. But damn do I not want to have to.

I want to be able to sit back and enjoy the simple things in life - like freedom and fresh air. I don't want to have to go back to the violence I left in Russia. I damned sure don't want my hands to be stained with any more blood. I left that life when I left the land of my birth.

But the woman standing behind me reminds me of Moscow in the heart of winter. She always dresses in muted colors; today her suit is all white. Who does that? Her hair is the color of pale moonlight on the snow and she always has it pulled up in

some kind of knot at the back of her head. She has an icy beauty that makes men shiver and women not realize how much of a threat she is to them until it's too late.

It's her eyes that make her more than just an ice queen, a frigid beauty held apart from people. Her eyes are huge chocolate orbs that seem to take in everything around her and give nothing away. She would have made very good money in my Russia as an assassin, or a government official. Of course, in Russia sometimes you can be both.

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Her damned eyes always make me crave chocolate. I've been coming in here for years and haven't ever asked for a fucking hot chocolate but one day behind her after taking in her melted pools of brown I ordered a hot chocolate. I don't think I've said more than ten words to her during the months she's been coming in but somehow she's sank her talons into me and made me crave something warmer than my lonely studio apartment overlooking a river of pavement.

It pisses me off. She pisses me off, with her perfect face, and her perfect hair, and her soft perfect voice. I step out of line and gesture for her to move up. I don't like having her at my back. I don't like having anybody at my back. Old habits and whatnot.

She gives me that polite, icy smile of hers that's just a little too tight to be friendly and starts to move ahead of me when the chill from the door catches my attention again, but this time something else has the hair on the back of my neck rising other than the D.C. air.

In Russia, especially the prison system, you have to develop almost a sixth sense for knowing when bad shit is about to go down. It saved my life more than I care to admit and today is no different. When a man stands in front of the door wearing a large overcoat scanning the people in line I can tell something is off. I don't hesitate to drop to the ground and roll. Yeah, I could come off looking like a complete idiot who just lost his mind but at least I will be alive to be that idiot.

I take the woman with me. Thankfully when we were switching places she was already in a good position for me to grab her by the hips and pull her back, nestling her ass deeper into me. And, wow, what an ass. We've hit the floor by the time the man has his gun up and firing. I make sure I take most of the force of the fall by

landing under her. Two more men come in behind him and start shooting as well. We've rolled under the swinging half door that separates the counter space from the front of the café but that is not going to keep us safe for long.

During our roll, I've ended up on top of her and somehow she's flipped over so that I can look down into brown pools of melted chocolate laced with fear. This is not the time to have a fucking hard-on but my body has told me to fuck off and got one anyway. If I'm fucking extremely lucky she's in shock, which will make it a lot easier to control her movements and actions. And possibly hide the little fucker in my pants. Behind the counter, I force myself to push off of her and crawl to the barista who's served me coffee every day for years. She's dead, shot through the head with her eyes still open.

She was a college kid who just wanted a date for a football game coming up at the end of the month. She had dreams and hopes and now she is lying on the floor, a puddle of blood spreading from the back of her head. I make a silent promise to her and all of the other dead bodies littering the floor that I will end the people responsible for this.

I reach for the gun the café keeps behind the counter checking to make sure it's loaded. The men who opened fire on the dining area are shouting at one another trying to decide who is going to look in the bathrooms and the back of the store. My time is running out and so is hers.

She sat up, but doesn't move any further. I grab her by the hand and pull her closer to the door leading into the back of the store where they keep their supplies and a small kitchen is set up. She lets me slide her along the linoleum. I'm trying to think of a way to go in the back without them knowing the door has swung open when a man comes through the back.

He has a café logo on his shirt and must have been in the back office when the men came in. As he's walking out I grab the woman and run for the door before it closes

back while remaining low. Wood chips are raining down on us from the door frame and the guy who just came out is about to drop fast. I push her ahead of me and slap her on the ass to make her move faster.

Once we're behind the door we can hear the sporadic blasts of gunfire dampened by silencers. I run to the office and shut and lock the door behind us. The deadbolt should keep them busy for a little while, at least until they search for the key in the dead manager's pockets. There's a small window up off the ground and both of us may be able to slip through, although it would be a tight squeeze for me. I know they have others outside waiting for people to come out. I know because that's what I would do if I was hitting a place like this. Hell, it's what I have done when I excelled at my past profession.

I worked for my government for years before power changed hands and the new people in charge felt I was too dangerous to be allowed to walk free. So they came for me, and I killed a lot of them. They finally arrested me and threw me in a high-security Russian prison. But you don't put dark things in dark places and expect them to rot away and die. Let's just say I was very well received in prison for my skill set with improvised weapons. Killing for the mob is not so different than killing for your government; both are corrupt and full of and backstabbers waiting for the first scent of blood to hit the air.

I got away from that; okay I broke out and ran from that, and now look at where I am. Inside a box with people trying to kill me and my life depending on if I can improvise my way out of shit. America was supposed to be my big change, my retirement from pain and violence. So you can bet I am more than a little pissed that fuckweasles like these guys come in and hit my favorite café. There will be hell to pay.

First I have to get us to a safer place than the back office. The gunmen will be here any minute and I feel each of those minutes ticking by as I look for a way out or a weapon to fight my way out. My eyes take in everything about the room. The window, the desk, the stack of crap in the corner that I'm guessing is product of some

kind, bingo - the attic door in the ceiling.

Wide brown eyes watch me as she hunkers down in front of the door. She's trembling and silent tears are slipping down her cheeks making her mascara run in black tracks down her face. Why the hell does that get me hard? It has to be the adrenaline. My body is so used to having it pump through my veins from before that now it's remembering it like an old lover blowing through town. Or maybe because she would look the same with my dick shoved so deep tears are running down her face and she can't take her next breath without me controlling it by taking it out for her.

Whatever the fuck it is, it's pissing me off. So when I go to stand in front of her and speak my voice comes out like rusty nails. "If you are going to stay with me, you are going to have to keep up. Can you?"

Lovely way to make a first impression Ivan, oh and the accent is thicker because your pissed your dick is up after years of not fucking working for anything other than your hand. Sure, take it out on her.

She looks at me for all of a split second and then gives me a big nod that has more tears running down her face.

"We go up, then over, yes?" I need her to understand what the goal is so we don't have to stop in the middle of being killed for me to explain what the fuck is going on.

Again she nods but she doesn't stand up. I hold my hand out for her and she slips hers into mine which is all I need to pull her up and yank her to me. I half drag, half walk her to the desk. I hop up on it and move the piece of tile that is made to look like any other. If you didn't know what the fuck you are looking for you would miss it. I stick my head up first to make sure no one is in there. When all I see is dust and boxes I reach down to pull her on the desk with me.

"You need to lose the heels, princess." She wasn't going to be able to do a lot in those

things.

For the first time the Ice Queen speaks, "No." What the hell just happened? Did she just tell me no? I've killed people for that, not for a while but I can remember doing it.

"Are you fucking kidding me? You do realize we have to be fucking quiet? You can't climb in those and if we get caught you damn sure aren't going to be able to run and I will leave your ass behind."

"You'd be surprised by what I can do in heels." Her chin goes up like I just issued a fucking challenge to her instead of a threat and she carries herself even more like royalty above the commoner than before. While her back is turned I adjust myself and go to help her. She's trying to reach the edge of the hole but can't reach even in her heels. I take her by the waist and lift her so that she can grab the bottom and pull herself up. I don't waste time, following her and replacing the tile.

"Don't move!" I am aware of how thin these fucking floors are, the sound of footsteps are going to sound like a marching band to the people we don't want knowing where we are. I army crawl over to a box and check how heavy it is. It's pretty heavy. I lay back and use my legs to push the box over the tile slowly. When I'm done I reach for the woman taking her by the ankle to pull her to me.

The look she gives me tells me she's wondering what the hell I think I'm doing pulling her ass across a dusty floor. "It's a lot quicker than telling you what to do and having you tell me 'no'."

I still can't believe she told me no. I crawl and pull her all the way over until we're at the roof access that can be used in case of fires. Not sure who would be going up during a fire, but it is what it is. I grab her close to me and use the wall to push both of us into a standing position near the window that's been permalocked by layers of old paint and time. So much dust is covering the thing I'm not too worried about

anyone from street level seeing in.

No, the only worry I have is a nice tight ass rubbing my cock and trying not to think about how long it's been since I sank my dick into a woman. I also have to think of the easiest, quickest way to get her sweet little ass up to the roof now that I'm all out of desks.