



# Kiss of Smoke

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**Category:** Erotic, Romance, Paranormal

**Description:** What was supposed to be a dream vacation just turned into a nightmare. It's not every day you board a private jet for an all-expenses-paid trip to Scotland with your two gorgeous bosses. And it's not every day you spot your fiancé kissing another woman across the terminal. The man I was ready to marry has been cheating on me for a year. Dumped and humiliated, the best I can do is get on the plane and lick my wounds. Fortunately, my bosses are more than willing to help...and in more ways than I ever imagined. But Lachlan and Alec can't possibly be interested in me. They're in love with each other...right? Scotland is cold this time of year, but these Scots are bringing the heat in ways I'm not sure I can handle. And as they continue fanning the flames, it's clear they've been hiding more than their attraction to me. Where there's smoke there's fire. Now I have to hope I don't get burned.

**Author's note:** This is a MMF romance with sword-crossing aplenty.

**Total Pages (Source):** 67

## Chapter One

### CHLOE

I was both the luckiest and unluckiest woman in the world.

On the one hand, I was sitting in a private airport terminal, moments away from boarding a luxury jet with my sexy-as-sin boss. My Scottish boss—complete with a rippling physique and an accent that made my toes curl.

On the other hand, my other Scottish boss sat a few seats away from him. Just as drool-worthy. Same panty-melting accent.

And, like Boss Number One, totally uninterested in women.

In the three months I'd worked for Lachlan MacKay and Alec Murray, I'd never seen them so much as glance at a woman—or another man, for that matter. Not only did my bosses run one of the most successful hedge fund firms in the world, they had a romance passionate enough to make Romeo and Juliet jealous. Everyone in the office knew it was futile to lust after either man. They only had eyes for each other—a fact confirmed to me one evening when I stopped by Lachlan's office to drop off some paperwork.

The door had been ajar, and I started to push it open when I heard a low, masculine groan. Worried something might be wrong, I nudged the door wider...and witnessed a scene that would forever be seared into my memory.

Lachlan had Alec up against a bookcase, and the two men were kissing like the world was about to end and they were trying to grab one last moment of rapture.

I froze on the spot, my heart racing and my brain telling me to turn around and get the hell out of the office. To stop intruding on what was obviously a private moment. But I couldn't tear my gaze away. I stood there, riveted, my eyes on Lachlan's crisp, white Oxford shirt stretched across his broad shoulders and his lean hips encased in a pair of gray trousers. I couldn't see Alec that well, but I didn't need to. I'd spent enough time staring at his body to know he was as tall and ripped as Lachlan. He was a Scot through and through, with red-gold hair and eyes the color of a lush, green valley. Lachlan was dark to his light, with brown hair and golden eyes that made my skin tingle whenever he looked at me.

But neither man looked at me that night.

As I watched, Lachlan slanted his mouth across Alec's, giving me a glimpse of five o'clock shadow and high cheekbones as he deepened the kiss. Which was a very French kiss. It was obvious from the way Lachlan's cheeks hollowed that he was thrusting his tongue hard into Alec's mouth. Their strong jaws moved against each other, utterly different from the way a man kissed a woman. It was like they warred for dominance even as they took their pleasure.

My lips parted, and I grew damp between my thighs. I'd spent plenty of time fantasizing about my bosses separately, but seeing them together was like someone pushing all my buttons at once—and then punching buttons I didn't even know I had. Goosebumps rushed over my skin, and I had to consciously remember to breathe so I didn't pass out.

Lachlan broke off the kiss and braced his hands on a low shelf on either side of Alec's hips, pinning the other man in place and giving me a clear view of Alec's handsome face with its square jaw and cocky grin.

He flashed one now, his green eyes twinkling. “I thought you were too hungry for this,” he said in his soft burr, his sculpted lips reddened and slightly puffy. “We have dinner reservations, you know.”

Lachlan’s right hand moved between their bodies, and then Alec groaned, his grin slipping.

Because—oh God—Lachlan was gripping Alec’s cock.

My breathing grew uneven. Vaguely, I wondered if it was possible to die of lust.

“Nothing wrong with an appetizer,” Lachlan said on a growl, the muscles in his back flexing as he pumped his hand up and down. His sleeves were rolled up, giving me flashes of golden skin sprinkled with black hairs.

Alec’s breath hitched. “Point taken.” He tipped his head back, and his eyes slid shut. “Damn, Lach, you’re really good at that.”

“I’m good at a lot of things,” Lachlan rasped before leaning in and sucking at the other man’s neck, his hand still busy between them.

Blood rushed in my ears. This is wrong. I needed to leave. But my feet wouldn’t move. I leaned forward, straining to see more—

“Okay, there, Chloe?”

I jumped, Alec’s voice jerking me back to the present. Airport noises intruded, and morning sunlight streamed through the terminal’s long windows. Private jet passengers got their own space, but one side of the lounge was open to the main concourse, and business travelers in suits hurried past with cell phones pressed to their ears.

Alec lounged in the plush seats across from me like Sam Heughan on steroids, his friendly expression tinged with concern.

“Y-Yes.” I sat upright, squeezing my thighs together. “I’m sorry, Mr. Murray. I was just daydreaming.”

A teasing look entered his green eyes. “It must have been some daydream. Your cheeks are flushed.”

I swallowed. Sometimes, I swore he knew I’d seen him and Lachlan that night. But that was impossible. His eyes had been closed, and Lachlan had faced the other way.

Besides, they would have fired me if they found out I spied on them. As kind and generous as they were, both men were downright maniacal about their privacy. Every new hire went through a week-long training about safeguarding company secrets. And Lachlan and Alec had an uncanny ability to root out employees with loose lips. My first month on the job, they fired the office manager for telling a friend the men liked a certain brand of coffee.

The office also had a strict anti-theft policy. Steal so much as a paper clip, and you could expect to be shown the door. I didn’t need to wonder what would happen if my bosses knew about my stolen glimpses of their most private moments.

## Page 2

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So it was my little secret. The sooner I forgot about it, the better.

Except I couldn't stop thinking about it. The memory rushed back every time I was around Lachlan or Alec. Unfortunately, being their executive assistant meant I was rarely out of their presence.

From a few seats down, Lachlan spoke without looking up from his newspaper, rolling his Rs in a way that lifted the fine hairs on my arms. "Leave her alone, Alec. She's probably just thinking about her wedding day."

Alec's face brightened. "That's right. How much longer until the main event?"

"Um, five weeks."

"Josh must be excited, no?"

"Honestly, we're both ready for it to be over." My cheeks heated, and I could almost hear my mother's voice scolding me. "Good grief, Chloe Drexel, your boss doesn't care about your personal life." My mother had a lot of opinions, including plenty of commentary on Alec and Lachlan's relationship. When I first told her about the job, she frowned and said, "It's good money, but two gay men?" When I called her on it, she got all huffy and accused me of being over-sensitive.

Cindy Drexel was, to put it mildly, a piece of work.

"Och, sorry to hear it, lass," Alec said. "Anything Lach and I can help with?"

The thought of taciturn Lachlan assisting me with wedding tasks made me smile. I shook my head at Alec. “No, but you’re sweet to offer. Wedding planning just isn’t as fun as I thought it would be.” Mostly because, in addition to dealing with my mother’s antics, I’d ended up handling the bulk of the planning on my own. My fiancé, Josh, wanted nothing to do with selecting stationery or choosing floral arrangements.

But that was normal, right? Men didn’t care about those things. Plus, he was crazy busy with work. As a second-year associate at one of New York City’s top law firms, he didn’t have much free time. At the end of a twelve-hour day, the senior partners expected him to show up at cocktail dinners and happy hours. That meant I spent a lot of evenings alone with pizza, wedding magazines, and Netflix. And the Netflix was definitely sans “chill.” Most nights, he got home so late he slept on the sofa to avoid disturbing me.

It was hardly the romantic lifestyle I envisioned when we moved in together. But as Josh liked to say, it wasn’t forever. Every young lawyer had to put in their dues.

Alec nodded like he planned weddings all the time and knew exactly what I was talking about.

Lachlan looked at me over the top of his paper, and I was struck all over again by his masculine beauty. The women in the office called him “Mr. Grey” behind his back because they said he looked like Jamie Dornan. As hard as I tried to keep the nickname out of my head, I never failed to picture him wielding a riding crop.

I blinked hard, struggling to banish the image. “Did you need something, Mr. MacKay?” Jesus, I’d almost slipped and said “Grey.” Damn those women in accounting.

His dark brows pulled together. “Are you sure you’ll be okay leaving for two weeks,

Chloe? That only gives you three weeks back in the States before your wedding. Alec and I probably should have considered the timeline before we planned this trip. If you're having second thoughts, we completely understand."

"Oh, no, it's fine. Josh can handle anything that comes up." He'd said as much last night, when we spoke on the phone as he traveled between work and a firm function at a hotel downtown. I'd hoped for one last night together before I left, but he'd already booked a room. The event was supposed to run late, and he didn't like taking cabs when he'd been drinking.

"I want you to get a good night's rest, babe," he'd said. "A flight to Scotland is no joke. You're going to be exhausted."

For a split second, I'd been tempted to call off my trip. I mean, what was I thinking jetting off to another country with my bosses five weeks before my wedding? But when I suggested it to Josh, he shot down the idea. "It's a free trip, Chloe. I know how crazy you are about castles. Go stay in one and enjoy yourself. We'll see each other for the rest of our lives when you get back."

He was right, of course. And I was pretty crazy about castles. Who wasn't? But I couldn't help wishing he would have put up at least a token resistance to his future wife leaving him alone for two weeks.

Lachlan was still staring at me, so I plastered what I hoped was a convincing smile on my face. "No second thoughts here, Mr. MacKay, I promise."

His golden gaze sharpened, making me want to squirm in my seat. He lowered his paper all the way, exposing his crisp, white business shirt. The same kind he wore that night...

My throat went dry.



“Are you certain?” he asked. “It’s not too late to change your mind.”

Alec tossed him an irritated look. “Christ, Lach, she said it’s fine.”

Lachlan returned his stare, and an odd tension seemed to rise between the two men.

Wait. Was Lachlan upset I was tagging along? My lingering desire fled. Maybe he wanted to spend two weeks alone with Alec without an employee underfoot. Come to think of it, Alec was the one who invited me in the first place. Lachlan hadn’t said much at all about the trip, except to give me terse instructions about what to pack. “It’s cold in the Highlands this time of year, so bring warm clothes. We won’t have time for shopping.”

He had a global financial empire to run. He didn’t want to babysit his American executive assistant. More likely, however, he didn’t want a third wheel on his and Alec’s vacation.

As the men continued their staring contest, awkwardness descended over me. “Um, guys? I don’t have to come. You really don’t need me—”

“Nonsense,” Alec said, swinging his gaze back to me. The sharp look he’d given Lachlan softened as he smiled at me. “We need you, Chloe.”

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And there went my libido again.

Lachlan shook out his paper and lowered his gaze. “I never said we don’t need her,” he murmured, his soft tone laced with a hard edge. “I just want to make sure she’s not compromising her personal life for our business.”

“You’re no’, are you, Chloe,” Alec said with a wink. He made it a statement, obviously confident I would agree with him. Looking at him, it was easy to see why. His tight-fitting gray sweater hugged his chest, and his black dress pants pulled taut over his muscular thighs. Sunlight played through his hair, turning the thick, red-gold waves to copper. His green eyes were...mesmerizing. It was the kind of dramatic word heroines in silly romance novels used, but it was the only way to describe the currents that ran through my body when he looked at me.

Vaguely, I heard myself say, “No, sir, Mr. Murray. As Josh said, I’ll see him for the rest of my life when I get back.” And maybe I had a guilty conscience, because as I tore my gaze off my gorgeous boss, I could have almost sworn I saw my fiancé standing across the terminal.

Great, I was so inappropriately horny I was hallucinating.

Except...wait a minute. My heart skipped a beat, and it was like someone dumped a bucket of ice water over my head.

I wasn’t hallucinating Josh. That was Josh. My fiancé, Josh Bennington, was standing in JFK Airport—and he was kissing another woman!

The world tipped on its axis. Later, I wouldn't remember leaving my seat or crossing the terminal. One minute I was sitting, the next I was standing beside my fiancé with my fists balled at my sides as he deep-throated a redhead.

“Josh?” My voice came out as a strangled croak.

He and the woman sprang apart so quickly it was almost comical. Almost. There was nothing funny about what was happening. We stood in front of a small food court, and people in line had started to stare.

For a second, Josh looked like he'd seen a ghost. Then he gaped at me. “Chloe? What are you doing here?”

“What am I doing here?” My heart pounded so hard I thought I might pass out. “I'm getting ready to board a flight to Scotland. What are you doing here?” I looked at his companion. Now that they weren't sucking each other's faces off, I recognized her as a lawyer from his firm. My jaw dropped. “Clarissa?”

She had the decency to flush. “Chloe... I don't know what to say...” She was dressed in a white pantsuit, and there was a small wheeled suitcase at her side. Josh wore jeans and the Yale sweatshirt I bought him when he got accepted to law school.

“Are you guys together?” I asked, looking between them. “Josh?”

A muscle in his jaw ticked. “The firm sent me to pick up Clarissa from the airport. My hotel is nearby, so it made sense.”

“Did the firm ask you to kiss her?”

“Chloe—”

“Are you cheating on me, Josh?”

He pressed his lips together, his expression stony. There had to be an explanation. I waited for him to say “this isn’t what it looks like” or “an anvil fell on my head and gave me temporary amnesia so I forgot about our engagement.” But he just stared, his shoulders rigid.

My throat thickened. Oh my God, I was going to cry in front of all these people. “You couldn’t wait until I was out of town? You had to show up at the same airport I was leaving from?” My voice cracked. “At the same time in the morning?”

He drew himself up. “You’re on a private flight. When the partners at work fly private, they board from the tarmac. I thought it would be the same for you.”

Alec’s deep voice rumbled behind me. “You thought wrong, lad.”

I turned to find him and Lachlan behind me, and my throat burned with tears. How fucking humiliating. In the space of five minutes, I went from discussing my wedding plans to getting dumped in front of my bosses and a bunch of business travelers next to the Cinnabon stand. It was like something out of a bad movie, except it was my real, stupid life.

Face burning, I faced Josh. “How long?”

He blanched. “Chloe, I don’t think—”

“How. Long.”

“About a year.”

The ice in my veins turned to fire. “You’ve been fucking her for a year?”

“Chloe—”

“You selfish, arrogant asshole!” My voice climbed, drawing more stares, but I didn’t care. I wanted to take off one of my new pointy heels—patent leather Louboutins I got on deep clearance—and stab him right in his all-American, country club face. “All those nights you were supposedly out late with your law firm friends, you were really screwing her?”

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“Well, Clarissa is one of my law firm friends, so technically—”

A screech ripped from my throat, and I flew at him.

A strong arm caught me around the waist and hauled me back. “Come on, now, Chloe lass. I’ve got you.”

“Let me go!” I clawed at Alec’s—or was it Lachlan’s?—forearm. “I’m going to kill him!”

Josh’s eyes went wide, and he shoved Clarissa behind him. “Chloe, this is uncalled f—”

“Wheesht, man,” Lachlan said sharply, holding me tight. Next to him, Alec gave Josh a withering look and said, “That means shut yer trap.”

I continued twisting and fighting, but it was no use. Lachlan’s chest was like a rock against my back, and his forearm across my stomach was hard as iron. As quickly as it came, my rage fled, and I slumped in his arms.

The crowd stared. Airport food court workers leaned out from their stalls, a mix of curiosity and pity on their faces. Josh gave me a wooden look, his gaze flat and empty.

The eyes of a stranger.

My tears rushed back. As I stared at the man I was supposed to marry in five weeks,

the only thing I could squeeze past my burning throat was, “Why?”

Some of the emptiness drained from his gaze, and a look of weariness crossed his face. “I don’t know, Chloe. I think I was just bored.”

The word hit me like an arrow thunking into its target. If Lachlan hadn’t been holding me, I might have collapsed. Suddenly, everything was too much. Hot tears streaked down my face, and I turned in my boss’s arms.

“Please, just...get me out of here.”

Before I even choked out the full sentence, he swept me into the air and folded me against his chest. The airport blurred, and then we were moving, his long strides carrying us away from Josh and the onlookers. As I gave into the sobs I’d been holding back, I registered that Alec had fallen into step beside us.

“I-I c-can walk,” I gasped against Lachlan’s chest.

“No worries,” he murmured. “We’ve got you now.”

## Chapter Two

### CHLOE

At first, I didn’t know where Lachlan and Alec were taking me, and I didn’t care. I’d always been an ugly crier. Being blond with fair skin meant even the slightest bout of tears turned my face into a red, splotchy mess. So I curled against Lachlan’s chest and put my hands over my face, part of me hoping a hole would open in the ground and he’d toss me in it.

But he kept walking, occasionally talking to Alec in a musical language I recognized

as the Gaelic they sometimes used. It was beautiful, with a rhythmic flow that swirled around my brain like a cool river. Drowsiness tugged at me, and I let myself relax against Lachlan's crisp shirt. He smelled of starch, expensive aftershave, and something that was uniquely his—a dark, spicy scent that made me relax even further.

Suddenly, the air pressure changed, and I lowered my hands to see the unmistakable interior of a private jet. Unlike the commercial airliners I'd flown on in the past, this plane had big, leather recliners with enough leg room to accommodate a giant.

Lachlan deposited me in one, exchanged a look with Alec, and promptly left.

I scrambled upright, tugging at my skirt, which had ridden up as Lachlan carried me. "Mr. Murray—"

"Easy, lass," Alec said, sitting next to me. He pushed a handkerchief into my hand. Not a tissue, a real square of cloth embroidered with ACM in red script. As I clutched it, I couldn't help wondering what his middle name was. I'd never seen it on any of the documents I handled at work.

"Take a moment to get your bearings," he said. "Lachlan's gone to speak to the pilot."

"Are we taking off?"

His green eyes were kind. "Do you want to? We understand if the trip is too much for you to deal with right now." His accent made now sound like noo.

"Josh cheated on me," I blurted. As soon as I said his name, fresh tears spilled down my cheeks.



Alec made a soft tsking sound and moved closer, until his thigh pressed against mine. He pulled the handkerchief from my hand and dabbed at my tears. The gesture was so tender, my tears flowed faster, and an involuntary sob warbled from my lips.

“Chloe,” he murmured, gathering me in his arms. His chest was as hard as Lachlan’s, and his heart beat strong and steady under my ear. This was the second time one of my bosses had held me, and somewhere in the back of my mind, I knew I should push away. Even in my predicament, it was wrong to weep on their shoulders.

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Yet I couldn't seem to stop.

Alec's delicious, woodsy scent mingled with a subtle cologne, reminding me of crisp fall nights and long walks through a dark forest. He was so warm, his body throwing off the same comforting heat as an electric blanket.

Gentle fingers stroked my hair. "Go on and cry, sweetheart. You've had a shock."

"I'm s-sorry," I said, my throat thick. "I just can't believe he had the nerve to pick her up at the same airport at the same time I was leaving. Who does that?"

Alec's voice was a mix of anger and exasperation. "A coward and a fool. It took everything I had not to lay him out."

"I wish you would have." Alec was several inches over six feet and worked out five days a week. He would have sent Josh flying across the terminal.

"We're cleared for takeoff," Lachlan said, seating himself across from us.

I sensed rather than saw the men have some sort of unspoken exchange over my head.

My shoulders tensed. Lachlan probably wanted me gone. He'd hinted as much in the lounge. If he'd felt that way before, he almost certainly did now. Who wanted a jilted bride tagging along on their vacation?

No one. Which was why I needed to get off this plane immediately.

But when I started to sit up, Alec ran his palm down my hair again, keeping me against his chest. “The choice is yours, Chloe. We can be in the air within minutes if you still want to go ahead with the trip. If you ask me, I think you should.”

“You do?” I said into his shirt.

Lachlan replied, his voice low and steady. “Only if you want to.”

“I think she does.” Alec made another lazy stroke down my hair, and the rumble under my ear deepened. “Get away for a couple weeks. There’s nowhere like the Highlands for unplugging from the rest of the world.”

It sounded wonderful. His hand in my hair felt wonderful. Goosebumps rose on my skin, and I had to suppress a shiver. He must have worried I was cold, because he tightened his arms around me. As soon as he did, another wave of lassitude swept me. My lids grew heavy, and my breathing slowed.

Sleep. God, I wanted nothing more than to drift off in the comfort of Alec’s embrace.

Somewhere deep in my brain, a faint alarm bell clanged. I had no business being in Alec Murray’s embrace. He was my boss. His lover—my other boss—sat across from us.

But as exhaustion gripped me, the alarm faded. I was so tired.

I could worry about doing the right thing later.

“Chloe lass? Shall we tell the pilot to go?”

If I hadn’t been so sleepy, I would have smiled. There was something endearingly old-fashioned about the way Alec spoke, with his “shalls” and his Highland accent.

I'd never get sick of hearing it. And if I flew to Scotland right now, I could hear it all the time.

As his hand smoothed my hair and sleep tugged hard at my mind, I nodded. My voice seemed to come from far away as I said, "Yes. Tell the pilot to go."

\* \* \*

The next time I woke, I lay on my side with the steady thrum of jet engines filling my ears.

I sat up, and a light blanket slipped to my waist. I was in a darkened bedroom—a luxurious one with sleek furniture and thick carpet. To my left was a bathroom with one of those plug-in night lights that turn everything a soft blue. Someone had removed my heels.

And the top button of my blouse was undone.

My face heated. At the same moment, the door opened and Alec entered, spilling yellow light into the room.

"Madainn mhath." He closed the door, then crossed the room and sat on the edge of the bed. "Means good morning," he said with a wink.

"Is it morning where we are?" As my eyes adjusted to the dark, I took in his appearance. He was as immaculate as ever, his thick hair neatly brushed back from his high forehead.

"We're over Iceland at the moment, and it's the middle of the night."

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“Oh.” He loomed large on the side of the bed, his sweater snug over his biceps. My stomach did a flip.

His gaze moved over me. “How do you feel?”

A rush of self-consciousness swept me. I’d lunged at Josh in the airport, cried in both of my bosses’ arms, and passed out on their airplane. Also, one of them had apparently tucked me into bed like a toddler.

Mortification level? Off the charts.

I cleared my throat. “I’m sorry I fell asleep like that. I don’t know what came over me. I’ve never been so tired.”

“No need to apologize. You went through a trauma. Anyone would be exhausted.”

“Thank you,” I whispered, reality slamming into me all over again. As soon as we landed, I needed to get on the phone with wedding vendors. But with the ceremony so close, I probably couldn’t get out of the contracts I’d signed. Tears pricked my eyelids.

Alec noticed at once. “Hey,” he said, brushing a gentle thumb under my eye. “None of that now.”

“I’m sorry.” My skin tingled where he’d touched me, and I had to take a deep breath before I could keep talking. “It’s just...I can’t believe this happened. Josh and I were together for four years. You think you know someone, and then they pull the rug out

from under you.” Bitter humor rose in my mind. “He was bored with me. Hopefully Clarissa can keep him entertained.” Which, of course she could. She was beautiful and accomplished—exactly the kind of woman Josh wanted. They probably fucked and then discussed recent Supreme Court decisions. I was an executive assistant with a typing certificate from a community college in Brooklyn.

“What are you thinking?” Alec asked.

I swallowed. “That I should have seen this coming. Josh is ambitious. I was never going to be good enough for him.”

Alec’s gaze was steady, his big body relaxed and elegant as he watched me. He’d spread his knees, and he rested his hands on his thighs.

He was so freaking hot, with his red-gold hair and chiseled features. Even in dress pants and a cashmere sweater, it was easy to picture him swinging a claymore while Highland mist swirled around him.

Okay, I had to stop lusting after my boss, stat. My gay boss, I reminded myself. Right on cue, the memory of that night in the office rushed back.

Lachlan had grasped Alec’s hip in a possessive grip as his other hand worked up and down Alec’s shaft.

Alec had groaned, sinking strong, white teeth into his lower lip...

Stop it.

I ducked my head and toyed with the bedding. Alec and Lachlan were a couple—a sexy, committed couple. As late as that morning, I would have said my relationship with Josh was just as solid.

Was I boring? Or maybe there was something else wrong with me. Maybe I'd lost whatever spark attracted Josh to me in the first place. He no longer found me desirable, so he found someone else.

Alec made a soft sound that drew my gaze up. "Yer thinking again, lass, and I don't think they're good thoughts."

"No," I heard myself say, "they're not, really."

"You can tell me if you want. The best place for bad thoughts is out of your head."

That made me smile. "I don't think it's as easy as simply saying them out loud."

His return smile made my stomach do another flip. Then he folded his arms, making his sweater pull even more tautly across his shoulders. "You don't need to say them. I already know what you're thinking."

"Oh, really? You can read minds?" The funny thing was, sometimes I got the feeling he could do exactly that. Like he could peer directly into my brain and rifle through my thoughts like someone opening a file cabinet.

His green eyes twinkled. "Mmhmm."

"Why don't you tell me, then, since you already know." Wait a second. Were we flirting? The thought made a warm, flustered feeling climb up my neck.

He sobered. "You're thinking you aren't good enough for Bennington, when that's not true at all, Chloe lass."

It was the Chloe lass that did me in. He was so kind and easy to talk to—his concern so genuine—that I got choked up all over again. As the tears gathered, he made

another soft sound and pulled me into his arms.

“I’ll get your sweater all wet,” I protested, even as I nestled my cheek against his warmth.



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“Dinnae care.”

“Josh dumped me,” I said, the shock of it making me blurt the obvious.

“I know. He’s an idiot.”

“I d-don’t think he wanted me anymore. Clarissa is”—I sucked in a breath—“gorgeous.”

“She doesn’t hold a candle to you.”

“Do you mean that?”

“Absolutely. You’re a stunning woman, Chloe Drexel. Damn near irresistible.”

Something in his voice made me lift my head. He’d sounded...sincere. And his green gaze burned with appreciation as he stared at me. I was practically on his lap, my skirt bunched high on my thighs and my shirt gaping open.

My voice was a thread of sound as I asked, “You think I’m irresistible?”

“Yes,” he murmured. “Let me show you.” He took my chin in his fingers and kissed me.

I gasped, and he pushed his tongue inside, stroking it along mine.

Desire shot through me like sparks, sizzling straight to my sex, which grew instantly

damp.

He gave a throaty growl and deepened the kiss, seizing my mouth like a starving man. His fingers left my chin to tangle through my hair and pull me more firmly against him. His other hand slid up my thigh, his palm hot against my skin. As my breasts mashed against his chest, my clit throbbed hard between my legs.

He sucked at my tongue, and my desire ratcheted higher. His mouth was as hot as his skin, and his scent swirled around me, the combination of cologne and dark forest invading my senses.

A moan wound up from my throat and transferred into his mouth as he plunged deep. His lips were firm but soft, and he used them like a sensual weapon, stroking and sliding as he explored my mouth. His hand on my thigh slid higher.

The door opened, throwing a harsh dose of reality over me.

I wrenched away from Alec, then scrambled backwards until my shoulders hit the headboard. I crouched against it, my chest heaving and my hair spilling over my shoulders. The blond waves were tangled from sleep—and Alec's fingers tunneling through them.

Oh God.

Lachlan filled the doorway. The lit cabin behind him threw his face into shadow, but his stare bored into me with a weight that made me want to melt into the wood at my back. The light spread over Alec and the rumpled bedding, the yellow blaze like an accusation.

Holy shit, I just made out with my boss. My mouth still tingled from his lips, and my thigh burned where his palm had covered it.

Words spilled from me like a river rushing over rocks. “Mr. MacKay, I am so sorry. I-I don’t know what came over me. I didn’t mean to kiss Alec—I m-mean Mr. Murray. I just—”

“Chloe,” Alec said, reaching a hand toward me.

“I’m still shaken by what happened at the airport, and I think I lost my mind for a minute and—”

“Chloe!”

Alec’s voice cut through my babble. “Yes?” I asked, forcing myself to look him in the eye.

His expression was calm—as if his business partner and lover hadn’t just caught us with our tongues in each other’s mouths. “You didn’t kiss me. I kissed you.”

“You...did?”

“Yes.”

“But...” I darted my gaze to Lachlan, who was still silent in the doorway. “You’re gay.”

“No, we’re not,” Alec said.

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“Yes, you are. I saw—” I snapped my mouth shut before I could confess I’d seen the two of them. Confusion flooded me as I looked between the two men. “You’re not gay?”

Alec shook his head.

“But you like men.”

His boyish grin held an air of mischief. “Quite a lot. Women too.”

Understanding dawned. “You’re bisexual.”

“That’s right.”

“Both of you?”

“Yes,” Lachlan said, stepping inside at last. He closed the door and walked slowly to the bed. His hard gaze ran down my body, taking in my open shirt and the skirt that was now twisted around my waist, revealing the cream-colored thong I’d worn to avoid panty lines when I bent over.

My cheeks blazed, and I tugged at my hem.

“Don’t.”

I froze, my gaze flying to his. But he wasn’t looking at my face. His golden stare was fixed between my legs, and his jaw was clamped tight. He’d rolled his sleeves up,

revealing the golden skin and black hairs I'd seen the night he jerked off Alec against the bookcases in his office.

An image of those tanned hands on my thighs popped into my head. My breath hitched, and more moisture flooded my sex.

Lachlan's nostrils flared. A muscle jumped in his jaw, and his expression grew more intense. Almost predatory.

Oh yes. Lachlan was definitely bisexual. How had I never seen it before?

"Chloe," Alec said softly.

I jerked my gaze to his, even as Lachlan's stare made my clit throb anew. My reply was more breath than sound. "Yes?"

"We're not just bisexual. We're polyamorous. Are you familiar with that term?"

For a second, I couldn't speak. Lust surged hot in my veins, spreading to my sex and making my nipples tighten. The sensations were so intense they bordered on pain. I'd never been more turned on in my life. At the same time, I couldn't think straight. The air seemed thicker—like the moments just before a thunderstorm. The jet engines droned, filling the room with white noise that muffled and blunted, making everything dreamy and smooth.

Alec was waiting for an answer, so I dragged in a breath. "You like multiple partners."

"Yes. Specifically, we like bringing a woman into our bed." His eyes seemed to glow in the darkness, that gorgeous green drawing me in.

My heart raced as the ache between my legs intensified. I pressed hard against the headboard. Maybe the discomfort of wood digging into my shoulder blades would clear my head.

Because I couldn't sleep with my bosses. Both of my bosses, at the same time. Who did that sort of thing? Yet it seemed that was exactly what they had in mind.

Didn't they?

Lachlan began unbuttoning his shirt.

Yes. Yes, they did.

My mouth went dry, and my heart tried to pound from my chest.

This can't be happening. I waited for Lachlan to stop, or for Alec to jump up and announce the whole thing was a big, cruel joke.

But Lachlan kept going, his long, nimble fingers working down the row of buttons.

I devoured him with my eyes, my gaze glued to his torso as he pulled off his shirt and undershirt, mussing his dark hair a bit as he went. His bare chest was smooth, and his rippling abs looked hard enough to wash clothes on. I let my gaze trail lower, and my eyes widened at the unmistakable bulge in his pants.

Warm fingers circled my ankle, and then Alec gave a gentle tug, as if he wanted to coax me off the headboard. He slid his hand higher, smoothing it up my calf. "We want you, Chloe. And if you let us, we'll show you just how irresistible you are."

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My whole body trembled. With Lachlan on my left and Alec in front of me, it was hard to know where to look. Alec's thumb flicked back and forth against my calf like a metronome marking time. Beside me, Lachlan stood barechested and still. I got the sense I balanced on the edge of a precipice. One careless step, and I would plunge into something dark and forbidden and maybe irreversible.

We want you. Three simple words. A whole universe of meaning. I'd spent three months fantasizing about my bosses, but even my wildest daydreams had never approached anything like this. Josh and I enjoyed the occasional role play, and I kept a nightstand stocked with toys and even a pair of leather restraints, but the prospect of bedding Lachlan and Alec at the same time made my previous sex life seem as thrilling as cold toast.

Josh. The mere thought of him made anger burn in my chest. As I looked down my body and met Alec's eyes, some of my resolve crumbled.

He kept up the steady flick of his thumb, murmuring in his Scots accent that made my heart race faster. "We won't do anything you don't want, Chloe. This is all about you." He leaned in and planted a soft kiss on the inside of my knee—like he was sealing his promise on my skin.

The jet engines roared. Dark desire coursed through my veins, pumping blood to my nipples and sex.

"Yes," I whispered, moisture surging hot between my legs. "Please touch me more."

Satisfaction flared in Alec's gaze, and his green eyes glittered as he stood and pulled

his sweater over his head. His tight undershirt was next, and then his pants, and—holy shit—he wasn't wearing underwear. His cock jutted from his hips, the shaft long and thick and the head crowned with a bead of moisture.

I looked at Lachlan, and my mouth went dry. He watched Alec with narrowed eyes, his golden gaze simmering with unconcealed lust.

Alec gripped my ankles and pulled, and I slid down the bed with a yelp. My skirt bunched high, exposing my lower half.

He wedged himself between my legs, his cock bobbing. Before I had a chance to process that my completely nude boss was kneeling between my spread thighs while my other boss watched, he pulled the crotch of my thong aside, baring my sex to his gaze.

Both men growled.

Alec prowled up my body, his eyes locked on my sex. "I've got to taste this pussy," he muttered. Instead of lowering his mouth, however, he traced a reverent finger down one side, then the other, teasing my sodden folds. He made the same circuit a few more times, then drew his fingertip to my opening and dipped inside, stirring the wetness pooled at my entrance.

My hips lifted of their own accord. More. The plea lodged in my throat, even as my body made its wishes known.

"Like that, do you?" he asked, a smile playing over his lips. He darted a hot glance my way before pulling the damp thong down my legs and tossing it aside. He gave my skirt the same treatment, the muscles in his shoulders bunching as he worked it down my hips and flung it away. Then he pushed my knees wide, lowered his head, and licked straight up my center.



I arched off the bed. “Oh my God, Mr. Murray.”

Alec chuckled, his lips moving against my sex as his muffled voice floated up. “I think you should call me Alec now, lass.”

“Yes, sir,” I said on a gasp.

He lifted his head from between my thighs long enough to shoot me a grin. “Och, but I like the sir. Maybe we’ll keep that.” He winked and bent back to his task, his lips hot and greedy against my folds. He kissed my sex the same way he’d kissed my mouth, probing and stroking with his tongue until I was moaning and thrusting my hips higher. Shivers danced across my skin as I strained up to meet the wicked mouth driving me crazy.

The clink of metal made me turn my head toward Lachlan. Our gazes met and held as he undid his belt and dropped his pants to reveal black boxer briefs. The material hugged his muscular thighs, and there was a damp patch in the front where the tip of his shaft strained against the fabric. Still watching me, he pushed the waistband down and pulled out his cock.

Alec slid a finger inside me and sucked my clit hard, making me moan as I watched Lachlan grip his shaft and pump his hand up and down the hard length. Alec’s cock was longer, but Lachlan’s was thicker, with a meaty girth as round as a soda can. Like Alec’s, his balls were smooth and heavy between his legs, the sac swaying gently as he stroked himself. His gaze moved down my body, falling on Alec’s head nestled between my thighs.

“How does she taste?”

Alec gave me a long, sensual lick, then pulled himself up and beckoned to his lover. “Come find out.”

Lachlan moved swiftly. His arm shot out, and he clasped the back of Alec's head and pulled him into a kiss.

A gasp caught in my throat as raw lust shot through my veins. It was like the night in the office, only now I got an up-close-and-personal view. There was nothing sexier than their strong jaws working against each other as they took each other's mouths, and the knowledge that Lachlan was tasting me on Alec's lips made my clit throb so hard I had to bite the inside of my cheek to hold back a whimper.

Keeping a tight grip on the back of Alec's neck, Lachlan used his other hand to grasp Alec's bare ass. He squeezed the muscle, then yanked Alec's pelvis into his own. Alec groaned and thrust his hips in a quick, hard roll, grinding his cock against Lachlan's even as they continued their passionate kiss.

My chest heaved like I just ran a marathon. The erotic display was a buffet of sensual delights, and I wanted to consume everything at once. They pressed against each other from mouth to hip, giving me occasional flashes of their rock hard shafts as they kept up their sexy grind. Suffused with need, I widened my thighs and began rubbing my swollen clit in tight circles.

Lachlan broke off the kiss and swung a fierce gaze toward me. "Oh no, you don't. That pussy is ours." His golden eyes blazed as he released Alec and moved up my body. When he was next to my head, he grabbed my wrist and guided my fingers to his cock. His accent thickened. "No' to worry, lass. I'll keep yer hands busy."

I gripped his shaft and immediately gasped at its heat. He was like burning steel covered in silk, the veined length so thick my fingers didn't meet my thumb.

He groaned and pushed his hips into my hand as I began to stroke up and down. "Been waiting to feel your sweet fingers on my cock."

He had?

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“Since the day you walked into the office,” he said, seeming to answer my question.

Except I hadn’t spoken out loud.

Alec’s mouth covered my sex again, and my confusion fled as pleasure washed over me. He sucked at my clit, his tongue teasing all around the aching bud. He licked and nuzzled with exquisite skill, taking me right up to the edge only to pull me back just before I came. I squirmed against his face, my body convulsing. My hands convulsed, too, and I squeezed Lachlan’s shaft as I tried to claim my release.

He gave a throaty sound of approval. “That’s it. Stroke me.” He grasped my collar and ripped my shirt down the front, surprising a yelp from me and sending buttons flying. A rare smile lit his eyes as his gaze fell on my lacy bra, and he flicked open the front clasp with a single twist, spilling my breasts and leaving me wholly bare to his gaze.

Shivers coursed over me as he looked his fill, his gaze lingering on Alec still lapping between my thighs before traveling to my quivering breasts and tight nipples. They grew even tighter under his regard—and tighter still when he reached down and lightly pinched each pink tip.

“Stroke me harder, Chloe. I like the way your tits bounce when you work my cock.”

I obeyed, little sobs spilling from me as Alec’s mouth took me ever closer to release. “Please,” I begged. “Please let me come.”

Alec lifted his head, his lips shiny with my juices. He ran the back of his hand over

his mouth, a mischievous light dancing in his eyes. “You want to come?”

“Yes.” Exasperation made my tone sharp. He was slowly killing me with his mouth. Of course I wanted to come.

He nodded to Lachlan, who eased his cock from my grip and opened a drawer in the nightstand. He withdrew a condom and tossed it to Alec, who caught it and ripped it open with his teeth.

After he sheathed himself, he placed a gentle hand on my knee. “Still good, sweetheart? Remember, nothing you don’t want.”

“I want you,” I said without hesitation, my sex aching for him. “I want you inside me.”

“That’s good, sweet Chloe, because I can’t wait to feel your slick pussy gripping my shaft.” He positioned himself at my entrance and pushed inside. The three of us groaned at the same time, the sounds mingling with the drone of the plane’s engines. Alec’s brow knit with concentration as he held himself still while I adjusted to his girth.

“Keep going,” Lachlan murmured. His gaze was fastened on the spot where Alec’s body joined mine, and he began pumping his own shaft with slow, languid strokes. “Tell me what she feels like.”

“Tight,” Alec gasped. “Like a hot fist around my cock.” To me, he said, “Open wider, baby. I don’t want to hurt you.”

“You won’t,” I said, but I spread my legs as wide as I could. His cock was even bigger than I thought, and it seemed to rub against every nerve ending I possessed, invading me with rock hard heat. As my body relaxed, the burn faded to a sweet

fullness.

And once again, I wanted more.

Tentatively, I lifted my hips.

Alec hissed like he was hurt, then gripped my thighs with hard fingers. “Slow down, greedy girl, or this will be over before it starts.”

I thrust my hips again, shivering when my clit dragged against his dick. “More of that,” I demanded.

Lachlan’s voice was amused. “Give her what she wants, Alec.”

“You’re both too impatient,” Alec muttered, but he began to thrust, each roll of his hips sinking him deeper, until he was driving himself to the hilt with each pass.

“God, yes!” I moaned, a flush spreading down my chest as my orgasm gathered. Lachlan watching made everything hotter. Never in a million years did I think I would let one man fuck me while another looked on. Now that I was doing it, my body hummed with dark, delicious pleasure. I wanted to look everywhere at once, from Alec’s muscled body looming between my spread thighs to Lachlan’s narrowed, golden gaze as his fist flew up and down his shaft.

Alec braced his weight on his fists and pumped harder, giving me swift, steady strokes that hit my clit over and over. The room filled with the sound of my wetness and the sharp smack of skin slapping against skin.

“That’s it,” Lachlan growled. “Give her more, man.”

Alec lowered his head and doubled his pace, thrusting so hard I had to brace a hand

against the headboard to keep from knocking into the wood. My breasts bounced, and my breaths came in harsh pants as I barreled toward my release.

My gaze collided with Lachlan's, which cranked my pleasure higher. He lowered his eyes to my chest, and his hand pumped faster.

"Gonna come," he grated.

A dark thought shot through my brain like an arrow. Come on my tits.

"Yes!" His shout rang around the room, and then he was coming, his release hitting my chest in a scorching spray that painted my nipples and breasts with hot, creamy ropes. I came at the same moment, my orgasm flinging me into a sea of pure sensation. My pussy clamped hard around Alec's cock, and I threw my head back and screamed as wave after wave of pleasure washed over me. Dimly, I was aware of Alec gripping my hips and pinning me down as he gave one last thrust and unloaded deep inside me, his release so hot I felt it through the condom. More pleasure rushed me, the wave so tall and vast it pulled me under. My body flew apart, and my mind went blank.

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When I swam back to consciousness, warm hands tended me and low, gentle murmurs filled my ears.

“I can do it,” I mumbled, trying to sit up.

Someone pulled me against a hard chest, and a masculine chuckle vibrated my back. “Hush, lass, you’re limp as a noodle. We’ve got it.”

I relaxed, letting my eyes drift shut. More murmurs, and then a warm cloth wiped at my breasts and swiped between my legs. After a minute, the bed dipped and another hard chest touched my front. I lay sandwiched between the two men, their big bodies emanating heat.

This feels like a dream.

Lips touched my neck, and Alec’s brogue curled around me. His voice seemed to echo, the words overlapping. “That’s right, Chloe. ‘Tis a dream. ‘Tis naught but a dream.”

### Chapter Three

#### ALEC

Lachlan had taken a glass of scotch into the bathroom, which meant he was angry. He always drank when he was upset, and considering he’d polished off two bottles since we landed in Inverness, he was furious.



He also hadn't spoken to me in several hours. I was no detective, but I considered that pretty strong evidence I was the source of his anger. The woman sleeping a few chambers down had something to do with it, too. Fortunately, she'd slept through the rest of the flight, the transfer between plane and car, and the entire ride to the castle. The situation with her was delicate enough without introducing Lachlan's misgivings into the mix.

I sprawled in an oversize chair in his bedroom, a sigh building in my chest as I eyed the bathroom door. How much longer was he going to be? I shifted my gaze to the dresser, where he'd left the third bottle of scotch. I wasn't above taking his alcohol hostage if it meant he was forced to stop giving me the cold shoulder.

As if I'd summoned him, the door opened and he walked out, scotch in hand and a white towel around his hips.

He stopped when he saw me. "You're still up."

"Aye. According to relationship experts, you should never go to bed angry. And I know you're mad at me."

He grimaced. "You sound like an American."

"Verra well. Cross then. You're cross with me, and I think I know why. Also, our mate is American, so you should probably get used to the slang."

"You dinnae ken she's our mate."

I sat up. "I bloody well do, Lach, and so do you. Pretend all you want, but Chloe Drexel is ours."

"She's human."

“So?”

“So I hoped for something more. A mate worthy of our race.”

“I can’t tell if you’re making a joke or not. You’re so bad at it.”

He stared at me a moment, then tossed back his drink and stalked to the dresser.

I let my sigh escape at last. “That’s not going to work, you know. It’ll take half the cellar to get you drunk, and you’ll burn it off the first time you shift.” I glanced out the mullioned windows. “Which should be tomorrow, since it’s nearly a full moon.”

He met my gaze in the dresser mirror as he poured another finger of scotch. “What do you know of the moon’s call?”

“I know you can be a right git when you’re on the cusp of a forced shift. Case in point, you continue to insist a human isn’t good enough for you, which is utter shite.”

“Piss off, Alec.”

“Now who sounds American?” I stood and crossed the room, letting my gaze roam down his bare back and tight ass as I neared him. His dark hair was damp from his shower, and beads of moisture still dotted his golden skin. Even after being sated—scratch that, very sated—by the session with Chloe, I was instantly aroused at the mere sight of Lachlan. My body’s reaction to him stopped surprising me a long time ago. It was as ordinary to me now as breathing or blinking—an involuntary response that happened merely by being in the same room with him.

Damned inconvenient sometimes, but a fact nonetheless.

I reined in my lust as I stopped behind him. Because as much as those relationship

experts might hand out clichéd advice, they had a point. If I let the disagreement between Lachlan and me fester, it could end up ruining everything. We had to talk.

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Taking a deep breath, I stated the obvious. “You’re angry I claimed Chloe.”

His eyes in the mirror were hard. “Aye.”

“Not all humans are the same. This prejudice of yours is—”

“Beside the point. If she’s ours, I’ll accept it. But we agreed to wait to claim her. It’s important to be certain.”

His clipped tone was familiar. It was the same one he used whenever I tried to get to the bottom of his dislike for humans. He was reasonable about most everything in life, but human beings were his sore spot. Worse, he refused to discuss his animosity, let alone try to overcome it. Over the years, I’d learned not to push him on it.

Except now I didn’t have a choice.

“It’s not a binding claim, Lach. You know it takes both of us to make her ours for good. And she was so sad after that cocksucker fiancé of hers dumped her in front of the whole concourse.”

Suspicion shaded his eyes in the mirror. “You didn’t have anything to do with that, did you?”

For a moment, I was speechless. Then my own anger kindled. “Christ, man, of course not. I’m glad he broke things off. It needed to happen if we’re to keep her safe. But I’m not that much of an arse to set her up for public humiliation.” I frowned at him. “How could you even think it?”

He faced me, his expression contrite. “Sorry. I know you wouldn’t hurt her that way. But you charmed her on the plane. I could feel it.”

“I lowered her inhibitions.”

“You did a fair bit more than that. I’ve never seen your gift so strong.”

He had a point. Chloe had been incredibly receptive when I charmed her—an ability I inherited from my mother. A cousin of hypnotism, charming allowed the wielder to delve deep into a subject’s mind, seize a thought or fantasy, and encourage them to act on it. It was best used sparingly, as suggestion could easily slide into coercion.

Judging from Lachlan’s furrowed brow, he worried my influence over Chloe tipped toward the latter.

“I was careful,” I said. “And I couldn’t let her stay in New York. She’s been vulnerable since the day she met us. Our enemies—of which there are many, in case you’ve forgotten—would love to get their claws on her.”

“I’m aware,” he said, his voice disgruntled.

“More importantly, this trip was supposed to give you a chance to finally realize what’s been obvious for three months.” When he didn’t say anything, I added, “She’s our mate. That’s the obvious part.”

He was quiet a moment. Then he crossed his arms, his earlier displeasure resurfacing. “You shouldn’t have charmed her. Now we’ll never know if she wanted us on her own or because you put the idea in her head.”

“Are you serious?” I let out a huff of laughter as I tried to ignore how his muscles bunched with his arms folded. “I might have given her a push, but she acted on it

because she wanted to. You know she saw us together that night in the office. She hasn't stopped thinking about it." I held back a smile. Chloe Drexel might have the face of an angel, but her mind was devilishly naughty.

Lachlan's golden eyes flashed, his inner beast peeking out. "I could scent her desire even as we waited in the terminal."

"Aye, that's right," I said, seizing on his admission. "She wanted us, Lach. I've never felt a wetter pussy in my life."

"Well, you certainly enjoyed yourself with it."

The irritation in his voice gave me pause—then amusement drifted through me. "Is that what you're upset about? You didn't get to stick your cock in something?"

"Very mature, Alec."

I stepped into him, our chests nearly touching. "It is, isn't it?"

"It's no—" He sucked in a breath as I found the slit in the towel and grasped his cock. Immediately, it hardened in my hand.

"Liar," I murmured, stroking him, my own cock hardening at the feel of his thick shaft in my palm. It was like holding a steel pipe covered in silk. Needing more of him, I undid the towel and let it drop to the ground.

He leaned against the dresser, bracing himself on the heels of his palms. "Stop trying to distract me," he muttered, but he made no move to end my ministrations.

Totally nude Lachlan was a sight to behold, and for a moment I let my eyes rove freely over the bounty in front of me. Six feet, four inches of warm, muscled male.

Broad shoulders. Smooth chest. Thick thighs and swollen cock. I leaned in and kissed the underside of his jaw, licking at the scruff there. He moaned and tipped his head back, giving me better access.

“Mmm,” I murmured against his hot skin, “I like when you skip shaving for a day or two. I might fancy a bit of beard rash on my arse if you’ve a mind to put that tongue of yours to good use later. But right now, I want to taste your cock.”

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He swallowed so hard it was an audible gulp. “This is a bad idea. We might wake Chloe.”

I cupped his balls, caressing his smooth sac and smiling inwardly when he thrust his hips forward. “No, we won’t. I put her to sleep on the plane. She’ll sleep until morning and wake thinking tonight was a dream.”

He looked at me, some of the desire fading from his eyes. “You push too hard, Alec. She’s human. You’ll damage her mind.”

“I know what I’m doing,” I said. As if to demonstrate, I gripped his shaft again.

He put a forestalling hand on my chest. “I’m serious. You tread dangerously close to breaking the treaty.”

“Nonsense. We didn’t kidnap her.”

“Do you know the difference?”

I released him and stepped back. “What’s that supposed to mean?”

“This isn’t some Seelie game. The survival of our race depends on the treaty. We have no females—”

“I’m well aware we have no females,” I said, my hackles up at the mention of my mother’s people. I let a little of that side of my ancestry rise under my skin, my heart racing as power flooded my veins. “But we have our female, and I’m doing my best



to keep her safe until you stop being stubborn and admit she's ours. And it's odd you didn't seem to have a problem with her when you were ripping her shirt off and fist-fucking yourself in front of her."

The atmosphere in the room shifted, an eerie charge building like the gathering of a storm.

Lachlan pushed away from the dresser, his eyes glittering like chips of amber. "Watch your fucking mouth."

I let my power flare higher. In the mirror, my skin glowed like it was lit from within. "Watch yours, before I shut it for you."

"If you think to threaten me, prince, I advise thinking again."

I stepped toward him, my voice echoing with otherworldly power. And that was an apt description, because it came from another world entirely. "I don't need your advice, beast."

A streak of movement, and then my head snapped around, blood spraying across the Aubusson carpet. Even as I stumbled, I spared a pang of regret at the damage. I'd purchased the piece myself in a workshop in France, long before the famous rugs bore the name of their village of manufacture.

Something slammed into my shoulder, and I stumbled again and nearly went down. I caught myself and whirled just as Lachlan swung again. This time, I ducked and then surged up, punching him in the ribs.

He grunted and staggered back, his eyes like molten gold. He shook out his arms at his sides, ready to charge again. "You sure you want to do this?"

“Are you daft? You punched me. Maybe that’s too difficult a concept for your primitive brain to—”

He came at me in a blur, lowering a shoulder at the last second and tackling me around the middle. My back hit the ground, forcing a grunt from my lungs. Before he could make another move, I flipped him under me and nailed him with a right hook.

“Returnin’ the favor,” I grunted, pain knifing through my knuckles.

He shoved me off him, and I sprang to my feet and hustled back before he could strike. He swung his legs and did a kip up like a goddamn ninja, then advanced on me with clenched fists.

I raised my own, my chest heaving. We circled each other, both waiting for the other to make a mistake. To lunge too soon or expose a flank. Even with his accusations ringing in my ears, desire blasted me as I took in his nude body. His cock swung heavy between his thighs, and his muscles flexed and shifted as he moved. He had a warrior’s build, and it was all the more impressive because it was real. He’d honed it in an era when a male’s physique could mean the difference between life and death.

In another blur of movement, he flew at me, catching me around the waist and carrying us both backwards. I twisted mid-air and hit the bed on my stomach. He landed on me like a sack of bricks.

I threw an elbow. He seized my wrist and wrenched my arm to the small of my back. “This isn’t just about what Chloe wants,” he growled, his breaths coming fast. “All three of us have to choose.”

“Fuck you, Lachlan,” I panted, the side of my face pressed into the comforter. “You didn’t seem consumed by indecision when you were coming on her tits.”

“She asked me to.”

I gathered all my strength and heaved, shoving him off. Before he could recover, I seized his shoulder and pinned him face down. He struggled, but I threw a leg over his hips, straddling his back. “What are you talking about?”

Abruptly, the tension drained from his body. He turned his head, showing me his profile. “Just what I said. She spoke to me mind-to-mind. Or at least it seemed that way.”

Confusion flooded me. “But...that’s not one of your gifts.”

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“No shit.” He made a halfhearted bucking motion. “Get off me.”

I slid sideways, then kept going until I collapsed on my back next to him, my chest heaving as I caught my breath. After a second, he rolled over, his breathing equally labored. We lay side by side, our legs dangling off the end of the bed. As quickly as it came, the charge in the room faded.

Silence reigned for a moment, then he muttered, “Sorry I punched you.”

“Same. Your jaw’s hard as a fucking rock. I think I broke my hand.”

“Seriously?”

I lifted it and flexed my fingers a few times. The stabbing pain was already gone, replaced with a dull ache that meant any broken bones were already knitting back together. “It’s fine. Did you really speak mind-to-mind with Chloe?”

“Aye. Well, maybe. And she spoke to me, not the other way ‘round.”

“But you heard her in your head?”

His shrug shifted the bedding. “It was in the heat of the moment, if you ken what I mean, so I wasn’t about to stop and contemplate it.”

That wasn’t good enough. How could he be so casual about this? I raised on my elbow so I could look down at him. “Lachlan, don’t you understand? If you’ve got that kind of connection with Chloe, she must be your mate.”

His expression was neutral. “I don’t know, Alec...”

“What are the chances of you suddenly gaining a new gift after all this time?” Excitement pumped through my veins. “I wonder if it’s happened with other mates. We should ask the king.”

“No,” he said quickly. “Cormac isn’t exactly...lucid at the moment.”

I raised an eyebrow. “A nice way of saying our sovereign is bat-shit crazy.”

“In a different time, you’d be killed for saying that.”

“You gonna turn me in?” I smiled and ran my palm over his smooth chest, finding a flat, brown nipple and pinching it.

His breath hitched, and desire stirred in his golden gaze. “Not if you keep doing that.”

I plucked at his nipple again, pleasure rushing through me when he groaned. Splayed on the bed, he was a naked, bronzed god. Every inch of his body was beautifully formed, from his beard-shadowed jaw to his powerful chest and long, muscled legs. He began to writhe under my touch, his white teeth sinking into his lower lip as I moved to the other nipple and circled it with my fingertip.

“I hate it when we fight,” I murmured.

“Me too. But”—he gave a sexy moan, his eyes glittering with lust—“the makeup sex is worth it.”

I made my voice light as I ran my palm down his stomach and grasped his cock. “Who says we’re having makeup sex?”

“Fuck, Alec, don’t tease me.”

Stroking him, I leaned over and took his mouth. He met me eagerly, sliding his hot tongue against mine. His lips were firm but soft, and I went hard as stone as our jaws scraped and our breaths mingled. I deepened the kiss, tasting toothpaste and scotch.

He moaned again, the sound muffled by my mouth.

I stroked him harder, pumping his shaft with a firm hand. Loving the way he trembled as his need mounted. After a minute, the trembling turned to quick thrusts of his hips as he sought more friction.

“Suck me,” he rasped against my lips. “I want to feel your mouth around my cock.”

“How bad do you want it?”

“So fucking bad.”

I rolled off him and stood, unbuttoning my shirt. “Since you asked nicely.”

He propped himself on his elbows and watched me with a dark hunger that shot straight to my dick. Normally, I might have taken my time undressing just to stoke his passion that much higher. But he looked fit to burst, so I stripped quickly.

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“Get over here,” he growled, his gaze on my bobbing shaft.

The command rippled across my skin, raising goosebumps in its wake. Lachlan was naturally more aggressive, and it spilled over to the bedroom. Blame it on his mother’s genetics or just a quirk of nature, but he was usually more dominant in bed—a role I didn’t mind letting him play.

On the other hand, I enjoyed the hell out of making him work for his pleasure. I also wasn’t above turning the tables on him.

I walked toward him slowly, pumping my cock with leisurely strokes as I went. “Aren’t you the bossy one? Patience is most certainly not one of your virtues, Lach.”

Frustration crossed his handsome features, his expression so irritated and perplexed I had to hide my smile. He looked like a kid who’d been shown a new toy, only to have it taken away. “I don’t need patience. I need your mouth. Now.”

I stepped between his legs, letting my bare thighs brush his. I stood there for a minute, thrilling at the way his golden stare drank in my hand going up and down my cock. I inched closer and let the tip of my shaft bump his.

He sucked in a quick breath, and his accent thickened. “Christ, man, get on wae it.”

Chuckling, I went to my knees. His dick stood up like an arrow, the slit pooled with precum. I grasped his thick length and fastened my mouth around the tip, sucking it clean.

Lachlan's hips jerked hard. "Oh, fuck," he gasped. "Jesus, that's good."

Delicious was more like it. I lapped at him again, drawing more moisture from the slit. He tasted of salt and fire and Lachlan. I could never get enough. Like all our kind, he was smooth between his legs, giving me an unimpeded view of his rock hard shaft and heavy sac. I took my time with him, trailing my tongue up and down his pulsing length before licking at his balls.

He jumped and hissed, his damp shaft bumping my cheek. "Alec Murray, you are the worst fucking cocktease."

I looked up and found him scowling at me. "Well, your cock seems to like it," I said, holding his gaze as I licked him from root to tip in one long swipe.

His back bowed. "Fuck. You've got me so hard my dick's ready to explode. Suck me right now or I'll—"

I wrapped both hands around his length and sucked him deep into my mouth.

"God, yes," he groaned, bucking hard against my face. "Yes, yes. Like that. Bloody hell."

My laugh was lost to a gurgle as his dick filled my mouth. No matter how many times I sucked him off, I was always surprised at his girth. His cock was a monster, with a meaty shaft and a wide mushroom head that caught on my lips as I bobbed up and down his silken length. I opened my jaw wider, and he surged inside, his cock nudging the back of my throat.

Immediately, saliva pooled in my mouth. I loosened my jaw and breathed through my nose, deep throating him the way he liked.



He sat up with a growl and grasped my hair in both hands, his hips thrusting faster. “That’s it, man. Take me deep.”

My cock throbbed between my legs, but I ignored it. Lachlan needed this. As much as he tried to resist Chloe, he wanted her. And because he wouldn’t let himself have her, his body was burning up with unsatisfied desire. It was also important for things to be right and whole between us. We couldn’t win Chloe over if we were at odds with each other.

Because Lachlan was right about one thing. She was human. Revealing our true natures was going to turn her world upside down. When that happened, it would take both of us to make sure her mind could handle the shock.

Lachlan stood, pulling at my hair as he yanked me tighter against his groin. Between curses and moans, he spread his powerful thighs wide and quickened his pace. I tipped my head back, taking him even deeper.

His eyes went wide, and he gave a thick growl of approval. “Sweet Christ, man. Nothin’ better than this.”

Oh really? Well, if he wanted a challenge... I slid my tongue past my lower lip so the tip caressed his sac.

“Yes,” he rasped. “Stay just like that.”

Amusement drifted through me. I was hardly going anywhere with him tunneling in and out of my mouth like a piston.

His fingers tightened in my hair, holding my head still as he thrust faster. His breaths alternated between gasps and growls, and sweat broke out across his forehead.

“Love this,” he said hoarsely. “Love you on your knees when I’m fucking your mouth. Goin’ so deep down your throat. Christ, Alec, you know how to suck a dick.” The dirty talk seemed to spur him on, because he yanked harder at my hair and pumped in earnest, drilling the back of my throat in quick strikes that rocked my whole body and made my erection flap wildly between my legs.

I hummed, knowing he’d feel the vibration around his shaft.

A mix of modern and ancient Gaelic spilled from his lips—some of the words so old they probably hadn’t been spoken aloud in centuries.

Still humming, I gave his bouncing sac a squeeze before delving between his cheeks, my finger finding his puckered entrance. Aided by saliva, I pushed inside.

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He cried out, his thrusts growing frenzied. “Gonna...come...so...hard.”

I pumped my finger in and out of his ass as I hummed all around his cock.

He gave a few more disjointed thrusts and then spurted hard against my throat with a shout. I swallowed his hot essence as I drank in the erotic sight of him standing over me like some ancient conqueror. He was magnificent, his muscled chest sheened with sweat. He’d thrown his head back, and his sexy mouth was open on a long, sensual moan. I sucked gently at his pulsing, softened shaft, drawing the last of his come down my throat.

He shuddered, his chest heaving, and his fingers slid from my hair. After a second, he pulled out of my mouth and looked down.

Gaze locked with his, I wiped a trickle of come from the corner of my mouth and sucked it off my thumb.

“Alec,” he breathed, his eyes fierce with emotion. In one motion, he tugged me to my feet and tipped us both onto the bed. We collapsed in a heap, his fist already pumping me.

I closed my eyes on a groan, my hips bucking. “Fuck. Won’t be long.”

“Come for me, then,” he murmured. His warm body pressed against mine and his breath stirred my hair as his fist flew. “Come all over my hand. Do it now.”

The growled command was all it took. Pressure boiled up my balls and into my shaft,

and then I was shooting my load into his fist and onto my stomach. Colors burst in front of my eyes, the world reduced to my cock and Lachlan's fist and the utter bliss drumming through every nerve ending. He knew just how to handle me, jerking me off fast and then slow as I arched and cried out. Just as my shaft became too sensitive, he released me and settled back.

As I came down, he left the bed, then returned with my shirt, which he wiped over my chest and stomach. As he mopped up my mess, I caught a flash of red on the fabric. Ah, yes. He must have broken the skin when he cracked my jaw. From bleeding to coming within fifteen minutes. It wasn't the first time.

"I liked that shirt," I said weakly, still trying to catch my breath.

"You can afford another one."

Well, that was true. Our kind had a thing for amassing wealth. It was one of a small handful of weaknesses.

Mates were another.

He flung himself next to me and scrubbed a hand over his face.

I rolled to my side and raised my eyebrows. "Feel better?"

He spoke without removing his hand. "Yes." There was a long pause. Then, "Perhaps I was a wee bit pent up." At my soft laugh, he lifted his hand and gave me a disgruntled look. "What? You want a formal apology on engraved paper?"

"No, Lachlan. Your tight arse is quite enough." Smiling, I kissed him, passion firing all over again at the feel of his lips and tongue. When he was relaxed and breathless, I broke off the kiss and murmured, "Love you."

“I love you, too,” he said huskily.

“And we could love her. We’ve waited a long time for our mate, Lach. And you’ve waited longer than most.”

Pain flashed in his eyes—there and gone so quickly I might have missed it if I hadn’t been inches away. Our bond was forged in fire. Nothing could break it.

But something was missing, and we both felt the lack.

He swallowed. “Aye, a long time.”

“You want her,” I said. “You connected with her on the plane.”

“Of course I want her. She’s a beautiful woman.” His dark brows drew together. “But wanting her isn’t the same as mating her.”

If he hadn’t been so obviously angst-ridden, I might have punched him again for being so stubborn. He was determined to deny Chloe simply because she wasn’t what he expected. Fortunately, last night proved his body already knew the truth even if his hard head needed more time to process reality.

But maybe I could prod him along.

“Her being human could be a good thing,” I said. “We don’t have to worry about her kin trying to take her back.”

He said nothing. Then again, he didn’t argue. It was a start.

“Use these two weeks to get to know her better.”

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His chest lifted in a sigh, but it was one of acquiescence rather than frustration. “The moon calls. I have to hunt tomorrow.”

“That not a problem. I’ll take her around the castle. Maybe show her the long gallery.” My mind filled with images of Chloe strolling before me, her long legs encased in the tight jeans she sometimes wore on casual days in the office. She had a glorious body, with round tits and ample hips. I wanted to explore it for hours. The mere thought made my cock stir.

“And you won’t show her anything else,” Lachlan said, a note of warning in his voice.

“I’m not gonna fuck her, if that’s what you mean.”

“I meant charming her, but you make a good point. Keep your dick in your trews and your brain to yourself, Alec.”

I tried to look insulted, but I ended up smiling. “I’ll be on my very best behavior.”

“That’s what I’m afraid of.”

### Chapter Four

#### CHLOE

I could never face Alec or Lachlan again.

Which was massively inconvenient, given that I was staying in their castle.

I'd woken in a canopied bed in a room fit for a princess. Sunlight had streamed through windows framed in blue velvet curtains. Ten-year-old me would have sunk into the feather pillows and possibly died of happiness.

Twenty-four-year-old me had buried my face in my hands and groaned as yesterday's events paraded through my head like a bad movie.

The airport.

Josh. (That dick.)

Lachlan carrying me.

Alec comforting me.

Blacking out on the airplane.

Having zero recollection of landing in Scotland or getting from the jet to the castle.

Having no idea how I could have possibly slept so long.

Having the most erotic dream of my life.

I hadn't stopped thinking about it—not when I got out of bed and realized my panties were soaked. Not when I wondered just which one of my bosses had put me in one of the nightgowns from my suitcase. Not when I stood in the en suite shower with images of hard, male bodies filling my head. The scenes were so vivid, it was as if I'd lived them.

Somehow, I managed to do my hair and put on a light makeup application even as glimpses of bare chests and thick cocks flickered through my mind. I'd pulled on a pair of jeans and a plain, long-sleeved shirt.

Then immediately swapped the shirt for a sweater when my hardened nipples poked under the fabric.

I'd done everything I could to banish the remnants of the dream. I hung my clothes in the big, wooden wardrobe that looked like it probably led to Narnia. I restyled my hair. Applied more makeup. Wiped some of it off. Searched for my phone, which was nowhere to be found.

Despite everything, the images refused to go away. Problem was, I couldn't stay in my room forever. Alec had left a note:

Come to the kitchen when you're up. I'll make breakfast. — A

Even his handwriting was beautiful. My third grade teacher would have gasped in delight at his elegant loops and curves, which looked like something from the Declaration of Independence instead of a casual note from a host to a house guest.

Well, technically, boss to employee.

Which was exactly why I had to erase the dream from my brain. I was already guilty of lusting after my bosses. Lots of women in my position would do the same. But now I was fantasizing in vivid detail about having a ménage à trois with my employers. Knowing they were gay made it worse—as if I intruded on a sacred part of their relationship.



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I sank onto the edge of the bed and groaned. The dream was obviously the result of stress brought on by Josh dumping me. I didn't need a psychologist to explain why my brain had pounced on Alec and Lachlan for my forbidden fantasy. They'd rescued me from an intolerable situation. They were rich. Gorgeous. Wealthy. Scottish.

They were also unattainable. Even if they were into women, they would never choose someone like me. I didn't even have a college degree. After high school, all my friends rushed off to universities, their lives mapped out. But I'd had no idea what I wanted to be. My mother's real estate career held little interest, and none of my stepfathers' jobs ever seemed all that exciting. At eighteen, I'd assumed I had plenty of time to figure out my path. Then a year passed. Then two. Then I met Josh and his legal ambitions took center stage. Yale didn't come cheap, so I'd worked while he studied. It made sense. Why force him to put his dreams on hold when I didn't even know what I wanted out of life?

I'd wanted a life with him, and look where that got me. Four years down the drain. I was an idiot for neglecting my future so he could seize his.

The scent of bacon drifted under my nose, drawing my gaze to the door. If I didn't obey Alec's summons, he would probably come looking for me—and I did not want to end up in a bedroom with him. Swallowing hard, I forced myself off the bed and across the room, glancing in the dresser mirror as I went.

My cheeks were flushed, but my appearance was otherwise acceptable. No one would know I'd spent the past two hours reliving an X-rated dream.

“You're a stunning woman, Chloe Drexel. Damn near irresistible.”

I shoved Dream Alec's voice from my head as I opened the door and stepped into a broad hallway lined with suits of armor. He'd never said those things to me, and I had to keep that reality front and center in my brain.

I followed the smell of bacon down the hall to a grand staircase that opened onto a black-and-white checkered foyer. Awe filled me as I descended the stairs, and I couldn't help gawking at the castle's lush interior. I'd known Alec and Lachlan had money, but I didn't realize just how much. I was so busy admiring the banister's intricate carvings, I didn't notice Alec until he spoke from the foot of the staircase.

"There you are, sleeping beauty."

I stumbled the last few steps, lost my footing, and pitched forward.

He caught me easily, his broad chest absorbing the impact as our bodies met and our feet tangled. The scent of forest and cologne filled my nose, and his green eyes smiled down at me. "Och, lass, I didn't mean to startle you."

My heart raced from a combination of desire and mortification. I stepped back before I could do something stupid like stroke my hand over the bristly reddish-brown hairs that shadowed his jaw. "You didn't," I said, my cheeks burning. "I'm just clumsy."

His eyes softened. "Surely not, Chloe lass. You're probably just getting your land legs back after the long flight."

For a second, I could only stand there, mesmerized by his roguish grin and masculine beauty. His thin black sweater turned his red-gold hair to fire, and his worn jeans clung to his hips. Even in the casual, American clothes, there was no mistaking him for anything but a Highlander. His shoulders stretched his sweater, and his big hands looked like they could rip a man in two if necessary.

Out of nowhere, an image of his glittering green eyes boring into mine as he thrust inside me popped into my head. I sucked in a sharp breath.

What was wrong with me?

His smile faltered. “Is something wrong?”

“Not at all.”

Sympathy filled his gaze. “Do you think you’re up to eating? You had quite a shock yesterday.”

My stomach growled so loudly, we both looked at it.

I slapped a hand over my midsection as he chuckled. “I’ll take that as a yes.” He proffered his arm in a courtly gesture. “I hope you’re ready for the best breakfast you’ve ever tasted in your life.”

There was no way to gracefully decline. He’d just heard my stomach trying to claw its way from my body. And I hadn’t eaten since yesterday. So I took his arm and let him lead me across the foyer. “You don’t have to cook for me.”

“Nonsense. You’re a guest. Besides, it was either me or Lachlan, and I’m a far better cook.”

My stomach did a flip. I’d been so preoccupied with the dream, I forgot to worry about Lachlan not wanting me on the trip. “Is he eating with us?”

“Afraid not,” Alec said, afraid sounding like afreed. “He had some business in Inverness. He’ll be back later this evening. But don’t you worry. I’ve got plenty of activities to keep us busy.”

At the mention of activities, a flurry of erotic images flooded my mind. I stumbled again and might have gone down if not for his grip on my arm.

“Whoa, lass.” He stopped, steadying me. “You sure you’re all right? Maybe I should take you back to bed.”

“No!” My protest rang off the stone walls. I couldn’t let him get anywhere near a bed in my presence. My brain would melt.

Meanwhile, his eyes had gone wide.

I took a deep breath. “I mean, no thank you. I promise I’m okay. Like you said, it’s probably just jet lag.”

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His expression cleared. “Och, probably so. Come now. Coffee and food will put you right.”

I had serious doubts anything could put me right at this point, but I managed a weak smile as I let him lead me again. Maybe I really was jet lagged, because my head was so hazy I had trouble focusing. Fortunately, he didn’t seem bothered when I leaned hard on his arm, my fingers curling around his bicep.

“The kitchen’s not far,” he said in a bright voice. “It actually used to be a library, but we— Ah, the previous owners gutted it over a century ago.”

“Why would they do that?”

“Well, the castle already had two, but the old kitchen was in a separate building. People used to build them that way to keep from burnin’ the whole place down if a grease fire got out of hand.”

“Did it work?”

“Aye, and I assume that’s why you never see any fat people depicted in medieval art. It’s cold in the Highlands. You think twice about fetching a midnight snack if you have to freeze your bawbag off to get it.”

I couldn’t help laughing at his use of bawbag—one of the more colorful slang words I’d picked up while working for him over the past three months.

He grinned down at me, his eyes dancing with mischief.

“No,” I said, “that’s definitely not worth it.”

“Too right, lass. Ah, here we are.”

Like the rest of the castle, the kitchen was a mix of old and new. Modern cabinetry and stainless steel appliances blended with stone walls and arched, wooden ceilings. Alec steered me toward a spacious island next to the oven. “You sit. I’ll cook.”

“Oh no, I can help.”

“Arse in chair, Chloe. That’s an order.” The command was delivered in a teasing tone, but it still made desire flutter low in my belly.

“Okay,” I said meekly, grateful for the marble countertop that hid my lower half as I squeezed my thighs together.

He worked quickly, pulling out ingredients and turning on the stove’s burners. In no time, he had a pan of bacon frying and a coffee pot brewing in the background. There was something insanely sexy about a man who knew his way around a kitchen, and it didn’t take long for the flutters of desire to bloom into something stronger and more persistent. My heart sped up as he stood whisking eggs with his back to me, his perfect ass lovingly hugged by his faded jeans.

He hadn’t worn any underwear in the dream.

“Scrambled or omelet?” he asked, turning around with the bowl in hand.

I jerked my gaze to his. “Um, scrambled, please.” My throat went dry. There was no way he hadn’t noticed me ogling his ass, but he was too polite to say anything. I lowered my eyes, pretending to be suddenly fascinated by the veining in the marble.

“I have something of yours,” he said as he poured the eggs into a skillet.

I looked up. “Oh?”

He pulled my phone from his pocket and handed it over. “It was dead when we landed last night. I put it on the adapter to charge.”

“I’m kind of afraid to see my messages,” I murmured, powering it on. Knowing Josh, he’d already contacted my family and our mutual friends in a bid to control the narrative about what happened. He was a stickler for managing his reputation, so he’d probably come up with some lame story for canceling the wedding.

My heart raced as the screen lit up. Sure enough, there was a long list of missed calls—half of them from my mother. I also had over a hundred unread text messages and just as many emails. And not one of them was from Josh.

Blood pounded in my ears. He couldn’t even be bothered to make sure I landed in Scotland okay? Then again, he was probably busy with Clarissa. Maybe he even took her back to our apartment.

Jesus, were they sleeping together in my bed?

I flipped the phone facedown on the counter.

Alec slid bacon and eggs onto plates. “That bad, huh?”

There was genuine sympathy in his voice, which meant he cared more about me than the man that, up until twenty-four hours ago, I thought I was going to spend the rest of my life with.

“You know,” I said slowly, “it probably sounds weird, but I’m glad it happened. Josh

couldn't even wait for me to leave town before he cheated. He would have been unfaithful during our marriage." A shiver shot down my spine. "God, imagine if I'd had kids with him."



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Alec's face was kind. "I think that's a very positive way of viewing the whole situation. I'm proud of you, Chloe. Not many people could hold themselves together after an experience like that."

Proud of me. Something told me that wasn't going to be my mother's reaction. Throat tight, I said, "Thank you, Mr. Murray."

"Alec, lass. Just Alec."

But I like the sir. Maybe we'll keep that.

The dark words rolled through my head, overlapping the ones he'd just spoken aloud. The Alec in front of me faded, replaced with Dream Alec who lifted his head from between my legs, his mouth glistening from my sex. I blinked hard. For a moment, the two Alecs merged, and the whine of a jet engine filled my ears.

"Chloe?"

Like the flip of a switch, the vision vanished. The real Alec stood on the other side of the counter with two plates of steaming breakfast food in front of him. As the scent of cooked bacon hit my nose, my stomach lurched.

"I..." Sweat broke out across my forehead.

He frowned. "What's wrong, honey? You've gone pale as a sheet."

My mouth watered uncontrollably as my stomach pitched. "The food," I said weakly.

He moved fast, removing the plates and rushing to the sink, where he held a towel under the tap. Then he was at my side and pressing the cold cloth against my nape as he rubbed the small of my back. “I’m sorry,” he murmured. He sounded contrite, as if he was somehow responsible for my nausea.

I tried to say “not your fault” but it came out so garbled he probably didn’t catch it. Talking made things worse, so I clamped my mouth shut and concentrated on not vomiting on his kitchen counter.

Slowly, the queasiness receded.

He seemed to sense it. “Better?”

“Yes.” Except I’d embarrassed myself all over again. No wonder Lachlan had to leave for “business.” I was supposed to be the men’s assistant. Instead, they’d ended up looking after me.

“You stay put,” Alec said. “I’ve got a miracle cure for nausea.”

His trilled meeracle, along with the purposeful way he bustled off, made me sit up and smile. “A miracle cure? If this works, you should bottle it and sell it.”

“It works,” he said airily, his back to me once more.

This time, I kept my gaze squarely on his shoulders. Not that it did much good, considering his upper half was just as sexy as the lower. As if my body wanted to prove a point, it started humming with desire again.

Seriously, what the hell was wrong with me? While I had a healthy enough sex drive, I was hardly a nymphomaniac. Yet here I was getting turned on just moments after nearly puking.

He turned and set a plate of toast in front of me.

I stared at the neatly cut wedges. “This is toast.”

“No. It’s dry toast.”

“This is your miracle cure?”

“Aye.”

He looked so proud of himself, I covered my mouth to hide my smile.

A reddish-gold eyebrow went up. “Laugh all you want, lassie, but that’s a miracle on a plate.”

Meeracle. If his body didn’t tip me over the edge, his accent would.

He folded his arms and nodded toward the toast. Clearly, he wasn’t going anywhere, so I sighed and took a cautious bite. When my stomach stayed calm, I took another and then another, and then suddenly I’d finished an entire wedge. And I felt...pretty good, actually.

Alec’s handsome face was smug. “Admit it, lass. That’s miracle toast.”

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I wiped my mouth as I laughed. “I do feel better so, yes, I admit it.”

“Think you’re up for a tour of the castle?”

The word “castle” was all it took to banish the last of my nausea. “I know how crazy you are about castles,” Josh had said. “Go stay in one and enjoy yourself.”

He could fuck right off, but his advice in that regard was solid. I was sitting inside a real castle in the Scottish Highlands, and an honest-to-goodness Highlander was offering to act as my tour guide. I probably wouldn’t get this kind of opportunity again.

I smiled at Alec. “Honestly, I would love it.”

\* \* \*

Halfway through the tour, I had to clutch my sides because they hurt so much from laughing. Alec should have worked in a museum, because he had a story for every painting, piece of art, and stick of furniture. And his stories were more often than not raunchy or downright outrageous.

In the long gallery, which was literally a long room built for indoor strolling during Elizabethan times, I blushed at a painting of a man in a fur-lined doublet and an enormous codpiece.

“Och, that’s a bad look, isn’t it?” Alec said beside me. Big shafts of late morning sunlight slanted through the windows and turned his hair to a rich garnet.

“Why would men wear those?”

“There were no trousers yet. Just hose, like a pair of stockings a woman might wear today. When fashion changed and men started favoring shorter doublets, they found their bits and bobs were exposed, so the codpiece was the solution. They started out as fabric and then evolved into a contest o’ sorts.”

“So, basically, you’re saying nothing’s changed in five hundred years?”

He grinned. “Fair point, lass.”

My heart rate picked up, and my relief at Lachlan’s absence evaporated. Without his gruff snarls and stern looks, there was no buffer between me and Alec’s unrelenting charm. Every time he smiled or winked, scenes from the dream threatened to surface. The easy solution was to make up an excuse and escape to my room. But Alec had been kind enough to show me the castle. I’d already caused enough disruption with my wedding nightmare and nausea at breakfast. I wasn’t about to add unnecessary drama to the mix.

We moved to another painting, and I gasped. “He looks so much like Lachlan!” A forbidding-looking figure stood on a green hillside with a horse at his side. Except for the knee breeches and curly wig, the man was the spitting image of my taciturn boss.

Alec stared at the painting. Then, almost to himself, he murmured, “He loved that horse.”

“How do you know? Did he leave documents behind?”

Before he could answer, my phone buzzed. Right away, my blood turned to ice in my veins. What if it was Josh? What would I say to him?

But when I dug in my pocket, it was my mother's name on the screen.

Oh no.

I looked at Alec. "It's my mom. I'm not sure I want to answer it." I kept my voice low, as if speaking too loudly might summon her through the phone.

"It's your choice, honey. If you let it go to voice mail, I won't tell anyone."

His steady, quiet support was exactly what I needed. My mother couldn't hurt me. Not with six-and-a-half feet of Scot at my side.

Besides, if I ignored her for too long, there was the possibility she would get on a plane and come find me. "Stubborn" was too weak of a word to describe my mother.

Taking a deep breath, I swiped the screen and put the phone to my ear. "Hey, Mom."

My mother's voice was sharp as a rapier and so loud it frazzled the ear piece. "Chloe, you have outdone yourself this time!"

I winced and pulled the phone away. "What are you talking about?"

"What am I talking about? I'm talking about your wedding! I'm talking about you abandoning Joshua so you can spend two weeks with those men."

I swung away from Alec and hunched my shoulders. "Mother—"

"I've held my peace all this time because you're a grown woman and you make your own decisions, but do you realize how unsavory this looks? A woman vacationing alone with two gay men? No wonder Josh got cold feet."

*Source Creation Date: July 11, 2025, 5:10 am*

“Is that what he told you?” I demanded, my blood heating. “Did he mention I caught him kissing his co-worker in the airport?”

There was a pause, and I could almost hear her pressing her lips together.

“Josh has worked hard to get where he is, Chloe.”

“What’s that got to do with anything?”

“He has a reputation to protect. He can’t have a wife involved with people who flaunt an alternative lifestyle.” She made a dismissive sound and added, “Or whatever they’re calling it now.”

My anger flared, and for the first time I understood what people meant when they talked about being so furious their blood boiled. Gripping the phone, I spoke in a low, trembling voice. “It’s none of your business what people do, Mom. You and Dad divorced before I turned two, and then you ran through three more husbands. You’re in no position to judge anyone’s relationship.”

The line went quiet.

“Mom?”

“Chloe Ann Drexel, I never thought I would say this, but I am ashamed to be your mother in this moment.”

I froze. When my mother got angry, she didn’t yell. Instead, she became eerily calm.

Over the years, I'd learned to recognize the tone that signaled she was ready to say something truly awful.

After another tense silence, it came. "Return home immediately and maybe you can work things out with Josh. He said he's willing to listen. But if you stay in Scotland with those faggots, I don't think he'll have anything more to say to you. And neither will I."

"Mom—"

"Chloe, you either come home now, or you're no longer part of this family."

The call ended.

For a second, I just stood there, my whole body numb. Somewhere in my mind, I knew I should be shocked. Except I wasn't, and maybe it was because I'd always known my mother was capable of such casual bigotry. But Josh?

No, he didn't care about Alec and Lachlan. Hell, he pushed me to go to Scotland. Obviously, he'd wanted me gone so he could be with Clarissa, but he wouldn't have encouraged me if he had an issue. He was just using my trip as a reason to excuse his disgusting behavior. He'd obviously sensed my mother's feelings and decided to capitalize on them.

God, he was such an asshole.

Misery rose hot and thick, then settled over me like a lead weight. Slowly, I faced Alec, who stood in the same spot with his arms folded lightly over his broad chest. "How much did you hear?"

His smile was wry. "Your mother has strong opinions."



“Please know I don’t share them.”

“I do ken that, sweetheart.”

There was no anger or condemnation on his face. He didn’t seem the least bit ruffled by my mother’s insult, even though he had every right to be.

“I’m so sorry for everything that’s happened,” I said. “The airport yesterday...and now this.”

He came to me and clasped my shoulders in a light grip. “You didn’t cause any of it, Chloe. It’s not your fault people you trusted betrayed that trust.”

I shook my head as bitterness welled inside me. “Honestly, the hardest part is realizing what a fool I was to think Josh was a good person, let alone someone I should marry. Or maybe I was just willfully blind. He’s changed a lot since he started practicing law. I mean, he was always ambitious. He wanted the big firm lifestyle and the prestige that comes with it.” I gave a humorless laugh. “An executive assistant for a wife isn’t very prestigious.”

“Hey now.” Alec curled a finger under my chin. “Your job is important, and you’re bloody brilliant at it. Lach and I are tough to work for. We may look civilized on the outside, but we’re rough, unruly beasts underneath. It takes a lot to keep us in line. You’re exactly the drill sergeant we need.”

I smiled, because sometimes it did take a bit of bossing to keep the two of them on schedule. “You’re not tough to work for.”

“You’re right, o’ course.” His eyes twinkled, and his face split in a grin. “I’m easy. Lachlan’s the pain in the arse.”

His air of mischief was so infectious, the heavy feeling lifted, and I felt my smile grow as my body relaxed.

We stood like that for a moment, the gallery quiet and still around us. Sunlight puddled at our feet and warmed my skin. His fingers under my chin were warmer.

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And he was close. Much too close. So close I could feel the heat from his body and see the gold striations in his green pupils.

His eyes were gorgeous—almost inhuman. No man should be this sexy. Desire quickened in my blood, and I tensed, ready to lift onto my toes to kiss him, when I remembered this was my boss and what the hell was I doing? He just overheard my mother slander him for being gay and now I was ready to make out with him?

I took a quick step back, dislodging his grip. My heart pumped fast and my body trembled like I just lurched out of the path of a speeding car. “U-Um, thank you for the tour.”

His brows pulled together. “There’s a lot more to see.” He nodded toward a spot behind me. “The gallery opens onto the roof. On a clear day, you can see the church spires along the River Ness.”

“Maybe later.” I forced a smile, hoping I didn’t sound as jumpy as I felt. “I think I just need a little more sleep. My body’s still adjusting to the time difference.” And a near-constant state of arousal. “I know this is a working trip, and I promise I’m not trying to—”

“Chloe,” he interrupted, his tone gently chiding. “You take the afternoon to rest. Lach and I will catch up with you around dinnertime.”

“All right.” I swallowed the Mr. Murray that wanted to slip from my tongue. Things were safer between us before he became Alec.

Before the dream.

I had to forget it. I had to permanently ban the images of entwined male bodies and rock hard cocks from my mind.

But as I placed my hand on his firm forearm and let him escort me from the gallery, I was almost certain there was no putting that genie back in the bottle.

## Chapter Five

### LACHLAN

As I entered the castle, there were a half dozen reasons for my bad mood. Chief among them was the need to use the front door—something I generally avoided, given it took twice as long as simply leaping to the balcony from the ground. But Chloe's window overlooked the same courtyard, and I couldn't risk her seeing me do something no ordinary man should be able to do.

Miss Drexel was another reason for the displeasure that snaked through my veins in a steady flow I'd been unable to stem.

Despite my best efforts, I couldn't get her out of my head. Normally, the moon's call was so strong it blotted out all other thought. Held in its silver grip, I was free to drift across the sky, my mind unburdened by the weight of years of fruitless searching.

But as night had fallen and the stars winked overhead, my thoughts had returned again and again to Chloe. Although my body still hummed from our shared passion, it was the aftermath that kept invading my head. It was I who carried her from the plane to the car, and I who held her on the winding drive from the airfield to the castle. I would have transferred her to Alec, but she'd curled against me like a sleepy kitten, her body warm and her pale hair smelling of jasmine.

That damn scent clung to me still, and it had filled my lungs as I dipped over the city I could obliterate with a sigh.

So clueless, humans. It was the great gift of their species. They could pretend they held dominion over the planet.

Just as long as they didn't look up.

That was why Alec had to be wrong. Chloe couldn't be our mate. Fate wouldn't be so cruel as to saddle us with such a fragile creature. One so easily broken or stolen.

Of course, fate had been screwing our species over for more than a thousand years.

Unlike the other Firstborn Races, our kind didn't have any alliances. The Great Treaty, signed by our king millennia ago, was the closest we had to any guarantee of a peaceful coexistence with the other magic wielders in the world. But that agreement was mostly one-sided, and our enemies were forever looking for ways to strike without breaching its terms. Any mate of ours would be a target.

A human mate would be a burden.

And yet I couldn't keep Chloe out of my head. Hadn't been able to since she walked into my office three months ago. She was an alluring mix of temptress and innocent. Her features were delicate, almost doll-like, with wide, blue eyes and smooth skin and a silly dab of a nose. But all that blushing prettiness stopped at her mouth. Plump and pink, her lips were made for closed doors and black silk sheets. And she had this habit of nibbling the lower one when she was deep in thought or perplexed about something.

Her body was just as distracting. She dressed her supple curves in work-appropriate clothes, but no amount of fabric could hide those long legs and firm tits. The nip of a

waist and rounded ass. I wanted to sink into her heat. To feel her pussy ripple around my shaft while her siren's mouth begged for more.

And that was exactly what I'd planned on doing while she was in Scotland, assuming she wanted it. Which she did, of course. Alec was right about that. But he was wrong about her being ours. One questionable bout of telepathy was hardly proof of a mate bond. I didn't need to, as he put it, "get to know her better." I needed to bed her—preferably with Alec along for the ride—until I got her out of my system. Then she could be on her way and Alec and I could go back to searching for our true mate.

And we could put the inconvenience of Chloe Drexel behind us forever.

"Where's Chloe?" I asked as I strode into my bedroom and saw Alec sprawled in one of the chairs in the sitting area.

He pulled his gaze from the flat screen TV on the opposite wall, where a rugby match was in full swing. "And a good evening to you, too, Lachlan."

I sat on the sofa and looked him over. His hair was damp, the red-gold strands appearing almost brown. His bare feet were propped on an ottoman, and he wore nothing but a pair of black sweatpants. The table next to him held a glass ashtray full of cigarette butts.

*Source Creation Date: July 11, 2025, 5:10 am*

I raised an eyebrow. “Cold shower and a pack of cigarettes? You kept your word, Alec. I’m impressed.”

“Aye, and I have the blue balls to prove it.” He scowled and muttered, “Despite jacking off twice in the shower.”

Immediately, my mind conjured an image of him standing under the spray, his muscular ass flexing while his hand worked his cock. Lust bolted straight to my groin, but I forced myself to focus on the conversation. The sooner we slept with Chloe, the sooner we could put this whole trip behind us.

“How was she today?” I asked.

“Honestly, not good.” His air of sexual frustration disappeared, replaced with one of concern. “I worry you may be right about me charming her. She seemed disoriented this morning. Then her mother called, and things went even further to hell.”

“What happened?”

He ran through the events of the day, starting with Chloe feeling ill at breakfast and ending with her mother’s ultimatum.

When he finished, I let out a low whistle. “Do you think she’s serious about disowning Chloe?”

“She sounded pretty damn serious. And from the look on Chloe’s face afterward, I’d have to say, yeah, she meant it.”

“How close is Chloe with her family?”

Alec tilted his head, and his voice was lightly reproving when he said, “All that information was in the background check report I left on your desk when we hired her.”

“You hired her.”

“Did you read the report?”

“Refresh my memory.”

He gave me a look, but said, “She’s an only child. Her father died when she was young. The mother is a real estate broker, but her Manhattan apartment is far too nice for someone who sells a few modest properties a year. She seems to have made a career out of building wealth through marriage.” He snorted. “It’s always the serial monogamists who have the most problems with other people’s sex lives.”

I mulled over this information, which was indeed new since, as Alec was all too aware, I hadn’t read his report. Between his words and little hints Chloe had dropped here and there, it was clear her childhood had been one of genteel neglect—a child raised by nannies and day camps.

People with that kind of upbringing often ended up shy or cold. But Chloe was neither. Everyone in the New York office loved her. She was forever bringing in donuts or little treats for the staff. One time she even bought the receptionist a plant in a rainbow-colored pot so outrageously bright I’d done a double take when I passed it.

“What’s this bloody thing?” I’d asked.



Chloe had looked up from arranging the leaves. “Oh! Mr. MacKay.” Her cheeks had turned bright pink, and she swallowed several times before saying, “It’s a plant.”

“I can see that, Miss Drexel. I meant the pot astronauts can see from the space station.”

At first, she frowned, her baby blue gaze filled with confusion. Then she let out a nervous laugh. “It is colorful, I’ll give you that. It represents the Rainbow Bridge. You know, for pets.” When I continued staring at her blankly, she said, “You don’t know.”

I shook my head.

She darted a look over her shoulder, making the blond waves she’d tied in a low ponytail swish over her generous breasts. When she faced me, she lowered her voice. “Karen’s cat passed away, so I wanted to cheer her up. There’s this poem that says pets cross a Rainbow Bridge into Heaven when they die, and they wait for their owners in a green meadow full of sunshine.”

It took a minute for her explanation to sink in—probably because I was busy staring at her mouth. That pouty, pink mouth that made my dick twitch even as she talked of receptionists and cats.

“Mr. MacKay?” She nibbled her lower lip, anxiety hovering in her gaze. “I can move the plant if it’s too bright for the office.”

I wanted to yell at her to stop that nonsense. To stop making the whole world fantasize about fucking her mouth. Instead, I’d muttered “keep it” and walked away before I could kiss her or fire her.

Alec made a sound, drawing me back to the present. “Would you look at that?” he

asked, pointing to the TV, where referees dragged two shouting players apart. “These refs are out of control. Just let the lads play, you clatty bastards.”

“Do you think she’ll go back to New York?” I asked.

He turned the TV off and looked at me, his green gaze far too perceptive for his seemingly casual pose. “I’m not giving her the option,” he said simply.

“She’s a modern woman. She’s used to making her own decisions.” And she could easily decide we weren’t worth ruining relationships with her family, especially after she found out what we really wanted from her. Chloe might fantasize about us, but there was a difference between indulging in a hot daydream and acting on it.

*Source Creation Date: July 11, 2025, 5:10 am*

Alec's beast moved through his eyes, revealing the possessive, deadly creature beneath the tan skin and easy smiles. Then he shrugged. "I'll seduce her. She won't realize she never had a choice."

"What about her mind? If she's that fragile—"

"I won't charm her." A wicked light entered his eyes. "I won't need to."

"You think that will work?"

He lowered his chin. "Lachlan."

Fair point. Still... "Seducing her could be a slow-moving process, given the wedding drama and now this line in the sand from her mother. You said she shied away from you today in the gallery. She's obviously confused by her feelings for us. It might take time for her to come around to the idea of two men at once." I leveled a look at him. "And patience is most certainly not one of your virtues, Alec."

His nostrils flared as he recognized his line from the day before, and I didn't need his mental gifts to know he was thinking of what had followed. He ran his gaze down my body, taking in the plain white T-shirt and loose trousers I'd pulled on after my shift. Voice gruff, and maybe a little begrudging, he said, "How was your hunt?"

"Uneventful."

"Boring?"

It was my turn to shrug. “It’s better when you’re there.” Alec wasn’t pulled by the moon as I was, but he was still a predator—maybe even more so, given his lineage. Most of the time, he joined me when the moon’s draw became too hard to resist. But we couldn’t risk leaving Chloe unattended. Not when her presence in the castle put a target on her back.

“So you’re saying you missed me,” he said. Between his smirk and the heat building in his eyes, he liked the idea of that a lot.

“I wouldn’t go that far.”

“Liar.” He put his arms over his head and stretched, his abs flexing and his ass lifting off the chair. “I can smell your deceit from here,” he said on a lazy exhale.

I stood and drifted over, letting my gaze wander over his tanned chest. “It’s a wonder you can smell anything after all those cigarettes. Thanks for doing that in my room, by the way.”

“Sorry. You ken I only smoke when I’m horny.”

I shoved the ottoman aside, and his feet hit the ground. “So you’re horny, hmm?”

“Aye,” he rasped, his head tipped back and his eyes glittering with unconcealed lust. His erection bulged under the sweatpants, and his pulse throbbed hard in the side of his neck. When I stepped between his knees and knelt, his breath caught. “What are you doing?”

“Figure it out.” I pulled roughly at his sweats, yanking them off in a couple of quick tugs. His erection sprang free, the tip already dotted with moisture, but I ignored it. “Hands above your head. Hold onto the back of the chair and don’t move.”

He obeyed with an eagerness that was almost comical. Alec was always up for anything, and his adventurous streak was one of the things I loved about him. He was as dominant as any male, but he was usually happy to let me take control. Some might view his willingness to submit as a weakness. In reality, it was part of his strength. He was confident enough to know what he liked, and alpha enough to go get it.

And it was incredibly satisfying to give it to him.

I pushed his knees wide, then smoothed my palms up his powerful thighs and over his rippling abs, avoiding his shaft entirely. He swallowed thickly, and his lips parted as his heart rate picked up. I took my time exploring, lust surging in my veins at the feel of his chiseled body under my hands. When I reached his nipples, he twitched and bit his lower lip.

Sexy as hell. In the back of my mind rose an image of Chloe doing the same thing. And just like that, I wanted them both in my bed. Needed them both at my mercy.

But right now, Alec was losing control.

“Touch my cock,” he gasped, starting to writhe. “I need it bad, Lach.”

“Not yet.” I pinched lightly at his nipples, smiling when he hissed and squeezed the back of the chair in a white-knuckled grip. I plucked at the flat, dusky peaks before running both hands down his flanks to his hips, which he lifted again and again, clearly longing for me to turn my attention to his dick. But I paid it no mind, instead caressing him everywhere else. His silky inner thighs. His hard calves lightly dusted with golden hair. His long, bare feet.

Everywhere but his cock and the tight sac underneath.

He squirmed, his swollen shaft bobbing against his stomach. “If you don’t suck my dick, I’m goin’ tae die.”

“You always say that.”

“I mean it this time.” His eyes narrowed to green slits, and his voice was half growl, half whimper. “Fucking tease. I should kick your arse.”

I stood and pulled my shirt over my head, heat prickling down my nape at the way he drank me in like a man dying of thirst. When I dropped my trousers, he squeezed the chair so hard the tendons in his wrists stood out. Despite his threat, we both knew he wouldn’t break position. I’d told him not to. It was as simple as that.

*Source Creation Date: July 11, 2025, 5:10 am*

I took a minute to appreciate the sexy stretch of his nude body splayed out like a feast on a serving platter. The man was put together like a Greek statue. Every muscle, every sinew, was perfectly formed. His cock was a thing of beauty, too. It swelled under my regard—nine solid inches topped with a smooth head drizzled with precum.

His voice turned to gravel. “You want me to beg?”

Without breaking eye contact, I sank to my knees, took his shaft in one firm hand, and slowly licked my way around the damp tip.

“Fuck,” he wheezed, his eyes going heavy-lidded. “Fuck.”

I gave him another long, languid swipe of my tongue. In Old Gaelic, I said, “Tell me what you want.”

“Fuck you, Lach,” he rasped in the same language, thrusting against my hand. “You know what I want.”

“Aye, but I want to hear you say it.” With my other hand, I fondled his sac, my fingertip inching toward his ass.

His reply came in a rush interspersed with moans and urgent thrusts of his hips. “Stop teasing me and suck my dick. Please, Lach, I need it so bad. Put your mouth all over my cock and suck m—”

I sucked his whole length down, launching straight into a hard, fast rhythm.

“Fuck yes!” His hips lifted, his cock surging into my mouth. “More of that, Lach. God, don’t stop.”

His enthusiastic shouts echoed around the room, and somewhere in the back of my mind a little voice warned Chloe might overhear. But the castle walls were thick, and he settled down as I fell into a regular tempo, one hand kneading his balls while I used the other to give him a quick pump each time my mouth ascended. Every few plunges, I sucked hard, loving the way it made him moan. Loving the salty-sweet taste of his dick in my mouth and his dark, woodsy scent in my lungs. Loving the fuck out of the way his strapping body trembled above me.

With the moon’s call heavy in the air, my inner beast stirred. Pressure built in my chest and spread outward, sliding through my limbs. Still sucking up and down Alec’s dick, I lifted my head enough to see his face. He was biting his lip again.

Like Chloe.

My beast grew restless. Want her. The thought formed in my mind. Not really words, because the beast didn’t speak. But it made its wishes known. When it wanted something badly enough, it didn’t wish at all. It just took.

Soon, I told it. Chloe was in the castle, and Alec wasn’t going to let her leave. Or, more accurately, he was prepared to use his considerable charm—figurative, not literal—to convince her to stay. He and I might want her for different reasons, but we both wanted her. So it was as good as done. Chloe Drexel would be ours. For a day. A month. For however long it took me to exorcise her from my thoughts and convince Alec she was nothing more than a passing fancy.

Not a mate. Just a pleasant diversion.

The beast pushed harder.



My skin started to burn.

## Chapter Six

### CHLOE

The problem with hiding in my room was it gave me a lot of time to think. And my thoughts were dominated by the things I'd seen in my dream.

I should have been thinking about my canceled wedding or my mother's threats or what the hell I was going to do with my apartment now that Josh and I were no longer an item. Both our names were on the lease. We'd gotten a killer deal on the rent, and it was in a great location—just far enough from my mother's place to make it impractical for her to drop in for visits.

Although, that probably wasn't going to be a problem now.

But I couldn't seem to concentrate on any of those things. My life was in tatters, yet my mind spun with memories of Alec and Lachlan and the dirty sex on the plane.

Except they weren't memories at all. None of that had happened, and I needed to get a grip before I completely lost my mind.

Actually, I thought as my gaze landed on my open suitcase on the floor, I needed to go home. I'd started packing after I fled the gallery this morning and then stopped when Alec left lunch outside my door.

At least I assumed it was Alec. He was gone by the time I responded to the light tap on the wood. There was no note on the tray, just a chicken salad sandwich on homemade bread beside a steaming bowl of the most delicious broth I ever tasted in my life. There was also a thick slice of chocolate cake and a glass of ice cold water.

Of course he prepared an amazing lunch. Because he was amazing. And funny and smart and sexy.

And I had to get out of Scotland before I embarrassed myself by moaning in front of him or licking his abs. Clearly, the incident in the airport with Josh had broken my brain, unleashing some kind of mental crisis that led to erotic fantasies about my bosses.

Paging Dr. Freud for real.

*Source Creation Date: July 11, 2025, 5:11 am*

It was stupid to continue with the trip, even though I hadn't been completely conscious when I agreed to it. But now that I'd had a chance to sleep on my decision, it was obvious I'd made the wrong one. Alec had stayed away today, but maybe that wasn't about letting me get over my "jet lag." Maybe it was because he was tired of me alternating between weeping on his shirt and ogling him. Lachlan had gone one step further and left the castle altogether.

He was probably tired of me ogling Alec, too.

Come on my tits.

My face grew hot as images of Lachlan pumping his release onto my chest flickered through my head. He could never, ever know I dreamed such a thing. Could never know I fantasized about him jerking himself off while he watched his lover fuck me. Could never find out I wanted to know how it would feel if they switched places.

And he wouldn't. Because I was getting on a plane and flying back to New York.

Now I just had to tell Alec. There was no way around it. Even if I managed to sneak out of the castle, I had no way of getting to Inverness, let alone booking a plane ticket on my own in a foreign country.

Squaring my shoulders, I opened my door and stepped into the hallway with its gleaming hardwood and suits of armor. Alec had pointed out all the bedrooms on our tour, explaining that he and Lachlan kept separate quarters because Lachlan was a light sleeper.

“And Lach says I snore,” he’d added with an eye roll. Of course, that immediately made me picture the two of them in bed together, their big bodies entangled beneath the sheets.

I shoved that image firmly from my head as I walked toward Alec’s room.

Then a muffled noise made me stop.

Male voices drifted from the bedroom just past Alec’s.

Lachlan was back.

Well, that should make leaving easier. He didn’t want me in Scotland in the first place. He’d probably drive me to the airport himself. With that cheery thought in mind, I followed the voices, which grew louder as I approached.

Except they weren’t speaking English...and they weren’t speaking Gaelic, either. Not quite. My understanding of the language was rudimentary at best, but I’d picked up a few phrases here and there, and this bore little resemblance to the lilting cadence Alec and Lachlan used around the office. I frowned and crept closer, straining to unravel the guttural sounds. The door was open just enough to let me see the edge of a bed and a sitting area where—

All the breath left my body.

Alec was sprawled naked in an oversize chair, his arms over his head and big hands gripping the back of the frame. Between his spread legs knelt Lachlan, his golden body equally nude as he gave Alec a blowjob hot enough to set the room on fire. His dark head bobbed up and down, and from the way his cheeks were hollowed he was sucking Alec’s cock like his life depended on it. His hands were busy, too. One pumped Alec’s shaft while the other made rhythmic thrusts under Alec’s balls.

Because he's playing with Alec's ass. The realization made my heart pound so hard I felt lightheaded. They were magnificent, both of them, two warriors built for battle yet sharing the most intense passion I'd ever witnessed.

Unintelligible sounds spilled from Alec's lips as he put his head back and squeezed his eyes shut. His red-gold brows drew together and a look of ecstasy swept his features.

My panties went instantly damp, and my knees loosened. Actually loosened to the point where I darted a look at the door frame in case I needed to clutch it for support. This was hotter than the dream. Hotter than that night in the office.

And it was wholly different than anything I could have imagined. While the men were evenly matched in size and strength, Lachlan had always seemed more dominant. Harder and more aggressive. Yet here he was on his knees sucking Alec's dick with obvious zeal. His stubble-covered jaw was stretched wide, and his muscles flexed as he absorbed every brutal thrust.

"Goin' tae come," Alec gasped in English.

Lachlan bobbed faster, his own erect shaft slapping his stomach as he sucked.

A creaking sound filled the air. With a start, I realized it was the chair and Alec's grip was straining the wood. He let out a hoarse shout, then jerked his hips in a stilted rhythm.

Lachlan's throat started working, and I couldn't have looked away if I tried. He swallowed again and again, clearly drinking Alec down to the last drop. Above him, Alec moaned and went limp, his breaths sawing in and out of his chest. After a second, he lifted his head.

The men's gazes locked, and an electric look passed between them. A prickling sensation slid down my nape. Something was about to happen...

Lachlan swallowed a final time. Then he surged to his feet and pulled Alec out of the chair and into a rough embrace. My eyes went wide at the sight of two broad, muscled backs and two taut, round asses. Two sets of sculpted arms. Endless bare skin.

Lachlan slanted his mouth across Alec's and kissed him like Alec was the source of all oxygen in the world. They stood in profile, giving me a direct view of everything. Thick cocks rubbing together. Glimpses of tongue as their kiss went from hot to scorching.

Guilt and lust flooded me. It was wrong to watch them. A horrible intrusion. If I had even a shred of decency, I would turn and go back to my room.

But I couldn't make myself move. Couldn't tear my gaze away from the mesmerizing sight of their hard bodies locked together as they continued to kiss. When Lachlan ran a hand down Alec's back and squeezed a firm ass cheek, I finally had to brace myself against the jamb.

Alec moaned.

*Source Creation Date: July 11, 2025, 5:11 am*

Lachlan tangled his other hand in Alec's hair before breaking off the kiss, yanking Alec's head to the side, and burying his face in the other man's neck. Even with his mouth muffled against Alec's skin, I heard him growl, "I want your ass." As he said it, he squeezed Alec's cheek harder, lifting the other man onto his toes.

Jesus. This was the Lachlan I'd expected to see, and he didn't disappoint. His mouth nuzzling Alec's neck was a tender contrast to his possessive grip on Alec's ass. His eyes glittered, and it must have been a trick of the light, because they almost seemed to glow.

"Aye," Alec said on another moan, his eyes shuttered as Lachlan kissed his neck. "Hurry, Lach. I need it fast and hard."

Lachlan took Alec's earlobe between his teeth, nipping lightly. "How hard do you want it?"

"As hard as you can give it to me."

In a blink, Lachlan spun him so he faced the chair. Alec braced his weight on either arm and leaned forward. His biceps flexed, and his body seemed to vibrate with anticipation. His muscular ass could have graced any fitness magazine cover, and Lachlan seemed to appreciate the view, because he smoothed his hands over the rounded globes before pulling them slightly apart and letting his gaze fall on Alec's puckered entrance.

Oh God. I wasn't sure I could handle this. Moisture flooded my panties as Alec raised his ass in blatant invitation.

Lachlan withdrew a small bottle of lube from a side table and coated two fingers. When he snapped the cap closed, Alec moaned.

And I bit my lip hard so I wouldn't moan with him.

"You ready for me?" Lachlan asked, his voice so deep it seemed to vibrate inside my chest. And I was clearly starved for oxygen, because his skin appeared darker, his usual golden tan deepening to bronze.

I blinked the vision away in time to see him trail his lube-covered fingers down Alec's crack. He glided up and down, teasing without pushing inside.

Alec arched his back, thrusting his ass higher. He shot Lachlan an irritated look over his shoulder. "Stop fuckin' around and give me your cock."

Lachlan's low chuckle seemed to drift across the room and caress my skin. I gripped the door frame as he parted Alec's cheeks and eased his fingers into Alec's ass.

Alec dropped his head forward and let out a pleased groan that shot straight to my sex. "Christ, Lach, that feels good." He threw his hips back, as if he couldn't wait for Lachlan to go deeper.

Lachlan obliged him, thrusting his glistening fingers in and out in a slow, steady rhythm.

"More," Alec said, his voice rough as sandpaper. He bore down hard on Lachlan's fingers, and his breaths grew ragged.

Lachlan gave a throaty growl of approval and increased the pace. He must have added another finger, because Alec grunted and widened his stance. He moved with Lachlan, rolling his hips and setting his heavy sac and semi-erect shaft swinging.



Sweat broke out across my skin, and I had the passing thought that I might actually faint. The sight of one big, powerful man bent over while another big, powerful man finger fucked his ass was beyond any fantasy I could have conceived. It was hot and delicious and forbidden. My breasts grew heavy and pressure built between my thighs.

“Want more?” Lachlan asked, his gaze on his fingers pumping in and out of Alec.

Yes. I leaned forward.

“Aye,” Alec rasped, his deep voice breaking on a sexy, masculine whimper. “Fuck my ass, Lach. Put your big cock inside me.”

Lachlan withdrew his hand, gripped his shaft, and surged inside.

Both men moaned.

A haze covered my vision. For a moment, Lachlan went blurry.

I shook my head to clear it because I was not missing this.

Suddenly, Lachlan was solid again. He wrapped an arm around Alec’s chest and pulled him upright. The position must have lodged his shaft even deeper in Alec’s ass, because Alec shuddered and let out a low, satisfied groan. He gripped Lachlan’s forearm with both hands and let his head fall back on Lachlan’s shoulder.

“You feel that?” Lachlan muttered, giving him slow, grinding thrusts. His forearm flexed as he pulled Alec more tightly against his chest, holding him steady while he plundered his ass.

Alec’s eyes slid shut. His shaft was erect again, and it bobbed up and down with

every surge of Lachlan's hips. "Aye...I feel you."

"I feel you too, lad. Love your tight ass like a fist around my cock."

The blunt, dirty talk drove my desire to new heights. I didn't need the dream or my memories from the office. I had the real thing right in front of me, and it was so unbelievably hot I couldn't see straight. Lachlan went blurry again.

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But blinking didn't work this time.

Neither did shaking my head.

I clutched at the door frame as panic shot down my spine. Maybe I wasn't jet lagged. Maybe there was something truly wrong with me.

Lachlan got blurrier...and blurrier.

And then he turned to smoke.

For a second, my brain couldn't comprehend what I was seeing. Alec was as solid as ever, but behind him, where Lachlan should have been, was a dark, man-shaped haze. It twisted and swirled in a torrent of energy. At the top of the shifting column, a pair of glowing eyes burned like golden fire.

I gasped and stumbled back.

Alec jerked his head up, instantly focused on me. Behind him, the smoky entity did the same.

For a brief, terrifying second, time stood still.

The entity shivered. Then it shot toward me in a long, narrow stream.

I didn't scream. I didn't slam the door, and I certainly didn't stand and fight. Heart lodged in my throat, I did the only thing I could think of.

I ran.

## Chapter Seven

ALEC

As Lachlan streaked after Chloe in shadow form, I let out a string of curses. She couldn't know it, but running was the worst thing she could do. Of course, I could hardly expect her to stand still and let him reach her. She had no idea what she was seeing. No clue her life had just changed forever. She was in my world now. Mine and Lachlan's. And it was a lot more dangerous than the one she was used to. For starters, she'd probably been taught fairy tales were just stories.

They weren't, of course. They were heavily edited versions of the truth, sanitized so humans could tell themselves werewolves and witches and other creatures were nothing more than entertaining myths.

If I'd been worried about her mind breaking before, I was doubly worried now.

Fuck. What had Lachlan been thinking? His beast was always close to the surface when he was under the moon's influence, but he hadn't shifted unexpectedly like that in years.

What a hell of a time to break a streak.

Cursing and stumbling, I yanked on my sweats—nearly falling over the sofa in the process—and raced into the hall. Chloe's scent was strong in the air, and I sprinted after it, flying up the stairs to the long gallery. A woman's scream made the hair on my nape lift, and I pounded across the marble floor, flung open a door set in the wood paneling, and burst onto the roof.

“Don’t move!” Lachlan barked to my left, and it took me a second to realize he spoke to me and not Chloe.

Then I saw her.

She stood on the battlements, her feet on a stone ledge no wider than a stair tread.

And she held a sword. Italian, judging from the hilt. Probably sixteenth century. And far too heavy for her. One wrong step—a moment’s loss of balance—and she would plunge three hundred feet to the rocky ground below. There was no guarantee Lachlan or I could shift fast enough to catch her.

Fear and anger burned in my gut. She was ours, and she was being so incredibly foolish to gamble with her life this way. Nothing was going to take her from us. Not even her will.

But best not to let her know that just now.

“Chloe,” I said, holding my hands away from my body as I took a cautious step forward. “Come down from there.”

She brandished the sword, her knuckles white on the leather-braided grip. “Don’t come any closer!”

I stopped. “Or what? You’ll stab me from across the roof?”

“Alec,” Lachlan said under his breath.

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Chloe's eyes glinted, and her voice rose. "This isn't funny!" Her gaze darted from me to Lachlan, who stood nude in a patch of moonlight. She looked between us for a moment, then settled on Lachlan, as if she'd judged him the bigger threat.

Not entirely accurate, lass.

I kept my palms out. "You're right, and I'm not making fun of you. I jest when I'm nervous, and you're scaring the wits out of me standing up there."

"The castle is old," Lachlan said in a steady voice. "The stone could crumble, Chloe."

My stomach clenched. She wore flats—some kind of silly slip-on shoe with hardly any tread. For a second, I considered calling up my power. I could force her off the wall with a mere word. But I'd have to drop my glamour to do it, and seeing that might send her over the edge.

Literally.

She stared at Lachlan, her eyes round and stark. Even with the distance and darkness between us, I could see the pulse fluttering in her neck like a bird trapped under her skin.

"He's not going to hurt you," I told her, daring another step forward. She was gorgeous with her pale hair loose around her shoulders and her creamy skin gilded by moonlight. But there was a wild look in her blue eyes. I'd seen that look before—in the eyes of men on the losing side of a battle. In the desperate gazes of people backed into a corner. That look was dangerous. It was deadly.

I took another step.

She swung toward me, the sword's blade catching the moonlight. "Stay away!"

I froze. Lachlan muttered without looking away from her. "I told you not tae move."

"I won't," I said, my attention on Chloe. "I'm standin' still, sweetheart. See? It's safe to come down."

"No, it's not." Her gaze skidded between Lachlan and me. "I saw... I don't know what I saw." Her forehead wrinkled, and she lowered her voice to a mumble she probably didn't intend for us to hear. "Something is wrong with me."

My heart squeezed. She was obviously still feeling the aftereffects of me charming her on the flight. Now that she'd seen Lachlan between forms, she probably thought she was losing her grip on reality.

The wind picked up, tossing her hair. She tightened her grip on the sword, which began to tremble as she struggled to keep it aloft.

Forcing calm I didn't feel into my voice, I said, "Chloe lass, look at me." When she did, I held out a hand. "You have nothing to fear from either of us. You've worked for us for three months. Have you ever seen us be cruel or unkind?"

Her brows drew together. "No."

"If you listen closely, you'll hear the truth in my words. We won't hurt you. I vow it. But I need you to come down off that wall."

Silence reigned for a moment. Eventually, she swallowed. "You vow it?"

“Aye. You have my word.”

There was another long stretch of quiet. “You’ll let me leave?”

Lachlan tensed.

Deep in my mind, my beast reared its head. My chest grew hot, and a growl gathered in my throat. She wanted to leave us? The beast scented the air, testing the veracity of her words. They swirled through my lungs, smelling of earth after a hard rain.

Truth. Her declaration was sincere. If Lachlan and I let her off the roof, she’d return to New York.

Unthinkable.

The heat in my chest built. My beast stirred, straining against the metaphysical bonds that held it in check. I kept my gaze on Chloe, but I felt Lachlan’s regard like a weight on the side of my face.

“You’ll let me leave?” Chloe asked again. Her arms shook. She was nearing the end of her strength.

“Yes,” Lachlan said.

Truth.

I faced him as an inferno formed in my chest.



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His eyes narrowed with warning. For the briefest second—just a heartbeat—his irises flared bright gold as his beast challenged mine. Its message was clear.

Don't.

I shoved my sweats down my hips and twisted toward Chloe, already shifting to smoke. Her shocked gasp and Lachlan's angry shout filled the air as I shot across the roof. I materialized next to Chloe on the battlements, getting a glimpse of her pale face and dumbfounded expression. In one movement, I knocked the sword from her hand, swept her into my arms, and carried her off the ledge.

For a second, she seemed too stunned to move.

But only for a second. As I strode toward the door, she came alive, thrashing and screeching like a wild animal. "Put me down!"

I ignored her, then grunted as her fist caught my jaw.

She swung again.

I yanked my head away, and the blow glanced off my cheek. In my mind, the beast purred with satisfaction.

She's strong, it told me in its unique way of communicating. A fierce mate.

Lachlan fell into step beside me, his body radiating disapproval. But he stayed silent, and he didn't interfere. Which was good, because I wasn't sure I could handle both

him and a flailing Chloe. My sweet, mild-mannered executive assistant was gone, replaced with a swearing, spitting hellcat.

“Let go of me!” She fought harder, clawing at my bare chest. Without breaking stride, I heaved her up and over my shoulder. Immediately, she pummeled my back, striking my spine and kidneys.

I smacked her ass as I shouldered through the door and into the long gallery.

She went rigid. Then she unleashed holy hell on my back, yelling as she pounded her fists. “You hit me! Put me down, you Neanderthal!” She kicked her legs, one foot veering dangerously close to my sensitive bits.

I gave her another open-handed whack—this one hard enough to echo through the gallery—and put on a burst of speed no ordinary man could have managed. In a blink, I was through the gallery, down a series of hallways, and up a narrow, twisting staircase.

Lachlan met me at the top, his eyes like molten gold as he watched me unlock an ancient door studded with iron. The hinges groaned as I shoved it open and carried Chloe inside.

The tower room was small and round and held nothing but a bed. I deposited Chloe on it and straightened.

She shot to her knees, then shrank back when she got a look at my face. “Y-You...” She swallowed, and the rest emerged as a croak. “You’re glowing.”

Well, the cat was out of the bag now. I let my power rise a little more, and my voice rippled with it as I spoke a binding command. “You’re not to leave this room.”

She winced as if I'd struck her. As if the command was a physical blow.

Alarm bolted through me, and I reached for her. "Lass—"

"Don't touch me!" She scrambled back, pressing herself against the wooden headboard. Her chest heaved, and her cheeks burned with color.

But it was her expression that made me lower my arm. Her pupils were dilated, her eyes wary and fearful. They flicked to my hands, as though she waited for me to advance.

Or attack.

I was suddenly mindful of my nudity—and of the difference in our sizes and strength. I pushed my power down, forcing my voice to a human volume and cadence. "I won't hurt you."

Her chin went up. "You already have."

Now I winced, her words cutting deeper than the rusty sword she'd wielded on the battlements. At the same time, my beast fought its bonds, straining to break free. Fire licked at my veins and singed my insides. In another moment or two, I wouldn't be able to stop the shift.

And taking my other form in the oldest tower in the castle was a recipe for disaster.

Chloe was frightened and furious, and she had a right to both emotions. But I was in no state to offer comfort or explanations. Not with my beast so close to the surface. Without another word, I turned and went to the door. As I gained the threshold, she called out.

“What are you?”

I stopped. Turned my head just enough to answer over my shoulder. “Your mate.”

### Chapter Eight

#### LACHLAN

I let Alec have it as soon as he pulled the tower door shut.

“Have you lost your mind?” I said in Gaelic.

He faced me with glowing green eyes and replied in the same language. “She was going to leave.” He jabbed a finger at me. “You were going to let her!”

“Aye, because it’s what she wanted. Are you daft? You’ve broken the treaty.”

His expression turned mulish. “I have not.”

I flung a hand toward the door. “You locked her in the tower!”

“It’s what our forefathers did with reluctant mates.”

“Centuries ago. In a far different time. You can’t just grab women off the street and shackle them to your bed.”

He gave the door a speculative look.

“You can’t be thinking of doing that. Christ, Alec, you’ll go to prison.”

His eyes glinted, some of the haughtiness from his mother’s side coming through.

“As if one could hold me.”

“So you are thinking it.”

“Of course not.”

“Then what’s your plan?”

He opened his mouth just as something hard thudded against the door. A moment later, a woman’s grunt rang out, followed by another dull thud that shook the ancient oak.

We stared at the door. Then Alec muttered, “You should talk to her.”

I gaped at him. “I should? You created this mess.”

“You shifted in front of her.”

Anger rose swift and hot. I dropped my voice to a growl. “You’re blaming me for this?”

“In part.” His gaze sharpened. “What happened, Lachlan? You haven’t lost control like that in forever.”

“I...” I clamped my jaw shut. Because he was right. I shouldn’t have lost control. Worse, I hadn’t even realized it was happening. That kind of mistake was reckless and dangerous. In a modern world full of smartphones and public surveillance, changing forms could mean outing all the Firstborn Races.

And that could lead to war.

Alec watched me, clearly waiting for an answer.

I cleared my throat. “I didn’t know she was eavesdropping.”

His expression said he wasn’t buying it, but he didn’t press. Just glanced at the door and said, “She has a habit of doing that. And she liked what she saw.”

“Well, she didn’t like the aftermath. Forcing her off the battlements was one thing, but she’s unlikely to forgive the swats on her ass.” Her delectable ass, which had looked plump and fetching over his shoulder.

“Aye, she’s angry with me.” He shoved a hand through his hair, making the reddish waves stand on end. The arrogance drained from him, and his shoulders slumped. “I’ve botched this, haven’t I?”

“Botched, no. Fucked beyond all reason, aye.”

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“You can fix it, Lach. Make her understand.”

Exasperation washed over me. “There’s nothing to understand. She wants to go home.”

His expression darkened. “Not happening. She’s our mate. And she’s seen too much now.” He ran another hand through his hair, the motion jerky and agitated. He switched to English, mumbling, “It’s the mate bond making me feel this way. I need to shift before I explode.”

It wasn’t the mate bond. More like three months’ worth of sexual frustration. Bedding Chloe was the cure for what ailed him—and me. Of course, that was unlikely to happen now that he’d swatted her ass and stuffed her in the tower.

“Go,” I said on a sigh.

“You’ll talk to her?”

“I’ll do my best.”

Something struck the door, making it shudder.

“What could she possibly be throwing?” Alec murmured.

“Go on,” I told him. “It’s probably better if she doesn’t see you right now.”

He grimaced. “Probably.” He started down the steps, then paused and looked over his



shoulder, his gaze dipping to my hips. “Maybe put on some trousers first.”

I scowled and shifted to shadow form, then shot forward so fast he didn’t have time to move out of the way. Streaming in a million particles, I streaked a hot path past his ribs, making him yelp and jump aside.

It served him right, I thought as I twisted down the steps and raced to my bedroom. Not that a burn could really hurt him. Like me, Alec was a creature of fire.

My discarded trousers lay where I’d dropped them just before I pleased him—something that seemed ages ago now. I shifted as I entered the room, my feet striking the ground as my body became flesh. I couldn’t wear clothing in shadow form, however, so my trip back to the tower was far less convenient, and my irritation with Alec grew as I climbed the narrow steps.

The landing was quiet, as if the air itself held its breath. Mindful of Chloe’s propensity for launching things at the door, I entered the room slowly—and almost tripped over her shoes on the threshold. She lay on her side in the bed, her knees drawn to her chest.

“Chloe?” I moved toward her.

No answer. She stared sightlessly at the room’s sole window, which was covered by bars. Moonlight spilled across the floor and onto the bed, turning her hair to a silver river. She was lovely. And full of more fight than I’d given her credit for.

A human, yes. But a damn courageous one.

I moved between her and the window, my body blocking the light. “You chucked those shoes hard enough to shake the door, lass. I’m impressed.”

“Ten years of softball,” she said, her gaze still unfocused. “We were state champions in high school.”

“I didn’t know that.”

Now she looked at me, her blue eyes apprehensive but shaded with the same grit she’d displayed on the roof. “There are a lot of things you don’t know about me, Mr. MacKay. For example, if you think you’re going to keep me prisoner, you’re mistaken.”

“Lachlan. And I have no intention of keeping you prisoner.”

Could have fooled me.

I caught my breath. Because she hadn’t spoken aloud. Yet her voice had rung through my head as clear and true as a bell. Just as it had on the plane.

Desire flooded me as my heart beat faster. Holding her gaze, I concentrated on forming a sentence in my mind. Can you hear me, Chloe?

She bolted upright, then plastered herself against the headboard, one hand thrust out as if to ward me off. “You—”

“Spoke in your head.” As you did in mine. My heart was racing now, the knowledge of who and what she was crashing over me in waves.

“No, I didn’t.”

I tilted my head. Could have fooled me.

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Her lips parted, and her chest rose and fell rapidly. “What are you?” Her voice climbed. “How can you hear my thoughts? How did you change into that...thing?” A tear streaked down her cheek. “I need some answers, because I think I’m going crazy.”

A surge of protectiveness rose within me. Before, I’d wanted her body. Or at least I told myself that was all it was—a temporary itch I could scratch by taking her to bed.

Now I knew it was more than that. A lot more. Chloe Drexel wasn’t going anywhere.

And it was time to give her the answers she sought.

I went to the window, where the moon hung heavy in the sky. Closing my eyes, I cast out my senses. ALEC.

His response came at once, his mental voice strong and incredulous. Lachlan?

Aye. I’m with Chloe, and it seems I’ve gained a new ability.

Satisfaction poured through our mental connection, along with a steady whooshing sound. Told you so.

I clenched my jaw. He was going to be insufferable about this. Are you near the castle?

I can be.

Come to the tower window.

The whooshing sound intensified. Be there in a minute.

I turned, finding Chloe still crouched on the bed, her features pinched with anxiety. I gestured to the window. “Watch, lass.”

She frowned, questions practically floating around her.

“Just watch. It won’t be long.”

Her frown deepened, and her gaze darted between me and the window. Then she tensed, as if she listened for something. She leaned forward, and her eyes went wide.

A shadow fell behind me. I swiveled as Alec swooped into view.

Glorious beast. And, oh, but he put on a show. His scales rippled with moonlight, and his tail flicked sparks that split the night. His body was as green as his eyes, his wings a deep emerald veined with gold. Black horns sprouted from his head, and matching spikes decorated the long, sinuous length of his tail. The whooshing I’d heard in my head surrounded the tower, the sound like a great engine beating the air.

“Oh...my...God,” Chloe breathed next to me. “It’s—”

“A dragon,” I said, turning toward her. I swept a loose curl from her cheek and let my hand linger. “We’re dragons, lass.”

“We?” She glanced out the window. “You and Alec.”

“Aye.”

“I’m not hallucinating?”

She looked so adorably earnest, tenderness welled in my chest. “No, honey,” I said, brushing a thumb over her soft cheek, “‘tis not a dream.”

Something flickered in her eyes, and she paled. “The plane...”

I cupped her jaw, and this time I brushed my thumb over her pouty lower lip. “Not a dream, Chloe lass. That was very, very real.”

## Chapter Nine

CHLOE

Verra, verra real.

Lachlan’s brogue was thicker than ever. But there was no misunderstanding his words.

*Source Creation Date: July 11, 2025, 5:11 am*

The dream on the plane hadn't been a dream at all. I'd had sex with my bosses. At the same time.

And they were dragons.

Shapeshifters. Mythical creatures that weren't supposed to exist. And yet...one spun and swooped outside my window, its glittering scales as green as Alec's eyes.

Because that was Alec. My tall, gorgeous, Highlander boss—the one who made me meeracle toast and told bawdy stories about codpieces—was a dragon. So was my other tall, gorgeous, Highlander boss.

As my brain tried to wrap itself around that reality, I opened my mouth and blurted the first thing that popped into my head. “You're not gay?”

Heat and humor gleamed in Lachlan's eyes. “I believe the term is bisexual.”

A door in my mind flew open. Memories from the plane roared back, each moment captured and framed in exquisite detail. We'd had this conversation before.

And it had led to the most intense sex of my life.

Lust swept me, my nipples going instantly taut.

Lachlan cupped my cheek in one big hand, his thumb making lazy passes over my bottom lip. The gesture was more tender than sexual, but my body didn't seem to care. Moisture dampened my panties, and my clit started to throb.

His nostrils flared.

Black smoke streamed into the room from around the window.

I jumped back, my heart hammering, but Lachlan put a steadying hand on my arm. “It’s just Alec.”

The column streaked to a spot between us and the bed, then formed into the silhouette of a man. The particles thickened, and Alec materialized on the stone floor, his nude body sheened with sweat. His hair was tousled, and his chest heaved as if he just finished a grueling workout.

But it was his eyes that held my attention. They glowed so brightly they cast shadows on his cheeks.

“Just Alec,” he said, darting a look of mock offense Lachlan’s way. Then he focused on me, and his expression softened. “How we doing, lass? You okay?”

Considering I just learned dragons were real and I was still conscious? “Yeah. I think so.”

He stepped close and brushed my cheek in the same spot Lachlan had touched. “That’s my girl.”

Shivers coursed over my skin. The men bracketed me, their bare chests gilded in silver. The ache in my sex grew, and a restless need squirmed through me. “A-Are you doing this?” I asked, looking between them. “Making me feel this way?”

Alec shook his head. “No tricks, sweetheart. Just you. Just us.” He rubbed a featherlight thumb across my lower lip, as if he knew Lachlan had just been there. “If you want us, that is.”

The ache between my legs intensified. I wanted them, but... “Why me?” I heard myself ask. I’m nobody.

A growl rumbled in Alec’s chest. He threaded a hand through my hair and forced my gaze to his. “Not nobody. You’re ours, Chloe Drexel. Ours to claim. To protect. A treasure.”

Treasure. He trilled his Rs, the vibration shooting straight to my sex. As more heat dampened my panties, Lachlan moved close, his chest brushing my arm. His spicy aftershave filled my lungs, and his golden eyes gleamed like jewels.

“I want you both,” he said, his stare intense. Almost predatory. He flicked a wicked, possessive look at Alec, and my panties almost melted from my body.

Oh God. This was happening.

Lachlan dipped his head and spoke in my ear. “Get on the bed, Chloe.”

The command tripped a wire inside me, taking my desire from hot to scorching. There was no disobeying him—not when he spoke like that. I slipped from Alec’s hold and lay on the bed, which was as large and glamorous looking as the one in my room.

But it could have been plywood for all I cared. Because the guys were already prowling to the foot, their eyes roving my body stretched on the mattress. My heart thudded as Lachlan dropped his pants, his erection springing free. Alec’s rose and thickened, his cock impossibly long. They stood side by side, both nude and hard as stone. Together, they climbed the bed, shafts bobbing and muscles rippling.

They stopped on either side of my hips, turned to each other, and kissed.



My sex clenched, and I gripped the sheets in both fists. I could scarcely believe the erotic display unfolding right in front of me. They devoured each other, mouths gliding and tongues flashing as they made out with wild abandon. Lachlan seized Alec's hips in both hands and yanked him close so their dicks rubbed together.

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Alec groaned and thrust into Lachlan, grinding against him. Lachlan speared his fingers through Alec's hair and tugged Alec's head back, then nipped at Alec's jaw before muttering in the other man's ear. "I need to finish what I started, hmm?"

"Aye," Alec gasped, his eyes heavy-lidded and his cheeks stained with color.

Lachlan used his free hand to squeeze one of Alec's taut buttocks, then delved his fingers between Alec's cheeks and did something to make the other man give a sexy, plaintive cry. "You still ready for me?" Lachlan said gruffly.

"Never...stopped...being ready." Alec's accent turned ready to reddy, which fanned the flames already threatening to consume me.

Just when I prepared for them to continue, Lachlan released Alec and both men looked at me.

Alec's smile was pure wickedness. "Och, lassie, you're wearing far too many clothes."

Before I knew what was happening, male hands were everywhere, tugging and unbuttoning. Pulling my sweater over my head. Sliding my jeans down my legs. My bra disappeared, then my panties, and two sets of gleaming eyes fastened on my sex.

Lachlan slid a knee between my legs, spreading me open. "I only got a taste of this pussy before. I want more."

Alec stroked my thigh, his fingers moving in lazy circles as he lifted his gaze to mine.

“She tastes like candy. Sweet as sugar on my tongue.”

“Wider, lass,” Lachlan murmured, settling between my legs and running a burning golden gaze down my body. He looked at me the same way he did Alec, with a fierce possessiveness that seemed to sear my skin.

I opened my thighs, lust rippling through me in waves. I’d never been so wet. So ready and desperate to be touched. My body hummed, primed for him to lower his mouth and deliver on his promise.

Instead, he ran a finger down my slit, teasing my lips apart.

An involuntary moan rose from my chest. I lifted my hips, silently begging for more.

He stroked through the moisture slicking my lips, then pushed a long finger inside me, gliding easily.

“Please,” I begged, arching up so his finger plunged deeper.

He rubbed his thumb over my aching clit, making buttery warmth suffuse my sex. His accent thickened. “Tell me what ye need, lass.”

I didn’t hesitate. “Your mouth. Please.”

His golden eyes gleamed with pleasure. “As my lady commands,” he said, then lowered his mouth to my clit and sucked.

My body jerked, my hips lifting. “Oh...God. Oh, Lachlan, that’s so good.”

“He’s just getting started,” Alec said, still stroking my thigh. He gazed at Lachlan’s broad shoulders with smoldering eyes. “Our Lach’s got a talented tongue.”

That was an understatement. In short order, Lachlan had me thrashing and moaning, my mind blanking as I bucked and writhed. He replaced his finger with his tongue, spearing me in short, fast strokes before switching to long, sensual licks that made my sex clench over and over. I lost control of my body, my hips rolling brazenly against his mouth as I sought more contact, more friction, more everything.

And he gave it to me, lapping me up greedily. Like he relished my taste as much as Alec had.

Alec began stroking himself, his big hand smoothing up and down his cock as he watched Lachlan drive me crazy. “Told you she tasted amazing.”

Lachlan lifted his head, his eyes slitted with lust. “Better than anything. I could eat this pussy all day.” He pushed two thick fingers inside me, then lowered his head and continued lapping at my sex.

My vision went blurry as my orgasm gathered. But I blinked hard, struggling to hold it at bay. I wanted this to last as long as possible. To prolong the pleasure.

Lachlan moaned loudly, his mouth vibrating hard against my splayed sex.

I lifted my head and caught my breath. Alec still gripped his cock, but he’d reached under Lachlan’s body and now his hand pumped Lachlan’s shaft, too. His arms moved in a steady rhythm, his biceps flexing as he worked both Lachlan’s shaft and his own.

It was hotter than I could have ever imagined. I watched, riveted, my gaze flicking between his muscled forearm pumping his cock and his other muscled forearm thrusting under Lachlan’s hips. Lachlan groaned with desire, the sounds traveling straight into my core. My clit throbbed, and I let my head drop back as my release hovered just out of reach.

“Come for me,” Lachlan growled, plunging his fingers deep. He tongued my clit, licking and sucking the center of my desire as he thrust his fingers faster, drawing wet sounds from my sex. “Come now,” he ordered, and I did, my passage clamping hard and my orgasm sweeping over me like a hurricane. My back arched as waves of pleasure pulled me under.

When I resurfaced, Lachlan sat on his heels between my legs, his head thrown back as Alec stroked him. “Fuck,” he rasped, his chest heaving. “Fuck, yes, like that.”

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Alec released him, swiped his hand between my legs, then took it back to Lachlan, coating his straining shaft with my juices.

Lachlan and I moaned in unison. Aftershocks rippled through me as I stared, transfixed while Alec pumped Lachlan's thick length, which now glistened from my desire. He thrust his other hand between Lachlan's legs to fondle his sac.

Even with my orgasm still receding, fresh lust swept me. I propped myself on my elbows so I didn't miss a single detail of what was happening. Alec handled Lachlan more roughly than I would have, squeezing and kneading his balls with a firm hand while he stroked Lachlan's shaft from root to tip. In response, Lachlan's breath quickened, and a ruddy flush spread across his cheeks. He brought his head up, grabbed Alec's jaw, and took Alec's mouth in a brutal kiss.

Holy shit. My heart raced and my eyes went wide. They went at each other like they battled for supremacy, neither giving an inch. Alec jerked Lachlan's cock harder, his fist flying up and down Lachlan's shaft. Lachlan grunted and squeezed Alec's jaw until his fingers turned white. It was intense and rough and so crazy hot I struggled to breathe.

As quickly as it started, the kiss ended. The guys broke apart, and suddenly I had two pairs of hot male eyes on me again. In a blink, Alec levered himself over me and buried his face in my neck, nuzzling the sensitive skin under my ear. "All right, sweetheart?"

"Yes," I breathed, letting my eyes flutter shut as the tip of his tongue touched my skin. "More than all right."

He kissed a blazing path down my chest and captured a nipple in his hot mouth.

I jerked, then moaned as he tongued all around the peak. "Please keep doing that," I said, my breath hitching. It hitched again when he nestled his hips between mine and prodded my entrance with the tip of his cock. Desire zipped back and forth from my sex to my captive nipple.

He sucked a final time, then transferred his attention to the other breast. "Fucking perfect tits," he muttered around the damp peak, but I barely heard him as I tried to squirm my sex closer to his cock. He seemed oblivious to my efforts as he continued his ministrations, his tongue stroking and lashing. Desperate, I squiggled a hand between our bodies and gripped his shaft.

He released my nipple with a popping sound and lifted burning eyes to mine. "God, yes, Chloe. Put me inside you, lass."

Faces inches apart, we locked gazes as I guided him to my entrance. He thrust forward, seating himself to the hilt and making us both shudder. My sex clamped hard around his shaft, and he released a long, satisfied groan. Then he smoothed the hair off my forehead and lowered his mouth to mine.

He kissed me gently, his soft lips a contrast to his rigid shaft buried inside me. After a minute, he pushed upright, his bright eyes searching my face. "You're so tight, baby. I'm not hurting you, am I?"

Was he crazy? It took a second before I managed to speak. "Not even a little bit. I've never felt this good."

"I take that as a challenge," Lachlan said, rising behind Alec and making me blink. In my lust-addled haze, I'd lost track of him.

Oh no. Did he think I preferred Alec over him? How did people navigate the etiquette of threesomes? I licked my lips. “I didn’t... I don’t... Do you—”

His grin stopped my babbling in its tracks. Lachlan MacKay was grinning at me. And, oh God, a lock of dark hair had fallen over his forehead, giving him a roguish look. He snaked a muscled arm around Alec’s chest and toyed with a flat, brown nipple. “Relax, Chloe. I’ve got plenty to occupy me back here.”

My pulse picked up as his meaning sank in. I couldn’t see much from my angle, but the way he was positioned, with his thighs flush against Alec’s ass, he must have nestled his cock between Alec’s cheeks, where it would tease Alec’s most sensitive places.

“Fucking cocktease,” Alec muttered.

Yep. That was exactly what Lachlan was doing.

Alec shuddered and closed his eyes as Lachlan brought a second hand around and smoothed it over Alec’s chest. Lachlan found Alec’s other nipple and tweaked that one, too, pinching and rolling the dusky peaks with his fingertips.

I watched Alec closely, entranced by the expressions that played over his face as Lachlan continued touching and tormenting him. Curiosity made me bold. “Does that feel as good for you as it does for a woman?”

Alec’s eyes flew open, and his lips curved even as he seemed to fight back a moan. “Well, I’ve never been a woman, lass, but I’m gonna have to say yes. Because”—he jerked, sinking his cock deeper inside me—“it feels pretty damn good.”

Lachlan leaned forward and gave Alec’s ear a playful nip. “I can do better than good.”



Alec's reply was more breath than sound. "Please fucking do."

"Fuck her first," Lachlan growled in his ear. He pushed his hips against Alec's backside. "I want you both moaning when I take this ass."

The dirty talk had me gripping the sheets again.

"So bossy," Alec murmured, but he started to move, giving me slow, thorough pumps that lifted goosebumps on my skin.

My inner muscles spasmed, and fresh heat pooled low in my belly. He braced himself above me, pulled back, then surged home in a powerful thrust that jiggled my breasts.

"Again," Lachlan ordered in a thick voice, his golden eyes glued to my chest. How could I have forgotten he was a boob man? My heart pounded, and I could almost feel the hot ropes of his release lashing my nipples.

Alec withdrew almost all the way before plunging back in.

“Again.”

Alec repeated the move.

“Again.”

Another deep thrust, and then Alec fell into a grinding rhythm that stole my breath and made pleasure dance over my skin. I clutched his biceps for support as he pummeled me, then moaned and closed my eyes when he changed the angle so his shaft rubbed my clit. With every pump, my desire coiled tighter and tighter, ready to burst apart and send me flying into another release.

When he slowed unexpectedly, I thrust my hips up, struggling to capture my orgasm before it slipped away.

“Hold on, lass,” he said in a strained voice. Then he moaned. “Yes. Oh my... Yes.”

I opened my eyes as I realized what was happening. He bit his lower lip, and the muscles in his forearms flexed as he braced himself above me. Lachlan loomed behind him, his brow furrowed as he guided his cock into Alec’s ass. Unlike the frenzied kiss they’d shared, this was slow and steady. Easy and gentle.

And more erotic than anything they’d done until now.

Alec moaned and rolled his hips back, the movement shifting his erection inside me.

“That’s it, baby,” Lachlan rumbled, and I realized he spoke to Alec. “Open all the

way up. Just like that.” He palmed Alec’s ass, prising his cheeks apart as he eased inside inch by inch. I raised my head, struggling to see, but Alec’s shoulders blocked most of the action. Still, the look on Alec’s face and the gruff, sexy sounds he made told me everything I needed to know. Bliss flickered over his features, and his eyes gleamed like emeralds as Lachlan worked his cock deeper. After a minute, Lachlan surged forward, thrusting hard.

Alec sucked in a breath, then exhaled a string of soft curses interspersed with moans.

“Feel good?” Lachlan said, bending and kissing the other man’s sweat-sheened shoulder.

“Aye,” Alec grunted, starting to move in sync with Lachlan’s thrusts. “More.”

Lachlan chuckled and lifted his head to smile at me over Alec’s shoulder. “A man of few words. That’s a first.”

“Piss off,” Alec said, but there was no heat in it. He moaned again as Lachlan drove deep. “Oh yeah... Fuck, that’s good. Ah, man, keep going.”

Lachlan grasped Alec’s hips and fell into a rhythm, rocking forward in sure, steady strokes. Every movement, every surge, pushed Alec’s cock deeper inside me, as if Lachlan made love to both of us. Pinned under their bodies, it was almost impossible to move, which left me helpless to do much besides lie there and take each thrust as it came, my legs wide and my breasts bouncing. The air filled with our combined moans, the slap of flesh on flesh, and the wet sounds of my sodden sex. It was dirty and forbidden and utterly incredible.

Alec went to his elbows and claimed my mouth, his tongue tangling with mine. The new position deepened his thrusts, and suddenly his cock hit a spot inside me that made the coil of my desire blast apart. My cry of ecstasy soared into his mouth as my

orgasm seized me in a searing grip and didn't let go. The pleasure kept coming, each wave more powerful than the last.

Lachlan's movements grew faster and more frenzied. He squeezed Alec's hip and gave a final thrust. "Coming... Coming so hard in this tight ass."

At the same moment, Alec gave a hoarse shout, buried his face in my neck, and unloaded deep inside me. We came together, all three of us gasping and shivering.

And we came down together, crashing back to earth in a warm, satiated heap.

For the next few minutes, the only sounds were our harsh breaths as we lay in a tangle of limbs and sheets. The guys seemed to realize they were crushing me, because they pulled out and maneuvered us so I lay between them. Lachlan stretched on his side, one arm folded under his head and my backside tucked against his hips. Alec faced me and flung an arm over my waist, his hand resting on Lachlan's stomach. As my heart rate returned to normal, a wave of lassitude swept me. I let my eyes drift shut, cocooned by their big, warm bodies.

Very warm bodies.

Dragons.

Questions formed in my brain, then vanished like wisps of smoke. There were things I needed to ask, but the waves of lethargy kept coming, each one pushing me farther into the depths of sleep.

And maybe, I thought as the darkness gathered, maybe this was just another dream.

Maybe I'd wake in the morning and discover dragons weren't real after all.

## Chapter Ten

CHLOE

When I woke, the bed was empty. Sunlight streamed through the window and a column of black smoke shivered in the air.

Okay. So last night wasn't a dream.

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Also, dragons? Very real.

As I sat up and pulled the sheet to my chest, the smoke formed into Alec. His hair was wet, and he wore nothing but a satisfied smile.

“Mornin’, lass.”

I tucked a stray curl behind my ear. “Um, good morning.” Don’t look at his cock. Do not look at his cock.

He grinned.

Heat blasted my cheeks. I had to start remembering he and Lachlan could read minds. And turn into smoke. And move so quickly I couldn’t track it. Good grief, what had I gotten myself into?

More importantly, how could I have jumped into bed with them after their revelation? Was I really that susceptible to muscled chests and a Scottish brogue?

Alec stepped toward me with a concerned expression. His shaft swung heavy against his thigh, the thick length appearing even bigger in the daylight.

My face grew hotter. “M-Maybe you could put on some pants.”

A contrite expression flashed over his features. “Sorry. Clothes and shifting don’t mix. But I can make do.” He sat on the mattress and pulled a corner of the bedding over his lap. “Better?”

“Yes,” I choked out. Somehow, the fact that I’d slept with him and Lachlan—twice—was more shocking than finding out they were mythical creatures with magic powers.

Although, who was I kidding? Everything about the past two days was shocking. Maybe that was my life now, just stumbling from one disaster to another.

Alec frowned. “Last night was not a disaster.”

I pulled the sheet higher, as if the fabric might keep him out of my head. “Can you hear my thoughts all the time?” Oh God, had he been listening in since I’d met him?

“No,” he said quickly. “The gift doesn’t work that way. With most people, I can only send, not receive, although I can pick up a person’s thoughts if they’re very strong or directed specifically toward me. I can’t grab images or dreams, just words, and I typically have to be in the same room with someone to communicate mentally. I hear Lachlan more clearly than most because he’s my mate.”

My stomach did a little flip. “You used that word last night, when I asked what you are.”

“That’s right.” His voice grew husky, and something glinted in his eyes. “You’re also my mate. Mine and Lach’s. We’ve waited a very long time for you, Chloe.”

Verra. What was it about his accent that made me abandon all sense and melt into a puddle of lust? But I couldn’t afford to do that now. I needed answers. “What exactly does that mean, me being your mate? Is it like a girlfriend or—”

The door opened and Lachlan entered. He wore black pants and a dark sweater that looked like cashmere and was probably something far more expensive. His shoulders strained the material, and his hair was damp.

Immediately, my brain conjured images of him and Alec together in the shower, their powerful bodies slicked with water. I slammed my mind shut, shoving the pictures from my head before either man could discern my thoughts.

Lachlan stopped at the foot of the bed and frowned at Alec. “Would it have killed you to use the door like a normal person?”

Alec shrugged. “Chloe knows about us now. We’ll have no secrets between us.”

But I didn’t know everything. And questions flooded my mind so quickly my head seemed to spin.

Except it didn’t just seem to. The room tilted, and my stomach lurched as a wave of queasiness crashed over me.

“Chloe?” Lachlan was at my side in seconds. “You’re as pale as the sheets. Here, let me help you, lass.” He guided my upper body down so my forehead rested on my knees. Cold sweat pricked my temples and under my arms, and my mouth watered uncontrollably.

Gentle fingers stroked my hair back from my head. “Deep breaths,” Alec said. “Nice and slow.”

I did as he instructed, inhaling air until my lungs burned, then releasing it through my mouth. The nausea passed quickly, and I straightened, embarrassed to the core. “I’m sorry,” I mumbled. “I must still be jet lagged.”

The guys exchanged a glance, an odd look passing between them.

“What?” My embarrassment deepened. “Is something wrong?”



“No, honey.” Alec patted my knee. For once, he seemed hesitant, as if he was unsure of himself. “You’re human and...well, it may take a while for you to...acclimate.”

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Apprehension rose swiftly. “What am I acclimating to?”

“Nothing bad. Just a different kind of life.”

He and Lachlan shared another glance, and my unease grew. The events of the night roared back, reminding me how easily they’d subdued me on the roof.

And then Alec had hauled me to the tower and told me I couldn’t leave the room. He’d glowed when he said it, and his words had licked over my skin like an electric current. It wasn’t a sensation I wanted to repeat.

Both men frowned. Alec reached for me. “Chloe—”

“Wait.” I scooted back, tugging the sheet with me. With the harsh light of day filling the room, the atmosphere was different. Gone was the dreamy, seductive night. This was reality, and the men I thought I knew were not human. “I don’t know how any of this works. Are you saying you want a relationship? Or is this mate thing like a marriage?”

Lachlan was utterly still, his golden eyes more serious than I’d ever seen them. Which was saying a lot. His deep voice was just as solemn. “It’s far more than a marriage. The mate bond is permanent.”

“And eternal,” Alec said.

My heart rate picked up. Suddenly, the bed felt smaller with both of them on it. “What do you mean by eternal? Like angels and Heaven?”

Alec shook his head. “Dragons are the only true immortals. We can only die of heartbreak, and even that’s usually a choice. We are very hard to kill.”

Verra. This time, it didn’t make lust shoot through my veins. Heart hammering, I searched his face, for once unmoved by his masculine beauty. “How old are you?”

“A touch over three hundred.”

Oh...my God. He was older than the United States. No wonder he knew so much about the paintings in the long gallery. He’d probably met some of the people in them.

Lachlan’s expression was inscrutable as I turned to him. “And you?”

“A fair bit older than that.”

“How old?”

There was a pause. “Twelve hundred years, lass.”

I gasped. “I am twenty-four years old.”

“Aye,” Alec said. “But you’ll learn age is truly just a number. Especially once you get past the first couple of centuries.”

My pulse fluttered. “So I’m immortal like you now?”

“You will be.” Something dark and possessive flitted through his eyes. “After we claim you.”

“What does that mean?” I swung my gaze between them again, beginning to feel like

I was trapped in a neverending ping pong game. Panic stirred in my gut. My family wasn't religious, but my mother had taken me to St. Patrick's Cathedral every Christmas as a child. The pomp and pageantry of the mass was beautiful, but I'd spent most of the service staring at the stained glass windows, several of which featured scenes of Heaven. To my child's brain, the idea of eternity was terrifying. What would I do all day in Heaven? Or eternally mated to a pair of dragons? What if I wanted to leave?

Alec's eyes flashed. "We settled that question last night, Chloe."

"You mean after you spanked me?" God, how could I have forgotten that?

Easy. I was busy having multiple orgasms.

He narrowed his eyes. "A mere swat. You were ready to punt my bollocks to Inverness."

I'm starting to wish I had.

A red-gold eyebrow shot up. "That's playing dirty, lassie."

"Stay out of my head!" I scrambled back, and my shoulders bumped wood. Trapped. Again. My chest tightened. "Last night you promised I could leave. But now you're talking about mates and claiming and immortality. So I need you to level with me." I pressed against the headboard until it dug into my spine. "Will you let me go?"

The men were quiet, their gazes steady.

And that was all the answer I needed.

“Am I a prisoner here?” I asked, hating the way my voice quivered at the end.

“Never,” Alec said.

“Then say you’ll let me go!”

“We can’t do that. You’re our mate.” His eyes lightened, and for a moment he seemed to grapple with some strong emotion. He took a few deep breaths. “Dragons are possessive about their mates. It’s...unwise to run from us.”

For the first time, genuine fear slid down my spine. Was he saying they would hunt me down?

Lachlan spoke. “You asked us to level with you, Chloe. So here is the truth. Our race has no females. They died out long ago, taken by a mysterious sickness that only affected our women. It happened in another time, when the world was steeped in magic. Maybe it was a virus or some kind of blood disorder, but most likely it was a spell engineered by our enemies. We call it the Curse.”

“Fucking vampires,” Alec muttered, and I jerked my head toward him. Vampires were real, too?

“We’ve never been able to prove it was them,” Lachlan said. “But they and the other Firstborn Races—the other magic wielders in the world—celebrated the Curse, thinking it would be the end of us. Admittedly, they had some justification. Our

ancestors were a violent lot. There's a reason human fairy tales talk of dragons burning villages—"

"We don't do that anymore," Alec said.

"—and killing innocents."

"Or that."

"What about kidnapping maidens?" I blurted. I'd read enough Grimm's to know how the stories went, and the Disney versions bore little resemblance to the originals. There was also the fact that I was sitting in a tower room cornered by a pair of freaking dragons.

Lachlan didn't deny it. "Fate chooses a mate for everyone, Chloe. Even humans. Your kind just doesn't usually live long enough to meet the person chosen for them. Or maybe they meet in another life, I don't know. But time isn't an issue for the Firstborn Races. We can wait thousands of years for our true mate to appear. When the last female dragon died, our forefathers prepared to follow. However, fate is a fluid thing. It adjusts and adapts. Instead of dying off, the male pairs discovered new mates among the Firstborns."

Well, that didn't sound so bad. And his explanation about soulmates made sense. There were always those rare couples who seemed perfect for each other, or the occasional touching story of an elderly pair who died hours or days apart.

"Fate gave us new mates," he said, "but it was an imperfect adjustment." He found a loose thread on the bedding and snapped it off, leaving a tiny hole. "Each time a dragon pair is matched with a female from another race, we take her away from her people."

“And the chance to mate with one of her own,” Alec murmured, his gaze on the tear.

“Vampire, werewolf, witch, and fae,” Lachlan said. “All the other Firstborn Races united against us. They couldn’t kill our males outright, so they targeted our females, slaughtering their own daughters in an effort to wipe dragons from the earth.” His jaw clenched. “In doing so, they even killed their own kin. With the exception of our king, all dragons are halflings, since our mothers come from different races. But the lords of the other Firstborns didn’t care about that.”

“They just wanted us dead,” Alec said bitterly. “With no dragons in the world, fate would eventually pair their females with an acceptable mate.” He gave me a thin smile. “Your mother’s attitude toward our way of life isn’t new. Most Firstborns are lusty creatures, but dragons are the only polyamorous race. A thousand-year-old vampire prince is unlikely to cheer at seeing his daughter mated to two males who share a bed.”

“So it was war,” Lachlan said. “We fought for centuries, our numbers dwindling. Desperate, our forefathers took to acquiring females to test if they were compatible as mates. That practice is where your fairy tales come from.”

Acquiring, he’d said. But he really meant abducting. “You mean you held them prisoner.” I glanced around the near-empty room. At the barred window. The castle was old. The tower looked ancient, the blocks in the walls rougher and more primitive than the other rooms I’d seen. “You kept them in places like this.”

“It was a different time, Chloe. Our people were dying.”

“That doesn’t make it right.”

“No,” Alec said quietly. “And it rarely worked. Cormac, our king, negotiated a treaty with the other races. Dragons agreed not to capture or use magic to steal females, and

the other Firstborns agreed to a cease fire. Once a dragon pair claims a female, her kin are forbidden from trying to take her back. But we must claim her fairly, and she has to come to us of her own free will.”

As silence fell, I struggled to make sense of everything. So their war was over and they were free to pursue any female they wanted as long as they didn’t hold her against her will?

Then why was I sitting in a room with bars on the windows?

“To keep you safe,” Lachlan said, reading my thoughts. “The treaty stopped the war, but it didn’t make the other Firstborns suddenly love us. Targeting our females remains one of the few ways to harm a dragon. Our enemies are forever skirting the edges of the treaty without breaking it. Claiming you will afford you some protection, but you’ll still be vulnerable. The safest place for you is by our side.”

My lips parted. Did he mean forever? As in, I could never be alone again? Not even to grab coffee?

“For now,” he said.

I rubbed my forehead, which had started to ache. “This is a lot to take in. It’s all new to me and having you both in my head isn’t helping.”



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“It’s new to me as well, lass.” He glanced at Alec. “Telepathy wasn’t one of my gifts until you came along.”

I lowered my hand. “What do you mean?”

“It’s a fae ability. My mother was a werewolf.” He grimaced. “Not a race known for their communication skills.”

My gaze drifted to Alec. “So your mother was...”

“Fae. We inherit gifts from our mothers, but dragon blood is strong. For example, Lach is pulled by the moon, but he can’t shift into wolf form. His dragon side is too dominant. When we pass on our genes, our bairns only get our dragon DNA. It’s as if the blood protects itself from being diluted.”

The mention of bairns made my stomach do a weird little flip. “I’m human. I don’t have any gifts to pass on.”

An aura of discomfort settled over the men. Alec smiled, but it wasn’t one of his open, easy smiles. “You’ll pass on love for your children, lass.”

Lachlan was silent. When I met his gaze, he lowered his eyes, his expression locked down as tight as I’d ever seen it.

And, suddenly, puzzle pieces clicked into place. His relative coldness toward me when Alec was so warm and charming. His not-so-subtle efforts to convince me to stay in New York. “It bothers you,” I said. “Me being human.”

He lifted his head, but his eyes were shuttered. “It doesn’t matter. Fate chose you for us.”

“How can you be sure?”

Alec’s smile fled. “I should think last night proved it. And the night before that.” He raked a gaze down my sheet-clad body. “Deny it all you want, sweet Chloe, but you want us. Badly.”

Heat blossomed in all the usual places, but I ignored it. I couldn’t let him seduce me again. I had too much to think about. Like whether I was okay committing to an eternity of living with two dragons.

Including one who might not really want me at all.

Gaze locked with Alec’s, I marshaled every ounce of willpower I possessed. “I want”—I dragged in a breath, then spoke in a rush—“to go back to my room.”

His irises lightened, and for a split second I swore I could see fire in the emerald depths. Then, like the moon emerging from behind a cloud, light built under his skin. His features changed, growing sharper, and his hair waved in a breeze I couldn’t feel. His ears curved to delicate points. He was beautiful. But it was a terrible beauty. Something tickled my cheek, and I realized I was crying.

Playful, charming Alec was gone. In his place was a gorgeous, haughty creature too breathtaking to be real. Seeing him now, it was laughable to think I could have ever held him off with a sword.

Moving with fluid grace, he turned his head slightly, looking over his shoulder.

The door clicked, then slowly opened. My breath caught in my throat.

He faced me, and his voice rippled with the same electric power from the night before. “You can leave this room... But you’re not to leave the castle.”

## Chapter Eleven

ALEC

Five days after Lachlan and I talked to Chloe in the tower, I knew I’d fucked up.

By dropping my glamour and calling up my power, I’d intended to show her there were dangerous creatures in the world, and that running from Lachlan and me would be foolish. Instead, I scared her senseless and now she wanted nothing to do with either of us. She’d gone straight from the tower to her bedroom, and we hadn’t seen her since.

I’d waited three hundred years to find my female. Now she was two doors down and it might as well be two thousand.

“Do you think it’s possible to die from lack of sex?” I asked Lachlan from the sofa in his bedroom, where I lay on my back with a glass of whisky balanced on my bare chest. He sat in the chair opposite me, his face buried in a newspaper. A fire roared merrily in the fireplace, snapping and dancing. Mocking me.

“Lach?”

He folded down the top of his paper long enough to cast me a mild look. “If this is about Chloe, you have no one to blame but yourself.”

“Really? I had no idea. Too bad you haven’t pointed it out several times.”

“If you’re that hard up, you should use your hand.”

“Or you could blow me.”

He flipped his paper back up.

“Arsehole,” I muttered.

“If you spill whisky on my sofa,” he said airily from behind the paper, “you’ll regret it.”

“I’ll buy you a new one.”

“I like that one.”

I grabbed the glass, sat, and drained it in one gulp. “Better?”

A muffled grunt was all I got.

“You know they put the news on the internet now. You don’t have to murder trees to know what’s going on in the world.”

“Joshua Bennington announced his engagement to Clarissa Wakefield this morning.”

My jaw dropped. “Get the fuck out.”

He lowered the paper. “Says it right here in the Times.” His brows pulled together. “That son of a bitch moves fast.”

No kidding. “Do you think Chloe knows? They publish all that shite online. Or someone could have texted her. She has her phone.” Which Lach and I had debated taking from her. In the end, we decided the risk of her contacting anyone was minimal. What would she tell them? That a couple of dragons were holding her prisoner so she didn’t get kidnapped by a werewolf or fae?

Lachlan folded the paper and tossed it aside. “It’s hard to know when she won’t even speak to us.”

That wasn’t entirely true. When she didn’t emerge for meals, I took to leaving food outside her door as I had when she felt queasy in the long gallery. I’d whipped out every culinary skill in my arsenal, trying to tempt her with herb-roasted lamb, duck breasts in cranberry chutney, and crème brûlée.

Lachlan had shaken his head at the last. “Chocolate, Alec. If you’re going to grovel to a woman, always go with chocolate.”

His advice proved prescient, because when I added a chocolate and caramel tart to her dinner, there was a note scribbled on the napkin when I collected the empty tray later that evening.

Has a dragon pair ever been wrong about thinking someone was their mate?

I’d tucked my reply on a card beside her eggs Benedict the next morning.

Never.

Two meals went by—crab brioche bites and chickpea gnocchi—before I received her second note.

Do dragons ever have daughters?

My heart had soared at the thought of it, then sank when I had to reply with the truth.

Sadly, no. The Curse extends to our offspring, too. We only produce sons.

I decided not to mention I was willing to spend the rest of my life trying to break that streak with her.

Her next question came a day later.

Have other dragons mated with a human?

It took me three hours to get the fondant on her petit fours just right, and I was equally careful with my answer.

It's rare. But we live a long time, and there aren't all that many dragons in the world. There would probably be more human mates if we increased our numbers.

Which we were desperate to do. Dragons had never been a prolific species—something true across all the Firstborn Races. Most agreed it was Nature's way of controlling the magical population. We lived such long lives. The planet couldn't sustain billions of beings capable of surviving thousands of years.

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But the Curse, followed by centuries of war, had left dragons toying with extinction. And now maybe I'd pushed us a step closer by screwing up with Chloe. Lachlan hadn't helped by putting doubts in her head about fate giving us a human mate. Six meals had passed since her last note, and my hopes of receiving another were fading fast.

I set my empty whisky glass on the end table with a decisive thunk. "We have to persuade her to accept our claim."

Lachlan folded his arms, making his T-shirt pull taut across his shoulders. He also wore MacKay tartan pajama bottoms, which I'd gotten him as a joke. The uncharacteristically casual clothes made him even sexier for some reason. Which, considering he'd been holding out on me since Chloe fled the tower, was irritating as hell. "How do you propose to do that?" he demanded.

"I'll charm her." I waved a hand when his eyes darkened. "Not charm her charm her. I mean use my considerable powers of seduction to soften her up."

He snorted. "Someone's awfully confident."

"You doubt my abilities?"

"You've tried all your bedroom tricks."

I stood and walked toward him, untying the drawstring on my sweats as I went. I let my voice dip into a lower register. "Not all of them."

He rolled his eyes, but his breath hitched when I dropped the sweats and my erection sprang free—and he didn't protest when I climbed into his lap and straddled his thighs. He eased back slowly, unfolding his arms and resting his head on the back of the chair.

Unlike him, I didn't go slow. After five days of reluctant celibacy, I was ready to burst as I slid my hands into his hair and mashed my mouth to his, my hips rolling so the tip of my cock prodded his abs.

His lips curved against mine. "What bedroom trick is that?"

My answer came in heavy rasps as I stroked my tongue back and forth across his, reveling in his taste and the feel of his hard body under mine. "When I think...of a name...I'll tell you."

We made out for several long moments, our moans filling the room along with the crackling fire. He skimmed his hands up my back and over my shoulders, raising goosebumps in his wake. Pulling me closer so our chests touched and my aching shaft leaked onto his shirt. Judging from the damp bulge nudging my ass, he was having the same problem.

Still kissing him, I tugged at his shirt. "Take this off. Want tae feel you."

He tried turning his head.

I growled and brought him right back with a hand on his jaw.

His laugh rumbled my mouth, and he jerked his head more forcefully, breaking off the kiss. "It's hard to undress when you're sucking my face off, Murray."

I leaned back so he had room to maneuver. As I watched him pull his shirt over his



head, I frowned. “What’s with the distance this week, anyway?” It wasn’t like him to turn down sex. But he had—repeatedly—and my balls were in serious danger of staying blue forever.

He lifted his ass enough to push his pajama pants down his hips. When his shaft sprang thick and ready between us, he gave it a pointed look. “You really want to talk about this now?”

No. But it seemed important. If there was tension between the two of us, how could we hope to woo Chloe? We needed to present a united front.

He sighed. “I’ve just been working through some things in my mind. I guess you could say coming to terms with Chloe being ours.”

“So you accept it?” I tried to keep the eagerness from my voice, but I was probably unsuccessful. He knew me too well.

“Aye,” he said softly. “It’s hard to deny the mental connection.” A distant look entered his eyes, as if he saw things I couldn’t. “I’ve lived so long, I thought I’d seen everything. Never could I have anticipated gaining a new gift, and one no werewolf halfling is supposed to possess. And I certainly can’t deny wanting Chloe’s body.” His throat worked as he swallowed. “I don’t think I’ve ever craved a woman so badly. I wanted to see if going without her made me feel different. If the need would fade.” He flashed a rueful smile. “It hasn’t.”

Joy burst like a firework inside me. I never doubted he’d accept her eventually, but hearing him say it meant everything, especially in light of her recent questions about dragons mating with humans. She might dispute the power of fate, but I didn’t.

And now I knew Lachlan didn’t either.

I wrapped a hand around his cock and gave him a few slow, thorough pumps. “Well, until we bring Chloe around, I guess you’ll have to make do with me.”

His golden eyes glittered with unconcealed lust. “That’s hardly a sacrifice.”

I bent and kissed him again, and it was like he released some kind of barrier he’d imposed on himself. The dominant, insatiable Lachlan came roaring back, his tongue shoving at mine and his hands roving my body like he couldn’t get enough. His biceps flexed as he explored, his questing hands stroking my shaft and cupping my balls. He ran a hot palm over my abs. Another across my chest, teasing my nipples as he went. When I was flushed and trembling, he slipped a hand under my ass and found my crease.

“Don’t need prep,” I rasped, bearing down on his fingers teasing at my entrance. “Just give me your cock.”

With record speed, he stretched an arm to the end table, dug in the drawer, and produced a bottle of lube.

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Even burning up with desire, I managed to smirk. “I love how you have those stashed in every corner of the castle.”

His response was to coat his fingers and carry them back to my hole.

“Lach—”

“Shhh.” He worked two slick fingers inside me, making the hair on my arms lift. “Let me have this,” he said in a voice like sandpaper. “Let me feel you.”

The plea did me in. I pushed my impatience aside as I spread my legs wider, urging his fingers deep. Thrilling at the stretch and fullness. The slight burn that slid into a delicious pressure that spread from my ass through every part of my body. Holding my gaze, he pumped his fingers in a languid rhythm, sliding all the way out and over my taint before plunging back in. Massaging my prostate in wicked strokes that had me squirming and shivering.

I braced my palms on his broad shoulders as I rocked my hips, choking back a moan at the way the movement made our dicks rub together. When he added a third finger I bit my lip, then released a shaky laugh. “You’re gonna make me come doing that.”

“Hittin’ the right spot, am I?” he murmured, his gaze locked with mine.

“Aye, but your cock would feel better.”

“Then you’ll get it.” He slapped my ass with his free hand. “Up.”

I lifted my hips long enough for him to grasp his cock and bring the tip to my clenching pucker. Then I lowered myself onto his shaft, and we both groaned as I clamped hard around him.

“Ride me,” he muttered, urging me into a rhythm with a hand on my hip. “Fuck, that’s a good lad.”

Speech deserted me for a moment as I started to grind, setting a pace that had us both moaning.

“So good,” I gasped, and I would never tell him, but it was almost better for the drought he’d put us through. Like the first bite of food after a long stretch of hunger. Being equal in height, our faces were on level, so I caught every emotion that crossed his face. Even the ones he was usually too stoic to say aloud.

Adoration.

Obsession.

Love.

At the last, I grasped his face and slanted my mouth across his, sucking at his tongue as my ass clenched hard around his dick, grabbing at him with every stroke.

He made a sexy sound somewhere between a growl and a whimper, then squeezed my ass with both hands and started to move, surging his hips up in short, rapid thrusts.

Pleasure rushed at me from everywhere at once. My world shrank to his golden gaze and the slap of my ass against his thighs. The mind-numbing bursts of pleasure that came with each thrust of his cock. I bounced harder, and my dick flapped between us,

the tip swollen and drizzled with precum. I reached for my shaft, but he batted my hand away.

“Let me take care of you,” he said huskily, and took my erection in a firm grip slick with lube.

Ecstasy. Streaking through me like a pinball gone crazy. I rode him faster, grinding hard as his hand flew up and down my cock. My legs tingled as my whole body got on board with my impending release.

“That’s it,” he crooned, his eyes glowing slits. “Blow that hot load all over me.” He reached his other hand under me and fingered my rim, stroking hard where our bodies joined.

My eyes rolled back in my head. “Fuck! Oh...fuck.” My balls tingled, and then my orgasm ripped through me like a thunderclap. My stomach clenched, and I cried out and slammed onto his cock a final time as hot jets spurted from my shaft, soaking his chest and stomach.

He was right behind me, baring his teeth as he thrust once...twice, then shuddered as he came deep inside my ass.

I collapsed against his chest with my face buried in his neck. His pulse fluttered against my lips, and I touched the tip of my tongue to his skin, tasting salt and sex and fire. As our chests heaved and our hearts thudded against each other, my eyelids grew heavy. With sleep beckoning, I murmured, “So you liked my bedroom trick?”

I heard the smile in his deep, sated voice as he ran his fingertips up and down my spine. “Aye. It was quite a trick.”

Deep in my mind, my beast purred, pleased at having satisfied its mate. I closed my

eyes.

“But it won’t work on Chloe,” he said.

My eyes flew open. Wide awake now, I sat up. My beast came alert, too, riled at the thought of losing her. “What’s that supposed to mean?”

“We’ve tried sex with her. We need something different.”

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“But...” My mouth worked, but no words came out. “I can’t think of anything else,” I finished.

His chest shook with laughter. “I know, Alec. You do most of your thinking with your cock.”

“Says the male with his dick lodged in my arse.” My beast stirred more forcefully, itching for a fight. Its emotions rose hot in my mind. First he denied us for days on end, now he called us a manwhore?

Okay, so maybe the last part was justified. But he had a lot of nerve saying it, given he was the direct beneficiary of my sex drive. I went to slide off his lap, but he grabbed my thigh.

“Hold on.” He moved his hand to my jaw and leaned up to capture my mouth. “I’m sorry,” he murmured, brushing his lips over mine.

I held still, making him work for it. “You love my cock,” I muttered defensively.

His soft laugh was warm on my chin. “I absolutely do.” He drew back so he could look at me. “But I love you more.”

I gave in with a sigh, letting him apologize with a slow, thorough kiss. When we drew apart at last, I could see the tiny flames of my beast reflected in his pupils.

He smiled. “I have an idea.”

## Chapter Twelve

### CHLOE

If I continued eating Alec's food, I was going to get fat. Already, my pants fit more snugly.

But I knew refusing meals was a surefire way to make two dragons appear in my room.

Plus, Alec's cooking was to die for. Surprise, surprise, the same man who made meeracle toast prepared food worthy of a Michelin star.

Of course, he'd had lots of time to practice. Because he was three hundred years old.

That was just one of the realities I'd grappled with over the past four days...or was it five? I sighed and settled deeper into the featherbed in my princess room. Anyone viewing my situation from the outside would probably call me an idiot for being hesitant about Alec and Lachlan. They were rich, handsome, and exceptionally skilled in bed. They said fate had brought us together. They wanted to spend forever with me.

What more could a girl ask for? That level of commitment was hard to come by.

But that was exactly what gave me pause. They claimed they just knew I was theirs. That there could be no mistake. That fate never screwed up.

Except I didn't feel that same level of knowing. Worse, I'd thought Josh was my soulmate. Until a week ago, I believed with all my heart that Josh Bennington was the love of my life.



I clenched my jaw. A couple well-meaning friends had texted the news of his engagement. Hopefully Clarissa had better luck than I did. Honestly, though? She and Josh deserved each other, and I was happy I hadn't married someone capable of dumping one woman and announcing his engagement to another within the same week.

But wouldn't committing to Alec and Lachlan right now be the same thing? How could I go from newly single to an eternal relationship with two men in the space of five days? And not just any men. Two dragons who also happened to possess magical powers they inherited from other Firstborn Races. Hell, five days ago I'd never heard of the Firstborn Races. Now I was supposed to live in their world? A world that, according to Alec, was inherently dangerous for me simply because fate had chosen dragons as my mates.

On the other hand, the dragons in question were breathtakingly gorgeous—and they had twice now given me sex so mind-blowing I couldn't stop thinking about it. Every night since I'd locked myself in my room, I'd woken wet and writhing, lust riding me so hard I'd had to bury my face in my pillow so I could satisfy myself without waking the guys.

But my hand was a poor substitute for their cocks and mouths. Their fingers and tongues...

I lifted onto my elbow and punched at my pillow, fluffing it higher. Then I collapsed with a sigh. If I didn't figure things out soon, I was going to end up bursting from my bedroom and begging them to—

The door clicked, and Lachlan walked in. Six feet four inches of Highland Scot in, oh God, he was wearing a kilt. My gaze fixed on the blue and green pleated fabric, which fell to his knees. Sexy knees. How had I never noticed how sexy his knees were?

“Lass?”

I dragged my gaze up. “Yes?” My voice emerged as a hoarse croak, and I quickly cleared my throat. “I mean, yes?”

He crossed the room, and my mouth watered as the kilt swung around his legs. “I hope you don’t mind me coming in. Alec and I have been worried.” He stopped about a foot away, his broad shoulders filling my vision. He wore a blue fisherman’s sweater, and his dark hair was tousled.

I sat up, absurdly grateful I’d taken a long shower and spent extra time on my hair and makeup.

A ghost of a smile touched his lips. “You always look beautiful.”

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I sucked in a breath. “Can you not read my thoughts?”

“I’m sorry.” He ran a hand through his hair, then held it on the back of his neck. “I’m not used to telepathy.”

“Because you’re a werewolf.” It was still hard to wrap my mind around it.

“Yes and no. My mother’s side gives me some wolf traits like strength and aggression, and I’m called by the moon once a month, but my beast is dragon, not lupine.”

“And Alec’s traits are...”

He grimaced. “Alec’s a bit of a different story, and I think you saw some of that in the tower.”

“Yes.” The memory of Alec’s glowing skin and sharp, deadly features was unlikely to fade from my mind anytime soon.

“May I sit?” Lachlan waited for my nod, then settled beside me, bringing his familiar scent of aftershave and dark spices. “Alec isn’t just any fae. His mother was a princess of the Seelie court. It’s a popular misconception that the Seelie are good and the Unseelie are bad or evil. But the truth is all fae are the same. They are neither good nor evil. They’re power, the same as electricity or fire.”

Goosebumps rose on my arms. “Is that why Alec’s commands hurt?”

“Aye,” he said softly, “but he didn’t mean to harm you. You seem unusually sensitive to him, probably because—”

“I’m his mate. So you keep saying.”

He tilted his head—a wolflike gesture that, along with his golden eyes, made that side of his ancestry apparent for the first time. “Would it be so bad to be our mate, Chloe?” The hint of a smile returned to his face, which was shadowed by dark stubble. Between that and his Highland dress, he didn’t seem like a dragon at all. Just a man. A living, breathing man with washboard abs and perfect, rugged features.

Out of nowhere, I heard myself say, “You’ve never talked to me like this before.”

“What do you mean?”

“Just...” My cheeks heated. “I don’t know, just two people talking. In the office, you always seemed in a rush. So corporate. Like—” I cut myself off before I could say “like Josh.”

He frowned. “I’m nothing like Bennington. For one, I’d cut off my hands before I hurt you.”

He would, too. I might not feel the same tug of fate he and Alec did, but I knew in my bones he would never harm me.

“Neither would Alec,” he said, reading my thoughts. “He’s possessive, Chloe, but he’s not a monster. When dragons find something they want, they take it.” His eyes gleamed. “They keep it.” Little flames seemed to dance in his pupils. “And I think you’d like being kept.”

My nipples tightened. His domineering language should have been a turn off. So why

was my body totally ready to sign the dotted line on the mate agreement? A kilt, a couple of smiles, and I was prepared to ditch my freedom and stay locked in the castle forever.

“Now, that’s where you’re wrong,” he rumbled. Before I could tell him to get out of my head, he stood and extended a hand. “You want out of this tower?”

“Yes—”

“Want to see Scotland?”

“Yes, but—”

“How do you feel about seeing it from the air?”

## Chapter Thirteen

### CHLOE

“Why are you wearing a kilt?” I asked Lachlan as he led me through the castle. I hadn’t paid much attention to where we were going. I was too busy admiring his legs.

He slanted me a look. “Given the direction of your thoughts, do I really need to answer that?”

I clamped my mouth shut. I wasn’t sure which was worse, that he thought I was easy enough to be lured by a kilt or that he might actually be right.

“You wouldn’t be the first, lass.”

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We descended a set of stone steps and entered an enormous room with a cathedral ceiling and banners lining the walls. I wanted to gawk, but he tugged me along at a brisk pace, his long strides carrying us to a big wooden door.

“We can’t linger,” he said, pulling it open and gesturing me through. “It’s three hours to London, and we need the night sky for cover.”

Wait, I thought as we stepped into a darkened courtyard. The flight from Inverness to London was usually only an hour and a half. Why would it take three—

Oh.

A green dragon sat on the flagstones, its tail curled around its body.

When Lachlan mentioned seeing Scotland from the air, I assumed he meant via private jet. But it looked like we were flying Dragon Airlines.

Now I gawked. Every kid in New York City visited the Museum of Natural History at some point or another. I’d loved standing next to the dinosaur exhibits, marveling at how something that big could have existed.

But the dragon in front of me wasn’t a skeleton in a museum. It was alive and breathing, its massive chest rising and falling as it watched me with deep green eyes slit by vertical pupils. Its wings were tipped with curved claws as long and thick as a car. One flick and I’d be dead.

“Easy, lass,” Lachlan said, wrapping a warm arm around my shoulders. He raised his

voice so it echoed across the courtyard. “Alec is a gentle beastie, aren’t you, lad?”

The dragon rolled its eyes—actually rolled them—then rose to its hind legs in a mass of glittering scales. A beat later, it blurred and formed into smoke. The roiling, concentrated mass streamed toward us, stopped, and shifted into a nude Alec, who slid an exasperated look from Lachlan to me.

“I fought in the Battle of Culloden, and this one still calls me lad.”

Lachlan snorted. “Talk to me when you’ve fought in the Battle of Hastings.”

“You watched the Battle of Hastings.”

“Aye, and if popcorn had existed, I would have settled down with a bag of the stuff. It’s always a good day when the English get their arses kicked.”

Alec groaned and spoke to me in a stage whisper. “Word of advice, don’t ever talk about the English in front of Lach. He won’t shut up for a week.”

“I won’t,” I said, fighting a smile. It was impossible not to be charmed by their banter.

“Ahh, there it is,” Alec said. “I’ve missed your smile, sweetheart.” His expression turned softer and more serious. “And I swear to you I won’t ever do anything to chase it away again.”

Oh my, that look. His eyes were the same shade of green as his dragon’s. My throat went dry, and my heart rate sped up.

He touched my cheek. “If you’ll let me, I’d like to make amends.”

All I could manage was a breathless “okay.”

His slow grin made butterflies flutter in my stomach. “You ready for the ride of your life?”

“I’m...not sure.”

“It’ll be fine,” Lachlan said, starting to strip. “You’ll ride with me.”

“Lach’s bigger,” Alec said, “so you’ll have more room to sit.” He winked. “But I’m faster.”

Lachlan’s response was a muffled growl as he pulled his sweater over his head. “We’ll see about that.”

About. God, they were killing me.

In short order, I stood between two hulking, nude Scots, their muscled bodies gilded by moonlight.

Maybe I was already dead and this was Heaven.

Lachlan looked me up and down, his normally smooth forehead wrinkled. “It’ll be chilly in the air. Here, put this on.” He scooped his sweater from the ground and tugged it over my head like I was a toddler. Immediately, I was cocooned in Lachlan-scented wool from my neck to halfway past my knees.

“Och, let’s fix those sleeves,” Alec said, rolling them up. When he was finished, he stood back and nodded. “That’ll do. Now, let’s show you a side of Scotland most people never get to see.”



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As if that was a signal, Lachlan turned and paced away.

Oh...wow. His ass would put a Greek statue to shame. Two taut, round globes with sexy little indents that made my mouth water. I was so fixated on his backside, his shift took me by surprise. He poofed to a cloud of smoke, twisted into a tight column, and then burst into a golden dragon the size of a small mountain.

Wonder filled me as I took in his golden scales and glittering eyes, which gleamed like liquid metal. Like Alec, he had a crown of black spikes on his head and a row of horns marching from the top of his spine all the way to the tip of his tail. His face was reptilian, with an elongated snout and a mouth full of multiple rows of serrated teeth.

Without warning, Alec scooped me into his arms and carried me toward Lachlan.

“Hey!” I batted at Alec’s chest, which was like swatting a boulder. “What are you—”

“Trust me, lass, when it comes to riding a dragon, you shouldn’t think overmuch about it. It’s like learning to ride a bike. Best to just get on and go.”

“That is not how people learn to ride a bike!”

He quirked an eyebrow. “Is it no’?”

“No, it’s no’,” I said, mimicking his accent. “It’s—” I squawked as he tossed me into the air, then grunted when Lachlan caught me on his wing. Before I could catch my breath, the wing soared above the courtyard like a construction crane. Then it tipped, and I slid onto Lachlan’s broad back. The whole thing happened so fast I didn’t have

time to scream or worry about falling.

A column of smoke swished into the air beside me, then shivered and took Alec's dragon form. The beast bared razor-sharp teeth at me in what I supposed was meant to pass for a smile. Alec's deep voice flowed into my head.

See? Easier than ridin' a bike. Just don't let go.

My heart pounded as I surveyed one of the horns protruding from the top of Lachlan's golden head.

Wrap your hand around it, he said in my mind. You won't hurt me.

I bit my lip at the innuendo, then gasped when his back shook underneath me. "Behave yourself," I murmured, tracing my fingertips over one of his shimmering gold scales. They were more comfortable than they looked—like running my hand over a fine leather coat. If not for the horns and the fact that I was twenty feet in the air, I might have thought I sat in a luxury car with heated seats.

A great gust of wind tossed my hair, and then Alec launched himself into the night sky, his body shooting past like a rocket. Lachlan's back dipped beneath me as he drew a deep breath.

Then the world dropped out from under me.

For a second, I couldn't breathe. I clung to his horns for dear life as wind blasted my face and a jet engine roared in my ears. It was like takeoff in an airplane, only the plane didn't have a roof or seat belts. We shot into the air, climbing and climbing, Lachlan's wings flapping like two massive sails. They were banded with deep crimson, which made the gold even more breathtaking. Clouds streaked past my face. My hair grew damp, and cold air bit at my skin.

Just as the ascent became unbearable, Lachlan snapped his wings out straight. The roaring stopped, and we seemed to float, suspended in the sky like a blimp over a sports stadium. I dared to look down and my eyes went wide.

Lights dotted the Scottish countryside, which glowed a rich green even in the middle of the night. Church spires rose among the towns. Here and there, a castle perched on a rugged hillside or the edge of a rocky precipice. And everywhere there was water. Lochs of all sizes shimmered with moonlight, as though a giant had made footprints and then filled them with stars. Clouds drifted past like tufts of cotton candy. Every few minutes, Lachlan's wings gently beat the air, sending a whoosh of wind twisting around me. The temperature was chilly, but his body was warm. Like cupping my hands around a mug of hot chocolate on a snowy day.

Alec swooped into view, then settled in the air beside us. He gave me another terrifying smile, his teeth like stalactites in a cave. Fancy a race? Before I could reply, he plastered his wings against his body and streaked forward, leaving Lachlan and me in the dust.

Lachlan's voice rumbled in my head, the timbre rich with disapproval. Show off. Don't worry, lass, we don't have to chase him.

Ahead of us, Alec looped through the sky, his body twisting sinuously. He stopped, wings flapping, and looked over his shoulder. Through the mental connection came the faint sound of a chicken clucking.

I gripped Lachlan's horns tightly and patted his back. "Whatever happens, just promise you'll catch me if I fall off."

I had time to register him chuckling in my head. Then wind tore through my hair as he shot forward. We flew past Alec, which was how I learned dragons look absolutely ridiculous with a shocked expression on their faces.

My laughter was lost to the wind as we sped through the air, the ground below going blurry. Alec flew forward, his horned tail swishing. Lachlan dipped us sharply to the left, ducking under Alec's body. Obviously expecting to find us on the right, Alec did a double-take, his spiky head swiveling back and forth like a cartoon character.

Lachlan and I laughed together. Alec spun away, dropped back, and released a burst of flame perilously close to Lachlan's tail.

And then the race was truly on.

We dipped and soared. Spun and twirled. My fear melted away as we streaked through the sky, and I laughed as Lachlan did barrel rolls like a fighter plane. It was so much fun I lost track of time, and before I knew it the land beneath us glowed with millions of lights.

London.

The guys ceased their play, and Alec's voice entered my head. We have to fly a bit higher, lass. Someone might spot us.

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I held on as Lachlan flapped his wings, propelling us upward. The lights on the ground shrank to pinpricks, and the Thames became a narrow ribbon.

Alec settled next to Lachlan once more and swung glowing emerald eyes to me. What do you think of your first dragon ride?

I started to yell a reply, then tested out our mental connection. A little scary at first, but I'm getting used to it.

Approval shone in his eyes. You just had to try it to know you liked it.

The double meaning was clear.

A magical life awaits you, Chloe. It's up to you to seize it.

I stared at him as we glided over London, the glowing city sprawled below us. It was magical. There was no denying the view or the sheer wonder of sailing through the sky with two dragons. They'd warned me their world was dangerous, but that was true of the human world, too.

And yet...

I was human. There was nothing special about me. And I hadn't imagined Lachlan's resignation in the tower. His shuttered expression and grim acceptance. Human mates were rare. Alec admitted it. I even had it in writing. Out of nowhere, Josh's voice rang through my head. "I don't know, Chloe. I think I was just bored."

Abruptly, Lachlan folded his wings and took us on a sharp descent. The city rushed up, making me gasp and cling to his horns. Wind roared. My stomach dipped like I went over the hill on a roller coaster. We punched through a bank of clouds. A skyscraper appeared out of nowhere. Lachlan swept toward it, snapped his wings out, and landed on the roof. A second later, Alec alighted beside him, his claws scraping concrete.

I barely had time to take in my surroundings when Lachlan lowered himself to the ground and tipped his body sideways. Instinct bade me grip his horns in a bid to stay seated, but the angle was too steep. I slid off his back and onto his wing—and kept right on sliding until my feet hit the ground.

Alec was there in human form, his big hands gripping mine and pulling me up. “All right, lass?” he asked, brushing my tangled hair from my face.

“N-No.” I was too unsteady to push him away, so I clung to his arm as I rounded on Lachlan. “You could have warned me you were descending!”

The golden dragon shimmered and twisted into smoke.

“I could have fallen,” I told it.

The smoke formed into Lachlan, who strode to me, muscled Alec out of the way, and swept me into his arms.

Not again. What was it with Highlanders and plucking women off their feet? “Put me—”

“No’ yet,” Lachlan said, his accent thick as he carried me toward the glass doors of what was obviously a penthouse apartment. He looked down, and his predator’s stare made my mouth go dry. “You have some twisted thoughts in your head, Chloe. It’s

time we untangle them.”

## Chapter Fourteen

LACHLAN

As I carried Chloe into the penthouse, I waited for Alec to call me a hypocrite or try to stop me. Considering how things turned out the first time we found ourselves in this situation, I wouldn't have blamed him.

He did neither, but a mix of confusion and displeasure clouded his features as he followed me into the living room.

I couldn't fault him for that, either. I'd given him plenty of reason for confusion through the years. But that ended tonight. At last, it was time for me to come clean to my mate.

Both of my mates.

I deposited Chloe on a long sofa and gestured Alec to a nearby chair. “Please, sit. I have something to say.”

“All right,” Alec said slowly. He pulled a throw blanket from the arm of the sofa and tossed it at me. “Maybe cover up first. I see it was a cold flight.”

It was a crass attempt to break the tension, and while I appreciated the effort, I couldn't bring myself to smile or snipe back at him. What I had to confess was too important.

And painful.

Swinging the blanket around my shoulders, I perched on the edge of another big chair, my bare feet looking absurdly out of place on the room's white shag area rug. Mostly glass and chrome, the apartment was ultra-modern and about as opposite the castle as a place could be. Alec loved it. I was ambivalent, although I didn't mind the tub in the master bath. It was big enough for both of us and—

“Lachlan?”



*Source Creation Date: July 11, 2025, 5:11 am*

Alec's voice interrupted my rambling thoughts. "Um..." I scrubbed a hand over my face. "Right. No point dragging it out." I looked at Chloe, who watched me with wide blue eyes. She was so beautiful it almost hurt to look at her. But I forced myself to hold her gaze as I said, "I didn't want a human for a mate, but it was never because of you. Humans killed my mother...and one of my fathers."

She put a hand over her mouth.

Alec stiffened, his whole body suddenly alert.

I settled my gaze on a spot between them, and their faces went blurry as I cast my mind back to my earliest memories. "My mother was a werewolf, as you know, and she believed she had nothing to fear from humans. In those days, they were primitive and superstitious. They accepted magic as part of everyday life, even if they didn't understand it. But people can turn on things they don't understand. When they encounter something powerful, they fear it...and then they try to eliminate it."

The room was still as Chloe and Alec listened. Outside, the London night reigned, an inky black covering the city. If not for the room's sleek furniture and the thick panes of glass protecting us from the cold, we could have been in a mead hall, our ears pricked for the sound of enemies.

Or monsters.

"The details aren't important," I said, "although humans got plenty of them wrong when they wrote down the story. But the long and short of it is they hunted my mother and eventually killed her. Ripped her arms from her body and hung them in

the king's hall for all to see. My fathers sought revenge, but they were heartbroken and it made them weak. By the time they attacked, the humans had amassed a large army. They killed one of my fathers. My other sire died shortly thereafter."

"Leaving you an orphan," Chloe said, her voice thick with tears.

When I looked up, moisture sheened her eyes, turning them a deep violet. "No," I said. "I was a fully grown dragon, and I unleashed hell on that kingdom. I burned it to the ground, just like the fairy tales say."

Alec shook his head. "It was a long time ago, Lachlan. A thousand years or more. And it was hardly a kingdom. A cluster of longhouses, more likely, or a village with more animals than people."

"Why should that matter?" I asked, voicing the question I'd grappled with for centuries. "I murdered men and women. Children and babies. I didn't discriminate. Is there an expiration date on evil? I was capable of that once. Who's to say I'm not capable of it again?"

Alec drew a breath, but Chloe put a hand on his arm. Then she rose, crossed the small space, and sank to her knees at my feet. "You want to know what you're capable of? Evil isn't capable of love." A sad smile touched her lips. "When I first started working for you and Alec, I was jealous of your relationship. You love each other wholeheartedly, with zero reservations. I wanted that for myself, for me and Josh."

My voice was gruff in my ears. "He wasn't worthy of you."

"I don't regret what happened," she said. "Now that I've seen what true love looks like, I know I could never settle for anything less." She tipped her chin up as she met my gaze, and her blue eyes grew fierce, giving her the look of a furious angel. "You're not a monster, Lachlan MacKay." She grasped my hands in both of hers.

“We are all more than the worst parts of ourselves.”

My throat ached. Because I wasn't worthy of her, either. “I killed,” I said hoarsely.

“In another time, in another life. You had lost your family, but now you have a new life...and the chance to make a new family.”

For a moment, time stood still. Then I was on my feet and she was in my arms, our mouths locked together as I walked her backwards and tumbled her into Alec's lap. He cushioned her fall, then went to work stripping her out of her clothes. Her sweater sailed over my head and her bra smacked my shoulder as I sucked at her tongue and nipped the pouty lower lip that had driven me mad for months.

She moaned loudly into my mouth, and I broke away to see Alec's big hands cupping her tits. Lust struck me like a rattlesnake, and I pulled back so I could take in the sexy sight of his palms overflowing with her trembling breasts. He flicked his thumbs over her nipples, making the dusky pink tips tighten to little spears. He and Chloe made an alluring pair—him with his big, muscled body and her with her soft, creamy curves. My beast craved them both.

“Get ready for me,” I told them as I worked Chloe's jeans down her legs. I tossed them aside and snapped her panties off with a quick yank that made her gasp. I pushed her thighs wide and hooked her legs over the arms of the chair, baring every inch of her luscious pussy to my gaze. Alec's cock stood up proudly between her splayed thighs, the veined length inches from her glistening folds. A bead of precum dotted the tip of his erection. Shiny juices pooled at her entrance.

No sight had ever been hotter. I kept them that way for a moment, my inner beast thrilling at having them open and needy and at my mercy. “Which to taste first?” I mused, shooting a dark look up at my lovers.

My mates.

Chloe whimpered.

I smoothed my hands up Alec's calves and kept going until I reached her soft inner thighs. "You're right, lass. Ladies first." I lowered my mouth and licked straight up her center.

She went to pieces at once. "Oh God, oh God...oh God." She thrust against my mouth, grinding against my face as Alec's leaking shaft brushed my cheek...my chin...my neck.

I gave Chloe a long swipe of my tongue, then closed my lips around Alec's cock and took it straight to the back of my throat.

His hips jerked, and his deep groan seemed to vibrate the chair. The room echoed with his gravelly pleas. "Suck me. Yes. Fuck...just like that."

I fell into a pattern—one lick for her, one suck for him. Back and forth, I feasted on both, reveling in the contrast between her soft pussy and his rigid shaft. I kept them on the edge as long as I could, denying them release as their moans grew louder and Chloe's pussy got wetter.

But Alec broke first. When it was his turn, he surged into my mouth almost comically fast. His hips thrust in uncoordinated bursts, and his harsh pants drifted over my head. Smiling inwardly, I slid a finger between his cheeks and teased his hole.

He came at once, his hot release hitting the back of my throat. I drank him down and then some, delving my tongue in the tiny slit on his head to make sure I got every last drop.

When I pulled back, he'd wrapped his arms around Chloe's thighs, spreading her impossibly wide as he took her mouth in a passionate kiss. I rose, grasped my shaft, and stirred the tip around her entrance.

*Source Creation Date: July 11, 2025, 5:11 am*

She pulled her mouth from Alec's with a gasp. "Lachlan," she breathed, her eyes dark with lust. Behind her, Alec's green eyes glittered with just as much heat.

I loomed over them, one fist gripping my cock as I drew the head from her clit to her opening. Sandwiched between me and Alec, with his hands holding her open, she couldn't move. Could only tremble and moan, her big eyes wells of need.

And she could beg.

"Please," she whispered. "Please fuck me."

I pushed my hips forward slowly, spearing her an inch at a time. The three of us watched, gazes rapt, at her flaring, pink lips stretched around my cock. I pulled out slightly, and we moaned as one at the sight of my shaft glistening with her desire.

"So wet," I murmured, easing back inside, then sinking even deeper. "Such a needy pussy hungry for my cock." A few more slow, easy pumps and I was all the way in, my dick buried in her perfect heat. Her muscles clenched around me, and my sac brushed Alec's shaft, which had hardened again.

He slipped his hands from her thighs and cupped her breasts, gently kneading the plump curves.

"Keep doing that," I rasped, starting to thrust. It was almost better with his hands on her instead of mine, and dark pleasure curled inside me as I directed his movements. "Pinch her nipples." I thrust faster, rocking her on his lap. "That's right. Harder, lad. Make her moan."

He did, teasing and flicking the taut peaks until she cried out. Her sex squeezed my cock, making my balls tingle as I pumped faster, whipping my hips back and forth like a piston.

She squirmed on Alec's lap, her full lips parted as she alternated between gasps and sexy little moans that drove my arousal to unimaginable heights. "I'm... Oh, Lachlan. I'm gonna..." She moaned as Alec buried his face in her neck and sucked at her skin.

"Say it again," I growled, pumping so hard the heavy chair inched across the floor. "Say my name."

A flush bloomed over her chest as her orgasm gathered. "Lachlan!" she cried.

"Again."

"Lach—" She choked off the word as her mouth opened on a soundless scream. Her pussy spasmed, and her eyes went glassy.

My hoarse shout came a second later. Pleasure spun through my body, colors bursting behind my eyes as I thrust to the hilt and shot my release. It seemed to go on forever, and I was vaguely aware that I gripped Alec's forearm as I rode out the most blissful orgasm of my life. When it finally ended, I collapsed on her chest with my forehead on his shoulder.

He put a hand on the back of my neck and held it there while my heart rate returned to normal. When I could breathe again, I lifted my head and kissed him, then tipped Chloe's chin up and did the same to her. "You all right, baby?"

"Yes," she murmured. "Just really tired."

Alec smiled down at the top of her silky head. "Then we should get you to bed."

Though I have to warn you, Lach is a pillow hog.”

It was tempting to stay right where I was, but I peeled myself off Chloe and helped her rise from Alec’s lap. She shivered, so I snagged the blanket from the floor and settled it around her shoulders.

She gave me a shy look. “Does this mean you’ve claimed me now?”

Oh man. I should have known that question was coming. I glanced at Alec, who seemed suddenly interested in the weave of the upholstery on the sofa. “Ah, no. It takes a bit more than...that.”

She frowned. “Like what?”

“Well... We have to claim you a certain way.” I cleared my throat. “Both of us. At once.”

The color drained from her face.

“But you’ll like it. I mean, we’ll prepare you.” Fuck, I was bad at this.

“I need to sit down.” Her complexion took on a green tinge. She swayed.

Alec and I reached for her at the same time.

Her eyelids fluttered, and she slumped into my arms. “Chloe!”

“Lachlan,” Alec said sharply, his tone laced with something I rarely heard from him.

Fear.



*Source Creation Date: July 11, 2025, 5:11 am*

He gripped my arm and pointed to the white carpet. “There’s blood.” He pulled the blanket away from Chloe’s body, and we both froze.

More blood smeared her thighs.

### Chapter Fifteen

#### ALEC

The human hospital smelled of antiseptic, dying flowers, and stale coffee. Pots of the stuff sat on a warmer in the corner of the waiting room where Lachlan and I had been stuck since the nurses rushed Chloe away. On the flat screen television mounted on the wall, a news presenter in heavy makeup talked about a dip in the stock market.

“How much longer do you think it’ll be?” I asked Lachlan, who had finally stopped pacing and now sat in one of the green plastic chairs, looking out of place and slightly menacing.

I knew better, though. His glower didn’t stem from anger. He felt responsible for Chloe, and he was beating himself up inside for what happened.

I leaned forward to catch his attention. “Lachlan.”

His golden eyes snapped to me. “If I knew that, do you think I’d be sitting on my arse in this cursed place?”

I closed my mouth and sat back, my own plastic chair creaking.

As swiftly as it came, his temper drained away. He rubbed a hand over his jaw, mumbling, “I’m sorry. I just wish they’d tell us something.”

“Excuse me, gentlemen?” A woman in light blue scrubs stood in the doorway.

Lachlan and I shot to our feet so quickly her eyebrows lifted.

“Yes?” I said.

“Which one of you is here for Chloe Drexel?”

“I am,” Lachlan and I said together.

Her gaze darted between us, and a nonplussed expression crossed her face. “We only allow one visitor per patient. It’s hospital policy.”

Oh hell no. No way was I staying put while Lachlan saw Chloe. I went to the doorway, tapping my power as I went.

The nurse’s brown eyes went wide, and her head tipped back as I drew close.

Voice rolling with power, I smiled. “It’s all right”—I glanced at the name badge clipped to her shirt—“Helen. You can change the policy just this once.”

The glow of my skin reflected in her pupils as she nodded. “Yes,” she said in a dreamy voice. “You’re both allowed back.”

“Tapadh leat.” Thank you.

“You’re Scottish.”

I winked. “Born and raised.”

“This way.”

Lachlan muttered beside me as we followed her down a white, sterile-looking hall. “Laying it on a bit thick, don’t you think?”

“It worked, didn’t it?” I muttered back.

Helen led us through a series of halls to a tall counter buzzing with activity. Another nurse—older and oozing authority—stood next to it, tapping away at some kind of futuristic computer mounted to a pole on wheels. She looked up at our approach and frowned. “Just one visitor per patient.”

“They’re here for Miss Drexel,” Helen said, a vague smile on her face.

“Helen. You know our policy.”

“They’re here for Miss Drexel.”

The older nurse opened her mouth like she intended to argue, then shook her head. “You know what, I don’t have time for this.” She brushed past Helen and motioned for Lachlan and me to follow. “You’re already here. I’m not kicking you out now.” Her shoes squeaked as she strode past the counter, speaking over her shoulder. “I’m Joan, one of the nurse midwives. Ah, here we are.” She disappeared inside a patient room.

Lachlan and I froze on the threshold, then looked at each other. Midwife? We knew that word. It was an old one, and its meaning hadn’t changed over the centuries.

Joan stuck her head out the door. “Gentlemen? It’s been a busy night and my shift ends in an hour.”

“Sorry,” I heard myself say, and Lachlan and I followed her inside as my thoughts whirled with the implications of Chloe being treated by a midwife.

Then I saw Chloe sitting in the hospital bed, her face pale and frightened, and my heart dropped to my feet. “Lass,” I breathed, rushing to her side. “Are you all right? You scared Lach and me near to death.” He crowded beside me, his face nearly as pale as hers.

Her mouth trembled. “I...don’t know. They said I’m pregnant.”

Joan made a soft noise, and the three of us looked at her standing near the door. “I’m sorry,” she told Chloe. “We’ve been so busy tonight, I didn’t think to ask if you told

your”—her gaze drifted over Lachlan and me—“um...partner.”

“Partners,” Chloe said firmly. She lifted her chin, and her voice grew stronger. “Both of these men are my partners.”

I braced myself for a negative response, but Joan simply nodded. “Well, my apologies for dropping the news so abruptly.” Her brows pulled together. “Your hormone levels looked a little off, so we’d like to do an ultrasound. I’ll just pop out and grab the machine.” She left in another swirl of no-nonsense efficiency.

The second she was out the door, Chloe’s face crumpled. “I can’t believe this,” she whispered. She looked up, faint hope glimmering in her eyes. “It couldn’t be one of yours, could it? You used a condom on the plane, but then...” She trailed off and swallowed, obviously anxious.

I shook my head slowly. “No, honey. I used a condom the first time because I didn’t want to alarm you. But we don’t need one. Lach and I can’t catch human diseases, and we can’t get you pregnant until we’ve claimed you.”

Lachlan pulled a couple of visitors’ chairs over. We sat, and he laced his fingers through Chloe’s. “Och, they’ve bruised your wee hand.” He planted a soft kiss on the greenish discoloration around her IV. “I can fix it, lassie. Soon as you’re home.”

“You can?”

“‘Course I can. Dragon tears have healing powers.”

Moisture streaked down her cheek. “It’s Josh’s baby.” Her mouth trembled again. “What are we going to do?”

I stroked the soft skin of her arm under the sleeve of her hospital gown. “Whatever

you want, sweetheart. Lach and I support you no matter what.”

“But what about Josh? God, I’d have to see him for the rest of my life.”

“Don’t think about that now,” Lachlan said. “Just focus on getting better.” He drew an unsteady breath. “When I saw the blood on your thighs... Christ, lass, I couldn’t bear thinking I’d hurt you.”

“You didn’t,” she insisted. “They told me bleeding is common at this stage, and some women spot through their entire pregnancy.” A shy look bloomed over her delicate features. “You didn’t hurt me. I loved every minute of what we did. What we all did.”

A squealing sound split the air, and then Joan entered with a machine on a rolling cart. “Here we are,” she said, maneuvering it to Chloe’s bedside and locking it in place. She punched a bunch of buttons, then turned to Chloe. “Since you’re early in your pregnancy, I’ll need to do a transvaginal ultrasound for accuracy.”

“All right.”

Joan glanced at me and Lachlan. “Are you okay with—”

“They’re staying,” Chloe said.

Joan didn’t bat an eye, and I exhaled with relief because I had a feeling she’d be tricky to charm. Some people were naturally less susceptible to suggestion. Others had simply encountered too much bullshit in their lives to be persuaded. My money was on Joan fitting both descriptions.

She fiddled with the machine some more, then swished a probe under Chloe’s blankets with sleight of hand that would have put a magician to shame. A second later, a grainy image appeared on the black and white screen.

Chloe tensed.

Lachlan and I leaned forward.

In profile, Joan's mouth turned down. After a moment, she faced Chloe, and her voice lost its clipped, harried edge. "I'm truly sorry, dear. This isn't a viable pregnancy."

"What?" Chloe looked between her and the screen. "I don't understand."

*Source Creation Date: July 11, 2025, 5:11 am*

Joan pointed to a white ring in the middle of the black. “This is the gestational sac. We should see the developing embryo, but it’s missing. We call it a blighted ovum. Sometimes the embryo passed very early. Other times it never developed at all.” Her expression softened. “These are so much more common than people realize. Up to twenty percent of all first pregnancies end in miscarriage, and the number is probably even higher because we don’t always know about these very early ones.”

Chloe gazed at the screen.

“There is absolutely no reason to think you won’t go on to have a successful pregnancy.”

“I...” Chloe trailed off.

I put my hand over the one Lachlan already held, my fingers around both of theirs. “What should we do now?” I asked Joan.

“Right,” she said, her brisk tone returning. “There are two options, really.” She looked at Chloe. “You can wait for the miscarriage to progress on its own, or I can send you home with medication to move things along. You’ll likely have some cramping, and then it will be like a heavier than normal menstrual cycle.”

“Medication,” Chloe said. “I don’t want to wait.”

Joan nodded. “Just give me a minute to get the prescription. We can fill it here, and you’ll be on your way. Once you’re home, get rest and plenty of fluids.”



“We’ll take good care of her,” Lachlan said.

Chloe squeezed our hands.

Joan bustled about for a minute, then pushed the ultrasound machine to the door. Just before she left, she turned, her gaze falling on Chloe. “I’m sorry for how things turned out, Miss Drexel.” She hesitated, then added, “This probably sounds terribly unprofessional, but the women in my family have a knack for...knowing things. I can’t explain it, but I just know you’ll have a son. I feel it very strongly.”

My heart pounded. Beside me, Lachlan went completely still.

“Um. Anyway, I thought it might help to pass that along.” She gave a short nod and left.

By some unspoken agreement, the three of us waited until the sound of the machine’s squeaky wheels faded, then Chloe turned to us. “Are psychics a thing?”

Lachlan answered. “Yes, though the gift is unpredictable.” He cast a thoughtful look toward the door. “I’d wager she’s the real deal, though. That sort of thing does tend to run in families.”

I brushed a loose curl off Chloe’s shoulder. “You okay, sweetheart?”

She was quiet a moment. “I think so. That was a roller coaster.” She grimaced. “Honestly, I just want to get out of this gown and go home.”

“We can make that happen,” I said. “We’ll tuck you in bed and be at your beck and call. You can order us around like servants.”

Her smile put color back in her cheeks, which made sweet relief wash through me.

“Two handsome Scotsmen to do whatever I say? I’ll take it.”

## Chapter Sixteen

### CHLOE

The guys made good on their promise to take care of me. As soon as we returned to the penthouse, they tucked me in bed in the master suite and saw to my every comfort. Alec brought me bowls of homemade chicken noodle soup (with a side of meeracle toast), and Lachlan brushed the tangles from my hair and arranged the heavy mass in a French braid.

I’d touched the plait in surprise. “You know how to braid?”

“Of course I do. Medieval warriors were vain about their hair, lass.”

“Aye, like in Braveheart,” Alec said cheerily as he carried a laundry basket from the bathroom.

Lachlan glowered at him. “Watch your language. There’s a lady present.”

“It’s Lach’s favorite movie,” Alec said as he left the room.

“It fucking is not,” Lachlan called after him. He’d turned back to me with a scowl. “He gets me a DVD of the damn thing every year for my birthday.”

I’d grinned at their antics—and all the other ways they teased each other. They kept me laughing, sometimes until tears rolled down my face.

And when the tears shifted unexpectedly from humorous to the real thing, they’d held me as I wept, the three of us spooning in the oversize bed.

*Source Creation Date: July 11, 2025, 5:11 am*

“I-I’m s-sorry,” I’d gasped between sobs, my face buried in Alec’s chest with Lachlan’s warm body pressed against my back. “I d-don’t know why this is h-happening.”

“You cry all you want, lassie,” Alec replied, his breath stirring my hair. “It’s normal.”

I sniffed. “It is?”

“Aye. I read some medical journals online. The pregnancy wasn’t viable, but your body still thought it was pregnant. All those hormones are making a run for it.” He planted a firm kiss on my crown. “It can make you weepy.”

I lifted my head so I could see his face. “You researched all that for me?”

“Of course I did. You’re not in this alone.”

My heart squeezed. How could such a simple statement mean so much? But it did, and even more so because I knew it was true. I’d been alone my whole life—first as a lonely kid who seemed to get in my mother’s way, and then as the underachiever fiancée watching Josh from the sidelines. Now, for the first time, I was part of something I’d never had before.

A family. Maybe an unconventional one. Some people might not approve.

But who cared what people thought? People were overrated anyway.

Lachlan had chuckled, clearly picking up my thoughts. But it didn’t bother me

anymore. The mental connection was part of our bond.

He'd run a gentle hand down my back. "How's your bleeding, lass?"

"Lighter," I said readily, because it was impossible to be embarrassed with these men. My men. They were so matter-of-fact about things. But heat entered my cheeks as I added, "I think we should be able to...you know...soon."

He made a tsking sound and turned me so I faced him. Propped on his elbow, he traced my lower lip. "We're not worried about that. But I can speed up the healing process if you want."

"With your tears?" He hadn't mentioned it since the hospital, and now I really wanted to see how it worked. And if it made the damn hormones go away faster? All the better.

He looked at Alec behind me. "You want me to do it?"

"You're far better at it," Alec said lazily. "Old man," he added.

Lachlan gave him a disgruntled look. Then he lowered a soft gaze to me. "It's a tricky gift. Something that takes a long time to master." As he spoke, moisture gathered in his eyes, which seemed to leap with fire.

My heart raced as the air around the bed...sparkled. There was no other word for it. Currents seemed to dance over my skin like champagne.

Lachlan blinked, and a perfect, tiny diamond slipped onto his cheek.

My breath caught. Instinctively, I reached for it, curious to see if it was as real as it looked.

“No,” Alec murmured, catching my hand in a gentle grip. “Let him give it to you.”

Slowly, Lachlan plucked the shimmering jewel from his face and carried it to my mouth. Heart pounding, I parted my lips.

Fire. It licked over my tongue...and yet it didn't burn. Heat streaked from my mouth to every cell in my body, searing without harming. The diamond dissolved and a sense of well-being flooded me, better than anything I'd ever felt. Better than the finest food or the biggest wine buzz or the most explosive orgasm.

In a blink, all the aches and pains of the miscarriage vanished. The dragging in my limbs. The raw, scraped feeling in my womb. The nagging headache buzzing in my temples. All of it disappeared, leaving me flushed and awestruck.

“Wow,” I said, breathless as the rush of pleasure receded. “That was...thank you.”

“You're welcome,” Lachlan said, golden eyes smiling.

Alec's indignant voice had floated over my shoulder. “Better than an orgasm? We'll see about that.”

Raindrops struck my face, yanking me abruptly from my memories. I shivered and stood, gathering the tartan blanket I'd taken onto the rooftop where Alec and Lachlan had landed our first night in London.

It was hard to believe that was a week ago, I thought as I slid open the penthouse's heavy glass door and ducked inside. As I pulled it shut, the rain started in earnest, soaking the roof and making the city's lights gleam in the darkness. The wind howled, and I tucked my bare toes under the tartan. London wasn't as cold as the Highlands, but it was still chilly. If either of the guys caught me without socks, they would pitch a fit.

I snorted under my breath. They would probably do more than that. Alec would plunk me in a warm bath while Lachlan built a fire. It had been days since he healed me, but they both still acted like I was made of glass. It was endearing, but also kind of...well, irritating.

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I sighed, and my breath fogged the door.

The constant pampering had another downside. Namely, our sex life was beyond non-existent. No matter how much I insisted I was ready to resume our nocturnal activities, they insisted the opposite.

“We’ve plenty of time for that, lassie,” Alec had said.

“Your health is more important,” Lachlan had agreed.

Except I was fine. I didn’t need another bowl of soup or back rub. I needed two strapping, horny Highlanders to make my toes curl. Problem was, if I waited for the Highlanders in question to make the first move, I could be waiting a very long time.

Verra. God, I needed to hear that sexy accent growling at me in bed. Or on the sofa. Or the table. I didn’t care where.

I gave my reflection a firm nod, then turned and strode through the living room, the tartan flaring behind me like a cape. The bedrooms were on the other side of the penthouse, with a view of Hyde Park. Although the guys hung out with me in the master suite during the day, they’d slept in a separate room at night, saying they “didnae want tae disturb” me.

Well, no more.

Determination pumping in my veins, I headed for their room. As I neared the door, Alec’s voice drifted into the hall. “So it’s not a problem, her being human?”

I stopped, my scalp prickling.

Lachlan's heavy sigh came a second later. "It's never going to be ideal. But it doesn't matter."

"Right. We know she's fertile."

Oh my God. I pressed a hand over my mouth so I wouldn't make a sound. My heart pounded so hard I felt lightheaded.

Lachlan murmured something I didn't catch. Then Alec said, "We need to claim her. That will help."

Another sigh, and Lachlan said, "It's going to be a while before I can bring myself to touch her."

The hall went blurry as tears flooded my eyes. How could I have been so stupid? All my initial instincts had been right. They weren't into me. They only wanted each other. But their species was in danger of dying out.

My throat burned. They didn't want a mate. They wanted a surrogate.

And if I refused, they had the power to override my wishes. They could lock me in their castle tower and throw away the key.

I backed away from the door...and then I was moving fast, my bare feet soundless on the marble floors. I ran to the kitchen, where my phone was plugged into a charger. My heart thudded like a drum as I shoved the phone in my back pocket and rushed to the front door. I pulled on my boots with shaking hands, and then looked over my shoulder fully expecting to see a wall of smoke barreling toward me.



But there was nothing, so I slipped out the door and ran for my life.

## Chapter Seventeen

### CHLOE

I was both the luckiest and unluckiest woman in the world.

On the one hand, I'd managed to flag down a taxi seconds after fleeing the penthouse. The driver had taken me straight to Heathrow, where a flight to New York was leaving in less than an hour.

On the other hand, I had no passport. I'd been so intent on escaping Alec and Lachlan, I'd forgotten all about it.

Now I was sitting in a deserted waiting area across from the ticket counter while a bleary-eyed agent tried to get the U.S. embassy to answer its phone in the middle of the night. Judging from her expression, she wasn't having much luck.

Anxiety gnawed at me as I swept my gaze around the terminal, my eyes peeled for a pair of six-foot-four Scotsmen. Why, oh why, hadn't I remembered my stupid passport? I kept my license and credit card tucked inside my phone case, so at least I had money and some form of identification. It drove my mother crazy, and she was forever predicting the habit would lead to disaster. "What if you get mugged? Now you've lost your phone and your money."

Well, that hadn't happened. Instead, I'd lost my dignity and maybe my freedom.

No big deal.

Two police officers—one man and one woman—rounded a corner and made a

beeline toward me.

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I sat up straighter, my stomach doing its best to expel the gourmet grilled cheese Alec had served for dinner. At the thought of him, my nausea turned to anger, so I didn't flinch when the officers stopped in front of me.

"Chloe Drexel?" the woman asked, her accent as neat and clipped as a BBC presenter's.

"Yes?" I stood. "I mean, that's me."

The man spoke, his voice low and courteous. "We're from the Metropolitan Police Service. We're here to take you to your embassy, which will issue you an emergency passport so you can fly home."

Hope surged like a shooting star in my chest. "Seriously? How soon will I be able to leave London?"

"I'm not certain, ma'am. But the embassy moves pretty quickly. I'm sure they'll get you sorted."

It wasn't like I had any other options, so I followed them from the waiting area and past the ticket agent who didn't even look up as we left. Which seemed...weird. Because wasn't she still trying to get the embassy on the line?

The female officer looked at me over her shoulder. "You're lucky we monitor all outgoing calls to the embassies. We picked up your case on our scanner."

Oh. Well, that made sense. "How far is it to the embassy?" I bit my tongue before I

could ask what part of London it was in. I didn't want them knowing I was running from someone. Two someones.

"Not far," the male said, gesturing me toward a waiting police car as we exited the terminal. To my surprise, he slid in beside me while the female officer took the driver's seat. She merged seamlessly into traffic and we were off, the airport shrinking behind us.

We rode in silence for about twenty minutes, the police car a dark cocoon of silence. Then my phone buzzed in my back pocket, and I let out a yelp.

"Everything all right?" the female officer asked, meeting my gaze in the rear view mirror.

"Y-Yes." I had to wipe my sweaty hands on my jeans before I could grasp my phone. "Sorry, just anxious about losing my passport, I guess." My heart raced as I typed my password with my thumb.

Two text messages. Both from friends.

I let my head thump against the back of the seat. For the next few minutes, I simply stared out the window, letting the blurred scenery soothe me. Except... We were going kind of fast.

Too fast for the congested London streets.

And the scenery was all wrong. Instead of bright lights and busy streets, there was nothing but forest. How had I not noticed it before?

I sat up. "Where are we—" My question ended in a strangled scream as the male officer slapped a hand over my mouth and yanked me against him. As soon as my

back touched his chest, I knew I'd made a terrible, terrible mistake.

Because he had no heartbeat.

Vampire. The enemies Alec and Lachlan had warned me about.

A low chuckle slid around my ear. "It's a pleasure to meet you, Chloe." The mocking edge in his voice was even more offensive for being delivered in a cultured, upper class accent. "Let's see if you taste as good as you smell." Something sharp pinched my neck. Agony zipped down my shoulder and into my elbow, like hitting my funny bone against a hard surface.

I bucked against him. He tightened his grip, and the agony moved to my ribs as he squeezed me like a tube of toothpaste.

The air seemed to vibrate.

He lifted his head. "What the devil is—"

A fireball smashed into the road ahead of the car.

Chaos.

Tires squealed, and then I was thrown forward. My forehead smacked the seat in front of me, and a high-pitched whine filled my ears. For a moment, it was like I was underwater. Sounds were muffled. The world became fluid and slow.

Then everything rushed back in a burst of light and sound. Fire filled my vision. Someone shouted. Rough hands hauled me sideways. The vampire pulled me from the car and into the road, which looked like a scene from Hell. A wall of fire at least ten feet high formed a circle around the car. Heat seared my face and smoke filled my

lungs. As I bent, coughing, the vampire seized my arm and spun me so my back was against his chest. He wrapped a hard forearm around my neck and put his mouth next to my temple. “If you fight me, I’ll drain you before your lovers can save you.”

The female vampire strode into view, her police hat gone and her hair flowing like an inky cloud down her back. She rounded on us with glowing red eyes. “Do it now, Andrei! They’ll kill us if they know we have her!”

Fire streaked from the sky—a thick stream of it incinerating her on the spot.

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I tried to scream, but the male's arm cut off the sound.

“No, Volenta,” he said in an amused tone. “They’ll just kill you.”

A golden dragon swooped from the air, its wings fanned open as it descended. Just before its clawed feet touched the ground, it shifted to smoke. The dark mass swirled, and then a nude Lachlan stood before the wall of flames. His eyes glowed like two pools of metal, and every inch of his body vibrated with menace.

The vampire tightened his grip, completely cutting off my oxygen. I gagged, and he loosened his hold, almost as if he'd choked me reflexively and not on purpose.

The wall behind Lachlan flamed higher, and then Alec strode through in human form. The flames parted and reformed behind him, leaving his muscled body unscathed. He stopped beside Lachlan, his green eyes burning with anger and the promise of violence.

My heart threatened to pound from my chest. These weren't the playful dragons who raced as they flew me to London. These were killers.

And they were really pissed off.

Lachlan spoke, his voice too deep to be human. “You break the treaty, Andrei. Your prince will punish you.”

“Assuming we don't kill you first,” Alec said. As he spoke, the inferno behind him flamed higher.

The vampire's chest rumbled against my back. "I haven't broken the treaty. The female was fleeing you." The hint of a taunt entered his voice. "Or was she merely sightseeing at Heathrow in the middle of the night?"

Lachlan's eyes burned brighter than the blaze at his back. "Don't be stupid, leech. You're no match for us."

"Not normally," the vampire said. "But she's the strongest of her kind I've ever felt."

Lachlan and Alec frowned, confusion stamped on their features.

For a moment, silence reigned, with nothing but the crackle of flames around us. Then the vampire spoke slowly, his voice as surprised as their faces. "You don't know, do you?" Now he laughed, the vibration traveling down my spine. "Oh, this is too rich."

I struggled to draw air as his arm dug harder into my throat.

"What the fuck are you talking about?" Alec demanded.

"It's a trick," Lachlan muttered. "Leeches love deceit."

The vampire laughed for another long moment, as though he enjoyed their bewilderment. "It appears the trick's on you. She's a donum, you fools. I walked unnoticed through all of Heathrow merely because she was inside it." He put his nose in my hair and inhaled deep. "Mmm, she reeks of magic."

I squeezed my eyes shut, but not before I got a glimpse of Alec's face going livid.

The vampire lifted his head but kept his cheek against my temple. "Prince Ludovic will reward me handsomely for delivering such a prize. She'll serve our territory for



centuries, enhancing our power.”

My eyes flew open.

The flames shot higher than ever. Alec took a step forward. “She’s not your prize. She’s our mate.”

“You neglected to claim her. Until then, she’s up for grabs.” The vampire’s arm tightened. “And I grabbed her.”

My lungs burned. White spots danced in my vision, which had grown dark at the edges. The word “donum” meant nothing to me, but apparently the vampire thought it was worth abducting me over.

So I could “serve” him, just as Alec and Lachlan had expected me to serve their interests, providing them with a womb so they could save their species.

Just as I’d served Josh by working while he attended law school. Putting my life on hold so he could fulfill his.

No one ever wanted me just for me. They wanted me for what I could do for them.

And in the end, they were happy to cast me aside when I’d outlasted my usefulness.

As my lungs seized and blackness threatened to descend, the memory of every humiliation, every slight, rushed back. All the shitty odd jobs I’d worked. Every quiet night alone. The missed phone calls. The excuses and half-baked apologies.

“I don’t know, Chloe. I think I was just bored.”

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“It’s going to be a while before I can bring myself to touch her.”

A ball of heat formed in my chest.

Power. Not Alec’s. Not Lachlan’s or the vampire’s.

MINE.

The vampire tensed.

I ripped his arm from my neck, spun, and grabbed his throat.

His red eyes widened, and his lips parted, revealing needle-sharp fangs.

As I lifted him onto his toes, my hand and arm glowed like they were lit from within. The wall of fire leaped in my peripheral vision. Staring into the vampire’s eyes, I could see it leaping in mine, too.

“I’m done being useful,” I said, my voice rippling with power that shook the ground.

Then I flung the vampire into the flames.

Chapter Eighteen

ALEC

Chloe was gorgeous before.

Now she was breathtaking.

Her body glowed as she tossed Andrei all the way across the circle. He crashed into the fire, sprang to his feet, and slapped at the flames that climbed up his legs.

Chloe narrowed her eyes, which glowed like two sapphires. For a second, it seemed she might pursue him, but then she threw her head back and roared. The car's windows shattered. The flames around us shot upward. Her pale hair snapped around her shoulders, tossed by an invisible wind. For the briefest moment, her body wavered, her form going blurry.

My heart thumped like a wild animal in my chest, and emotion burned my throat. When I glanced at Lachlan, his eyes swam with unshed tears.

Understandable. This was the closest either of us would ever get to seeing a female dragon.

Chloe lowered her head and pinned Andrei with a look that dripped menace. "I serve no one."

He swept her an elegant bow that wouldn't have looked out of place in an eighteenth century ballroom. Which was exactly where he'd perfected it. "My sincerest apologies, my lady. I will inform my prince."

She let her gaze rest on him a moment longer, then looked away, as if he was a bug she'd decided not to smash.

At least not today.

Andrei smiled at Lachlan and me. "Best of luck claiming her. I have a feeling you'll need it."

Lachlan lunged at him, but he winked out of sight, disappearing in the way only a vampire could.

Which left Lachlan and me alone with Chloe. Power seethed around her, crackling and distorting the air. But the light had gone from her eyes, and her chest rose and fell quickly.

Too quickly.

I dared a step toward her. “Chloe... You hold too much power. You have to release it.”

She shook her head. “You lied to me.” Her skin glowed...then flickered. “You have to let me go.”

“We can’t do that, lass,” Lachlan said. “You belong to us. And us to you.”

“Why did you run?” I asked, unable to stop the question. She’d been so happy at the penthouse. Sure, the miscarriage was a blow, but her recovery had brought the three of us closer than ever.

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Her skin flickered again. And again. Under the glow, she grew pale.

I eased forward, one arm outstretched. “Chloe, you don’t understand how this gift of yours works. Let me—”

“I heard you!” she cried suddenly, and the power around her flared like a light bulb in an electrical surge. “You said it doesn’t matter if I’m human. You only care that I’m fertile.” She swung anguished eyes to Lachlan. “You said it would be a while before you could touch me.”

My stomach dropped. She’d overheard us talking. But she didn’t know the context, and she’d interpreted our conversation in the worst way possible.

Lachlan drew a deep breath. “Chloe, you heard Andrei call you a donum. It’s an extraordinarily rare gift, especially among humans. The mechanics are complicated, but the easiest explanation is that you’re a magical battery.”

She stared, frowning but clearly listening.

“A donum absorbs the gifts of any magical being in close proximity. You store power, but you also feed it back to them. As that loop gets stronger, a donum can actually display the gifts of the magical beings they’ve siphoned from.”

I slid a look at Lachlan. Where was he going with this? Magic 101 could wait. We needed Chloe to trust us before she fried the circuits in her brain.

“It’s very hard to lie to a dragon,” he said. “You’re flush with our power, lass. Use it.

Caste out your senses and test the truth of what we're telling you."

I exhaled, torn between admiring his intelligence and being annoyed that mine was obviously inferior.

"We don't care that you're human," he told her. "But no dragon pair can take a female mate without permission from the king."

"He's old," I said. "Possibly older than dirt. Cormac is the last full-blooded dragon on Earth, and he was born in a time when dragons ruled it. Over his long lifespan, he's seen our numbers dwindle to almost nothing."

"And all he cares about," Lachlan said, "is seeing them rise again. He's... Well, full-blooded dragons are intense."

"That's putting it mildly," I muttered. Volcanoes and hurricanes were intense. I'd rather snuggle with one of those bastards than spend any amount of time in Cormac's presence.

Lachlan held Chloe's gaze. "Our king is the most powerful being alive, but Alec and I would risk his wrath to mate you." His throat bobbed as he swallowed. "And I would die before I hurt you. When I saw that blood on your thigh..."

Inside the bubble of power, Chloe's eyes filled with tears. She flickered again, the flash revealing her bones under her skin.

"Lass," I said gently, "you'll burn yourself up. You have to release that power, sweetheart."

"I...don't think I know how."

I smiled. “It’s easy. Just picture your hand holding a wire. Then let it go.”

“That’s it?”

“That’s it.”

Her eyes drifted shut. A second later, the power boomed outward in a wave and dissipated. She staggered back.

Lachlan and I were already there to steady her.

“Whoa,” she breathed, sandwiched between us. “That was really weird.”

“The weirdest,” I agreed.

“Can I do that all the time?”

“I sure as hell hope not.”

Lachlan smoothed her hair back from her forehead. “How do you feel? Are you hurting anywhere?”

She smiled, and love shone from her eyes, turning them bluer than I’d ever seen them. “Not at all. In fact, I’ve never felt better.”

Chapter Nineteen

LACHLAN

“Are you sure you’re ready for this?” I asked as I set a bowl of ice cream in front of Chloe.

She lit up at the sight of the French vanilla drizzled with chocolate syrup. “If I wasn’t before, I am now.” She leaned her elbows on the penthouse’s kitchen counter and dug her spoon into one of the creamy mounds. Her hair was damp from the shower, and her nipples were hard points under the thin silk of her robe. There was beard rash on her neck, and her lips were swollen from my kisses.

Or Alec’s. Probably both.

I reached down and adjusted my cock, which pushed painfully against the front of my trousers. In the week since the vampires tried to abduct her, the three of us had hardly left the bed.

And still I wasn’t sated. Even now, I wanted—needed—more. It was a damn good thing she’d agreed to stay. Because letting her go wasn’t an option. Each time we joined, our bond grew that much stronger, its presence so obvious it was hard to believe I’d ever questioned it.

Over a thousand years of living, and I was still a fool. Fortunately, Chloe wasn’t. She’d forgiven my prejudice.

And I would never stop being grateful.



Alec walked into the kitchen and stopped. “You’re having ice cream without me?”

I gestured at the cell phone on the counter. “Chloe is going to call her mother.”

Chloe scooped more ice cream and held her spoon aloft in invitation. “Don’t worry. I share.”

Alec grinned and sauntered around the counter. “Careful, lassie. You’ll put wicked thoughts in my head with talk like that.” He dipped his gaze to the bulge between my legs and raised an eyebrow. “Having a hard time?”

I leaned a hip against the counter. “Just eat, Alec.”

His eyes gleamed with a mixture of heat and merriment as he put his palms on the granite and stretched toward Chloe. “Oh I plan to,” he murmured, holding her gaze as he took his time licking ice cream off the spoon.

She blushed and bit her lip. “I didn’t know dragons like ice cream.”

“We love it,” he said as she fed him another bite. “Give us something sweet and wet, and we gobble it right up.”

A curious sensation spread through me as I watched them alternate between flirting and sharing the dessert. The feeling was more than happiness. It was...joy, I realized. And lightness. For the first time in centuries, the constant ache in my soul was gone. I was whole.

Fate had given me not one but two perfect mates.

My eyes burned, and I swallowed against a suddenly thick throat.

Alec turned his head toward me, a soft smile playing around his mouth. “Come here,” he said, extending a hand.

I took it and let him pull me to his side. He used his other hand to grip one of Chloe’s and then nodded toward the phone. “You don’t have to do this to make us happy, sweetheart.”

Her heart rate picked up, and she licked her lips, anxiety rolling off her in waves. “I know...but I want to do it.” She squared her shoulders. “I need to do it.”

I reached across the counter and took her other hand. “Draw from us, then, love. Just like we practiced.”

Some of the tension left her shoulders, and a hint of amusement entered her blue gaze. “That’s a good idea. If there was ever a time to borrow some dragon power, it’s before a call with my mother.”

A sense of humility spread through me—something that probably wasn’t going to stop happening anytime soon. I’d questioned fate because I hadn’t wanted to be saddled with a weak human for a mate. I’d thought Chloe beneath me.

And fate had delivered the ultimate sucker punch by giving me a female who could siphon magic from any of the Firstborn Races.

“Okay,” she said suddenly. “I’m ready.”

Alec lifted her hand to his lips and kissed her knuckles. Then he swiped her phone screen and dialed.

Her mother picked up right away, her clipped tones filling the kitchen. “I knew you’d see reason. I’m swamped with work so I won’t be able to get you from the airport—”

“I’m not coming back to New York,” Chloe said.

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There was a long pause. Then Cindy's voice went low. "Think very carefully, Chloe. Because—"

"I have." Chloe squeezed my hand, and a little tug in my chest let me know she was drawing from me. I squeezed back. Take whatever you need, baby. I'd give her anything.

She'd given me everything.

Alec gripped my other hand and feathered his thumb over my knuckles.

"I'm staying in Scotland," Chloe told her mother.

"With those men?"

"They have names. Alec and Lachlan. And I love them."

My chest swelled.

"You're in love with two gay men?"

"They're bisexual," Chloe said. When her mother gasped, she kept right on talking. "I don't expect you to understand. I can't explain it all right now. Maybe someday...if you're willing to listen."

There was another long stretch of silence. When Cindy spoke again, her voice was hard and flat. "Chloe, I'm sure you believe yourself to be in love. But I'm not sure

you even know what love is.”

I tightened my fingers around Chloe’s. Alec gazed at her with steady eyes shimmering with power.

She looked between the two of us before drawing a deep breath and focusing on the phone. “You could be right. I may not know what love is, but I definitely know what it’s not. And I have you and Josh to thank for teaching me that.”

Cindy’s swift intake of breath was loud in the kitchen.

“I’m going now,” Chloe said. “If you ever decide you want a relationship, then I’ll expect you to treat me and the men I love with respect. This is the life I’ve chosen. I’m going to go live it.” She reached out and ended the call.

For a moment, the three of us looked at each other. Her words rang in my ears. I love them.

She loved us—enough to uproot her life and enter an entirely new world.

I was moving before I even realized it, circling the counter and plucking her off the barstool so I could take her in my arms. Alec was right behind me, and I grabbed his shoulder and pulled him into our circle.

In typical Alec fashion, he got straight to the point. “So you love us, hmm?”

She smiled up at him, her cheeks flushed with pink. “Yes.”

“Do you have a favorite, and why is it me?”

I reached around and pinched his ass.

He leaned down and murmured in her ear. “You can tell me later, lass. For now, just know that we love you, too.”

“Aye,” I said, drawing them both closer. “We love you, Chloe. And we’ll spend the rest of our lives showing you just how much.”

“We’d do anything for you, sweetheart,” Alec added.

She shifted her gaze between us, her big blue eyes shining with love. “Anything?”

“Name it,” he said.

The pink in her cheeks deepened. “I have a few ideas in mind.”

My cock twitched, completely on board with whatever her imagination could conjure.

She reached up and lay her palm against my cheek, then did the same to Alec’s. “For starters,” she murmured, “I was thinking you could lock me in that tower again.”

### Epilogue

CHLOE

“Just the lassie I wanted to see.”

I turned at the sound of Alec’s voice...and immediately caught my breath at the sight of him leaning against the tower room’s doorway with a crooked grin on his handsome face. Would I ever stop being taken aback by his sexiness? Probably not.

“What are you doing?” he asked.

“Ogling you.”

“Well, that’s a given.” He swept his gaze around the room. “I meant what are you doing up here? Lach and I have been looking all over the castle for you. I was ready to bake something with chocolate in it just to lure you to the kitchen.”

I put my hands on my hips. “I’m offended. Also, what were you thinking of baking?”

His grin spread as he sauntered over and took me in his arms. Light from the window turned his eyes the color of spring leaves, but his voice was a dark, smoky autumn. “You have a sweet tooth, hmm?”

I nodded, my skin tingling where he touched me. “An insatiable one, as it turns out.”

“However will we remedy that?”

“I don’t know. It’s—” My words were smothered by his hot mouth on mine. His tongue invaded, plunging and conquering, and his hands stroked a blazing path down my neck to my chest. He cupped my breast, his thumb finding my nipple through my shirt. When I moaned and thrust into his hand, he chuckled against my lips and pinched the hardened peak.

After several long, sensual minutes, he pulled away with a groan and rested his forehead against mine with his big arms wrapped around me. “Need to fuck you, but I dinnae want to do it in this tower.”

“Me neither,” I said, struggling to catch my breath. “It’s too cold.”

“What were you doing in here?”

I gnawed my lower lip as I debated giving him some bullshit excuse. But I couldn’t keep the truth from him for long. He’d taught me how to shield my thoughts, but there was no stopping a Seelie prince from sidestepping mental barriers if he really wanted to. So I took a deep breath. “I was testing the bars on the window. I wanted to see if they’d hold a vampire.”

He reared back, a reddish eyebrow shooting up. “A leech? Whatever for?”

My cheeks heated. “I wanted to experiment a little. See if I can draw power consciously.” In the month since we returned to the castle, I’d focused on learning everything I could about my newfound abilities. Donums were so rare, even Lachlan knew of only a couple others in the world. So far, I’d learned my gift literally meant “gift” and that I could accidentally kill myself if I drew too much power.

Wonderful.

But there were also benefits. If I could learn to control the power draw, I could



temporarily take on the abilities of any of the Firstborn Races. Lachlan called it “short-term invincibility.” Which was kind of awesome.

Alec frowned. “You pull from me and Lach all the time.”

“That’s just it. You’re the only magical beings I’m around. I guess I just wanted some variety.”

“So you thought you’d kidnap a vampire and hold him prisoner so you can absorb his powers?”

“Um...yes?”

His eyes darkened. “Fuck, honey, that’s actually pretty hot.” He drew me more tightly against him. “I like this bloodthirsty side of you.”

I moaned when he lowered his head and kissed me again, then I gasped when he smoothed a hand over my ass and nudged the plug nestled between my cheeks. Even with my panties and jeans in the way, the slight movement was enough to make me instantly aroused.

He smiled against my lips. “You’re after variety, eh, sweetheart?”

My heart pounded. I’d been skeptical about the plug when he and Lachlan first showed it to me.

“You want to put that where?” I’d asked.

The guys had laughed. Then Alec had kissed the frown off my face, explaining, “It takes both of us to claim you. And, not to brag, but we’re not exactly small lads, if you catch my meaning.” He’d drawn back, a mix of lust and mischief in his eyes.

“Trust me when I say a few days with a toy in your arse and you’ll be begging for the real thing.” He’d exchanged a heated look with Lachlan and added, “I speak from experience.”

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But it had been more than a few days. Claiming they didn't want to hurt me, he and Lachlan had insisted on a series of plugs, starting small and graduating to a larger one every couple of days. Now it had been a week and I was ready to murder them if they didn't deliver on their promise to give me "the real thing."

"Yes," I gasped now, my panties flooding with moisture as he gave the plug another nudge. "I think I'd like some variety. But...oh God, I'm going to come."

With a growl, he swept me into his arms. "Not yet, you're not." He strode from the room and descended the tower steps at a near-run. At the bottom, he cranked his speed to inhuman levels, and before I knew it he was shouldering his way into Lachlan's room.

"You found her," Lachlan said, turning from the fireplace.

And, oh wow, he wore nothing but a pair of silky pajama pants. As the dizziness from the trip downstairs faded, I let my gaze roam his rippling abs and broad shoulders. I'd clung to them more than once over the past week as Alec had thrust into me from behind. I'd also straddled them as Lachlan devoured my sex, his tongue making me scream myself hoarse.

"You're blushing," he murmured, drawing near as Alec put me down. "Thinking wicked thoughts, Chloe lass?"

"It's your fault," I grumbled. "Both of you."

Alec grabbed my hips from behind and pulled me against him. "Guilty," he said,

already kissing my neck.

Lachlan went to work on my front, lifting my shirt over my head and tossing it aside. His eyes lit up when he saw my bra. “I love these front clasps.” He snapped the plastic with a deft flick of his fingers, spilling my breasts.

Alec reached around me and cupped them, almost as if he presented them to Lachlan. And that was exactly what he did, because Lachlan immediately lowered his head and took a nipple in his mouth.

“Oh...yes.” I let my head loll on Alec’s shoulder as desire pummeled me. Every draw of Lachlan’s mouth was like a wire running straight to my sex. They hadn’t even touched me there and already my clit throbbed so hard it bordered on pain. Alec lifted my breasts, his fingers caressing and kneading as Lachlan feasted.

But I needed more. “Please,” I gasped, my sex clenching and my ass rippling around the plug. I wasn’t even nervous about accommodating them both anymore. I just needed them to fuck me. “More, please.”

Always attuned to my needs, they lifted and carried me to the bed. My jeans and panties disappeared, and then I was stretched on my back with Alec tonguing my nipples and Lachlan sucking my clit.

He lifted his head and pinned me with a look so scorching it was a wonder my hair didn’t catch fire. “You look so sexy with this plug, lass. I’ll never grow weary of seeing a jewel nestled in your luscious bottom.”

I knew what he saw because I’d spent quite a bit of time examining myself in my bathroom mirror. And I had to admit the sight was...mesmerizing. Each plug they’d inserted was tipped with a gem, and I’d turned this way and that in the mirror, entranced by the way the stone gleamed between my cheeks. And I knew the guys

found it just as entrancing because they never missed an opportunity to touch and admire it, which inevitably reduced me to a puddle of lust.

“As much as I like it, though,” Lachlan said now, “I think you need”—he flicked his tongue over my clit—“something”—another flick—“bigger.”

“Yes,” I said, my plea more breath than sound.

Alec released my nipple, and a look of understanding passed between the men. In a flash, they’d removed their clothes and Alec had propped himself against the pillows in a reclining position with me straddling his lap.

I braced myself for him to lift me and lower me onto his cock. Instead, Lachlan bent his dark head between us, took Alec’s shaft deep into his mouth, and launched straight into a vigorous blow job.

“Fuck,” Alec gasped, his body jerking beneath me. He palmed the back of Lachlan’s head, which brushed my stomach as Lachlan bobbed up and down. “Oh...that’s...fuck.”

My eyes widened at Lachlan’s skill. He took Alec to the root on every pass, swallowing Alec’s thick cock without gagging or slowing his pace. And it was mind-numbingly hot. The sight. The sounds. The way Alec sprawled on the pillows, his chest heaving as he obviously struggled to keep his orgasm at bay. His hand clenched in Lachlan’s hair, his fingers twitching. After a minute, he tugged hard at the dark strands. “Need to come. Almost...fucking there.”

Lachlan straightened abruptly, abandoning Alec’s cock, which flopped heavy and damp on Alec’s stomach.

Alec dropped his head back and groaned. “I hate you.”

Lachlan laughed. “You love edging. Don’t try to deny it.”

“It’s a love, hate relationship,” Alec said with a heavy sigh.

After a month of Lachlan’s bedroom antics, I had to agree. He was a master at edging—at taking Alec and me right up to the brink of an orgasm just to snatch us back at the last second. But when he finally let us come...

I shivered, and he turned lustful eyes to me. “Och, lass, you’re looking awfully lonely.” He cupped my splayed sex with an open palm, then slipped his middle finger between my sodden lips and rubbed my clit. He grasped Alec’s cock in his other hand and stroked it, prompting Alec to release another frustrated groan.

Lachlan ignored him. “What do you say, sweetheart?” he asked me in a voice like gravel. “You want Alec’s big cock inside you?”

“Yes.” God, I was nearly salivating for it. Even as Lachlan’s finger circled my clit, I couldn’t tear my gaze off his hand working Alec’s shaft. His fist slid up and down the glistening length in steady strokes, raising beads of pearly white moisture at the swollen tip. Groaning again, Alec put an arm over his eyes and bit his lip.

“This isn’t about him,” Lachlan said, stopping his strokes to squeeze Alec’s shaft in a brutally tight grip.

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Alec muttered a string of curses.

My gaze flew to Lachlan's. He leaned in and brushed his lips over mine. "It's about you," he murmured, dropping his head and nuzzling the skin under my ear. "Do you want us, lass?" he whispered, his breath tickling my cheek as he toyed with my clit. "Both of us? There's no going back once we do this."

"I know," I said, trembling from the things he was doing with his finger. I was so wet I could hear the loud smack of my juices as he made lazy passes around the throbbing center of my desire. Maybe I should have been embarrassed, but I was too far gone to care. My ass clenched around the plug, which was big but not nearly as big as his dick.

But I wanted it. Wanted them. Forever.

"I want you," I said, because somehow it mattered that I say it out loud. "Both of you."

Lachlan pulled back with a big smile on his face. "That's what I wanted to hear. Now, let's see you climb on Alec's hard dick, sweetheart. I think he's just about ready for you."

"Been fucking ready," Alec grumbled, already reaching for me. His big hands circled my waist and lifted me like I was nothing. He positioned me over his cock, which stuck straight up. "Slide on down, lassie. Get me nice and wet." He lowered me slowly, and the two of us gasped as my sex enveloped his cock.

“Christ,” he rasped, his gaze on my entrance stretched around him. “That’s it, honey. All the way down.”

I shuddered hard at the intrusion, which felt even better than usual because of the plug. When my pussy was flush with his skin, I started to grind.

“God, yes, lass. Ride me.”

I braced my palms on his hard stomach and rocked back and forth, undulating my hips so my clit brushed his dick. I was so primed, my clit so swollen and over-sensitive, I couldn’t hold back. A million tingles rushed over my skin, and just like that I was coming. “God! Oh my...” I rode him faster, sobbing unintelligible words as the orgasm swept me.

He talked me through it, murmuring soft words in his delicious brogue. Telling me how gorgeous I was with my creamy tits flushed and my nipples like two ripe berries. How he loved my tight little pussy milking his cock. His deep voice soothed and praised, carrying me up as I soared and returning me gently back to Earth.

As I slumped forward, warm hands slid over my back. Then Lachlan kissed my shoulder and guided me down until I lay on Alec’s chest with my breasts mashed against his pecs and his cock twitching inside me.

Alec stroked my hair from my sweaty forehead. “You’re so fucking beautiful when you come. I want to see it again.”

The unmistakable snap of a plastic flip cap cut through my post-orgasm haze. A second later, Lachlan stroked a slick finger down my crack, bumping over the plug.

I stiffened, but Alec was right there to reassure me. “It’s all right, sweetheart. Lach’s gonna take good care of you.”



“That’s right, baby,” Lachlan said in a voice thick with lust. His fingers brushed my sex flared around Alec’s cock. “You look so sexy like this. Fucking perfect.” Something warm and wet slid down my crack, and I realized he was lubing me up. He pulled the plug out just a bit, then pushed it back in.

Intense pleasure rippled in my ass and pussy at the same time, and I thrust my hips back before I could stop myself.

Alec moaned into my hair. “Fuck, Chloe, you can’t squeeze me like that.”

Lachlan’s warm chuckle drifted over my head. “That’s a lusty lass. Let’s see you fuck this toy with your pretty asshole. Aye...just like that.” He moved with me, giving me slow, easy pumps with the plug, working it a little deeper each time.

And it was, oh God, it was incredible. My hips rolled hard as more waves of pleasure rippled through me.

Lachlan continued fucking me with the plug, pausing every couple of minutes to drizzle more lube over my crack. In no time, I was reduced to a bundle of nerves and moans, my back arching again and again.

Alec wrapped strong arms around me and spoke next to my ear. “You ready, baby? You want us to make you ours for good?”

“Yes,” I sobbed. “Please...do it now.”

More liquid slid down my crack, and then Lachlan withdrew the plug and pressed his cock to my entrance. I clamped down at once, reflexively trying to keep him out.

“Relax,” Alec crooned in my ear. “Just like we talked about, hmm? Push your hips back. Good girl. Open up and let him in.” Approval laced his tone as I followed his

direction. “That’s it, lass. It’ll burn a little, and then it’ll feel really fucking good.”

He should know, I thought as I took deep breaths. He was an anal expert.

His shoulders shook, and then he laughed out loud as he picked up my thoughts. “Expert? Sweetheart, I’m an anal champion.”

The humor broke the tension, which was exactly what I needed to relax. Suddenly, Lachlan surged forward, seating himself to the hilt.

“Fuck,” he growled. “So goddamn tight.”

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Alec gasped. “I feel you, Lach. Christ, you’re right there.”

I could only moan as I tried to wrap my head around being completely, thoroughly filled. They were in every part of me, Alec’s cock buried in my pussy and Lachlan’s dick stuffing my ass. My muscles clenched all around them.

Then they started to move.

“Oh...” My voice went too hoarse for words as nerve endings I didn’t even know I possessed came alive. Alec thrust his hips up as Lachlan withdrew. Then they reversed position, Lachlan plunging inside as Alec pulled back. They fell into a rhythm, seesawing their cocks in a rolling grind that rocked me between them.

“That’s right,” Lachlan growled, his fingers biting deep into my hips. “You’re right where you should be, lass. Between your mates.” He fucked my ass harder, his balls lightly slapping my pussy and Alec’s thrusting cock.

“Can’t...hold on,” Alec gasped. “Say the words, Lach.”

Pumping faster, Lachlan spoke in a language I didn’t recognize and wasn’t entirely certain was language at all. The words touched my skin, sliding and stroking like fingers. They spun around us, flowing faster and faster as we moved and moaned. They kept flowing even after Lachlan stopped speaking. Words tugged gently at my hair and whispered over my skin. Caressed my sides and slid between my legs. Pressed hard against my clamping pussy and quivering hole.

And I fell apart. Exploded into a million stars. Reformed and exploded again a dozen

times...a hundred. I lost count as my release spun me into new worlds and dimensions.

Alec's shout rang in my ears and his heat flooded my womb. Behind me, Lachlan shuddered and pumped his scalding load into my ass. They held me and covered me, enfolding my body between them as we came together.

Eventually, awareness returned, and I heard my ragged breathing. The rapid thump of Alec's heart under my ear. Lachlan pulled out and dropped beside us, his chest heaving. After a second, he turned his head and gave me a searching look. "You okay, lass?"

"Yes. Are we...mated?"

"Aye." His gaze flicked above my head. "Although, I think we killed Alec."

"I'm alive," Alec said, his voice sleepy and sated. He shifted so I rolled and landed between him and Lachlan. Green eyes gleamed with satisfaction as he stroked light fingers over my stomach. "I love you, Chloe."

My heart skipped a beat. This was what the mate bond was about, I realized suddenly. Not power or one person serving another's interests. Just...love. Tears thick in my throat, I said, "I love you, too." I lifted my head and kissed him, then turned and did the same to Lachlan. "And I love you," I told him.

"Me too, sweetheart," he murmured, lacing his fingers with Alec's on my stomach. "Forever."

I snuggled deeper between them, sleep tugging at me. But a sudden thought had me wide awake again. "Does this mean King Cormac approves of me?"

Lachlan grinned. When I turned to look at Alec, he wore a similar expression.

“There was never any question, lass,” he said. “Human or donum, you’re downright magical.”

“No,” I said softly, my heart overflowing with love. “I’m the luckiest woman in the world.”

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