



More Than We Know

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Category: Erotic, Romance, Dark

Description: Quentin

Our marriage has always been a happy one, but lately, things feel... stagnant. Life's gotten in the way, and we've lost that spark and sense of adventure. But now that the kids are away at college and Sarah and I are off work for a few more weeks, I'm determined to bring back what we've been missing. But everything changes when our night at Club Caliber results in Sarah reconnecting with an old flame—a woman who very well may be her “one that got away.”

Sarah

I never thought I'd see her again. It's been over twenty years since Kat and I had gone our separate ways, and things had ended in heartbreak and bitterness. But now, she's here, and I don't know how to reconcile my feelings for her besides pushing them back down. That door closed a long time ago. That is, until Quentin suggests an arrangement that could pave the way for something more...

Kat

After twenty years of traveling for work and never settling too long in one place, I'm back in Chicago. A small part of me had hoped I might see Sarah, but I never thought it would be like this—in the middle of a BDSM club with her charming, loving husband beside her. I'd be crazy to accept their offer of joining them, because I'm all too familiar with the unicorn hunt—a married couple finding a bisexual woman to spice up their marriage before I'm tossed aside once they've satisfied their curiosity. But this seems different...

Saying yes to them might end up breaking my heart, but with my feelings for Sarah resurfacing and my interest in Quentin growing by the day, it's a risk I'm willing to take.

Note: This book is a romance novella with high spice and low conflict. Tropes include FFM, polyamory, a Dom/sub/switch dynamic, exhibitionism, reconnecting with a former lover, and “normal” characters in their 40s.

Total Pages (Source): 29

CHAPTER 1

SARAH

The house is too quiet.

I should have expected this, but it didn't occur to me just how permanent it would feel. Our youngest son is finally gone for college, and even though I know he and his brother will be coming home to visit for the holidays in a few months, the weight of the silence is heavier than I anticipated.

I close the book in my lap after attempting to read the same paragraph three times and walk to the living room, where Quentin is lounging on the couch engrossed in some historical documentary.

"Hey, you doing okay?" he asks, shifting his attention from the TV to me.

I shrug. "Yeah. It still feels weird knowing we have the house to ourselves all the time now. I'm not sure what to do with myself."

"Pretty soon we'll be back to work, and this will feel normal."

"I know," I sigh. Once summer break is over, Quentin and I will go back to school—him as a principal and me as a teacher—and I'm sure we'll be grateful for the silence in the evenings. But right now it feels like something is missing in a bittersweet sort of way, even though Ethan moved into his apartment only a few days ago. He had wanted to get settled in before classes start.

Quentin sits up and pauses the TV. “How about we have a date night tonight? A real one? It’s been a while since we’ve gotten dressed up and gone out somewhere.”

It doesn’t take me long to consider his offer. “That sounds nice, actually. Were you thinking somewhere specific?”

We toss a few ideas of restaurants and movies back and forth until Quentin says, “What about Club Caliber?”

My eyebrows rise. “It’s been a long time since we’ve been there.” But what better way to take advantage of our newfound solitude than by going to a BDSM club?

“It has. Can you be ready by seven? We can do dinner then go to the club?”

I glance at my phone. It’s only five. “Absolutely.”

I take my time getting ready, having almost forgotten how much I enjoy the process of making myself look and feel good for the club. In the shower, I shave everything and exfoliate with my favorite sugar scrub, and when I get out, I lather myself in lotion. It takes the better part of an hour for me to blow dry my hair and put on makeup.

Wrapped in a towel, I make my way into the bedroom and dig through the back of my dresser drawers until I find what I’m looking for—a black lace lingerie bodysuit that I haven’t worn in over a year.

I hope it still fits, I think before I wiggle into it and adjust the straps, letting out a sigh of relief when it settles against my skin just as nicely as it did before.

I run my fingers over the patterned lace spanning my torso and survey myself in the mirror. While I may not have the same body as I did twenty years ago when Quentin

and I started dating, I still think I look pretty damn good. Time has changed a lot about my body, but I like to think that it's all evidence of the life I've lived in those years.

Satisfied with how the lingerie looks and feels, I quickly slip into one of my favorite dresses that I also haven't had the chance to wear in a long time so that Quentin doesn't walk in on me in only my lingerie. I want to surprise him with it since he probably doesn't expect me to wear it.

Not anymore, anyway.

We used to be adventurous, going out on a whim and having kinky fun in our stolen moments. But life got in the way, as it often does. We traded our spontaneous date nights at the club for carting kids to sports practices and catching up on work in the evenings. Priorities shifted with the different phases of life, and intimacy took a backseat while we dealt with the highs and lows of our careers, raising a family, and all the random stressors on top of that.

While there's never been any doubt in our love, things in the bedroom have become... stagnant. Sex has become more of a routine than an adventure, something we both enjoy but rarely have the time or energy to explore in the way we used to.

Sometimes I wish he'd grab me by the hair, push me to my knees, and tell me to suck his cock, or bend me over the couch and take me in the living room while we're home alone. I want to submit to him again in the way I used to; I want him to dominate me and show me I'm his.

Maybe his suggestion to go to Club Caliber tonight is his way of telling me he wants the same thing.

"Hey, are you ready?" The bedroom door swings open and Quentin steps in. His eyes

rake over my body as he takes in my red dress and black heels. “Well, hello beautiful,” he purrs.

“Hello, Sir,” I flirt, hoping my use of the honorific will clue him in to what I’m thinking—that I want his Dominant side to come out and play.

He raises an eyebrow and his lips quirk up in a smile, telling me he gets the message loud and clear.

We make our way out to the car, and Quentin guides me down the sidewalk with a steady hand on my lower back.

And for the first time in a long time, a spark of excitement ignites within me. I don’t need anything to change for me to be happy, but I can’t ignore the anticipation rushing through me at the prospect of reviving our old selves.

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I want us to find that fire again, and tonight feels like it could be the spark that brings that fire back to life.

CHAPTER 2

QUENTIN

It's Friday night, so the club is in full swing by the time we arrive. The seats at the bar are almost full, there are people sprawled out on the numerous leather couches, and the dance floor is teeming with people. We haven't been here in months, but coming back feels simultaneously comfortable and invigorating. It's a safe place for us to be ourselves without the worry of judgment from the outside world, but it's also a place filled with an intimate, sexual energy that never fails to make me feel a little more alive.

Sarah and I have always made it a point to come here at least a few times a year, but the stress of normal life had always seemed to follow us, here and everywhere else. Things between us have felt different, especially over the past few years. Not bad, necessarily, but... lackluster.

But now, with both kids out of the house, I'm wondering if maybe this shift in the routine of our lives could reignite the flame that's been missing. It's a big part of the reason I suggested coming here tonight. We're just as in love as we've always been, but I can't help but miss our adventurous sides. Nights when we would spend an evening putting on a show in one of the exhibitionism rooms rather than watching movies at home, dedicating hours to touching each other and exploring our sensuality rather than attending an endless stream of school events for both our kids and

ourselves.

There are seasons to life, an ebb and flow of stress and peace, excitement and mundanity. There's no one without the other, and it's a fact I've come to accept. And now, we're shifting into a new season of life—one that allows us a lot more freedom and alone time.

Both of us deserve the excitement, and I think both of us are craving it, too. When I mentioned going to the club earlier, Sarah perked up in a way I hadn't seen in a long time, and she spent twice as long getting ready to go out as she normally does.

She needs this just as much as I do.

"It's weird being back here," Sarah quips as we settle into barstools at the far end of the bar that allow us a view of the rest of the room. The bass of the music thrums through my body, just loud enough to energize me without completely drowning out our voices.

"It is, but I'm glad we decided to come." The bartender takes our drink orders, and I settle into the familiarity of being back here. Sarah taps her fingernails against the wood top of the bar and scans the crowd, probably to see if any of our friends are here, and I lean in to give her a gentle kiss.

"So, I was thinking, this year for the science program—"

I cut her off. "Nope. I don't want to talk about work. Tonight is about us and only us."

She gives me an apologetic smile. "Sorry. You're right."

"Don't be sorry. I just want to enjoy the rest of our summer without thinking of school." Soon enough, the chaos of the beginning of the school year will be upon us,

and we'll both be up to our knees in work—her with lesson planning and grading, and me with constant meetings and big-picture planning.

Sarah looks around the room before shaking her head and chuckling to herself. “Man, it feels like we’re getting old. We were just like that twenty years ago.” She gestures toward a couple that looks to be in their early twenties on the other side of the bar. Their eyes look like they’re going to pop out of their heads, and they keep casting glances at each other and laughing nervously. They’re definitely not used to the scene in the way Sarah and I are.

“Speak for yourself—I’m not old. I’ve got plenty of youth and vibrancy left in me.” I wink, and she rolls her eyes, but she can’t keep the smile off her face.

“Sure, whatever you need to tell yourself,” she teases.

“I don’t need to tell myself anything. You’re just lucky you’ve got the most handsome man in this place.” I’m laying it on thick, but Sarah plays along all the same.

“That’s very true. But the most handsome man in here also flirted with me and picked me up twenty years ago, so...” Giving an exaggerated shrug, she trails off, the meaning of her unspoken words clear.

I lay a hand over my chest, feigning offense. “Hey, if I were here alone, I’d be able to pick up any of these single women. I’ve still got game.”

She raises an eyebrow as she takes a sip of her drink. “That sounds like a challenge.”

“Well, you know I’m not one to turn down a challenge,” I say with a wink.

“In that case... let’s see you do it.”

“Alright, fine. What are your terms?” I put on a serious expression, as if we’re bargaining a major business deal rather than betting on whether or not I still have enough game to pick up women.

“You have to go talk to a woman, and she has to show interest. You win if you can convince her to have a drink with you.”

“So you’re fine with me having a drink with another woman?” I tease.

She shrugs. “I’m secure enough in our relationship to know it wouldn’t be a problem, so yes. Just don’t lead anyone on too much and hurt their feelings.”

“Fair. And do I get to pick any woman I want?” I scan the crowd spanning from the dance floor to the far side of the room where there’s seating.

“Nope, I get to pick.”

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“Well, I hardly think that’s fair.”

She laughs. “Sounds like you’re chickening out to me.”

“Not chickening out. Who’s your pick then?”

Sarah spins on her barstool to fully survey the people dancing and milling about in the dark room. Lights flash across the dance floor and around the room, casting streaks of color over the many faces.

After a few seconds of searching, Sarah leans in close to me and asks, “See the woman in the dark blue dress leaning up against the wall to the left of the couches? She’s curvy and has long, dark hair.”

It only takes a moment for my eyes to find her in the crowd. She’s turned partially away, watching the dance floor and sipping on a martini. Even from this far away and with most of her face obscured by her hair from this angle, I can tell she’s beautiful.

I turn to Sarah, and the glint in her eyes reflects the spark of excitement inside me.

“Game on.”

CHAPTER 3

KAT

I wasn’t sure what to expect when I came to Club Caliber. A lot of big cities have

clubs like this, but I've found that most of them don't quite live up to expectations, whether that be because of the cleanliness, the atmosphere, or the members (no pun intended).

When I heard about this one after deciding to settle down back in Chicago, it sounded too good to be true. But as I stand here and take in everything while sipping on the last of my martini, all I can see are green flags. Everything is clean, the atmosphere is fun but classy, and the people seem happy.

"Going to join?" A man's voice sounds beside me.

I turn toward him and am caught off guard by how handsome he is. I was half-expecting a creepy old man. They're usually the bravest demographic, especially in places like this. But the man standing before me seems close to my age and definitely my type.

A flirty half-smile curves his lips, and his dark eyes glint with interest. He keeps a respectful distance but is close enough that I catch a whiff of his woody cologne.

"Not yet. I think I need a little more liquid courage before I jump on the dance floor." I raise my almost-empty glass to emphasize my point.

"Well, that can be arranged. I'd be happy to buy you one." His voice is low and smooth, the type of voice that I can imagine whispering all sorts of salacious things in my ear.

Wait, no. I'm not here to get laid tonight. I told myself I was only coming here to scope the place out, to get my bearings in the Chicago scene since I haven't lived here in over twenty years.

"I'll accept your offer as long as it's not under the pretense of getting laid," I say.

Better to be up-front about it, and his reaction will tell me everything I need to know about whether or not I might want to see him again. Too many men get pissed off or try to coax me into sex when I tell them no, and those ones always end up being terrible people who can't respect boundaries in any circumstance. A good personality is a necessary precursor for me to be interested anyway, so telling a man "no" is a great way to weed out the bad ones.

He chuckles. "Deal. That actually works out perfectly."

It's then that I notice the gold band on his ring finger. A wedding ring. God damn it. That means there are three possibilities here:

Option one: He's in an open relationship. However, I try to avoid getting involved with people who are already partnered up. Every experience I've had with one half of a couple always ends in disaster.

Option two: It's a unicorn hunt. He's here with his wife and they both want a woman to have some fun with for the night. I've been with two couples in the past, but both times, I've been treated like a fun new toy that they can dispose of once I lose my novelty to them. I'm a way to spice up their sex lives until they don't need me anymore.

Option three: He's cheating, and his wife doesn't know he's hitting on me.

All terrible options for me. But then I realize what he said. "Wait, why does that 'work out perfectly?'" I ask, making air quotes with my free hand.

"I'll be honest, I'm here with my wife." Surprise, surprise. "We haven't been here in a long time, and we were joking about whether or not I could still pick up a woman. I was just about to tell you that she had bet me that I couldn't pick up you specifically, and I was going to ask if you'd just have a drink with me to prove her wrong."

I raise an eyebrow. “Isn’t the whole point of a bet like that to tell the woman you’re trying to pick up about it?”

“Well, yeah,” he laughs, “but I didn’t want to lead you on or anything. Don’t get me wrong, you’re beautiful, but...” he lifts his hand to show off his ring and gives me a sheepish smile.

Maybe it’s his intense charm and refreshing honesty, or maybe it’s my unrelenting curiosity, but something makes me want to say yes. To be fair, it’s not like I’m doing something more exciting anyway. Watching people dance is only fun for so long.

I study him for a moment before saying, “Alright, I’ll help you win your bet. Lead the way.”

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He guides me toward the bar, and I notice how he keeps a good amount of space between us while still staying close enough to talk over the music. Every movement is deliberate, calculated to make me feel comfortable. It's refreshing.

"I'm Quentin, by the way," he says as we reach the bar.

"I'm Kat." I settle onto a barstool, and we shake hands before he flags down the bartender.

I try not to think about why such a quick, normal touch feels so electric.

After ordering our drinks, he turns his seat toward me to give me his full attention. I do the same until our knees are barely an inch apart from each other. "So what brings you here tonight?" he asks.

"Just moved back to Chicago after being away for a long time. Wanted to check out the scene since this club didn't exist last time I lived here." I keep my answer vague, not wanting to dive into my whole life story with a stranger.

"Well, welcome back. Where were you before?"

"I was a travel photographer, so anywhere the wind blew me, really."

"And it just happened to blow you back to the Windy City."

I can't help but laugh at the goofy dad joke. His handsome smile makes it a little less terrible. "Exactly."

We fall into easy conversation about my return to the city, how it's changed, and what's stayed the same. He's charming without being overtly flirty, curious without pushing for too many details about my life, and handsome in that effortlessly casual sort of way. It's too bad he's not single, but I can see why his wife married him.

Speaking of... "So, which one is your wife?" I ask.

He smiles and, without looking away from me, he says, "She has short blonde hair and is wearing a red dress. She's on the opposite end of the bar."

I discreetly look in that direction and spot the woman, but her face is turned away as she talks to a tall man who's leaning into her space. It seems to be a semi-friendly conversation, but even from here, I can sense her discomfort by the way she's leaning slightly away from him and subtly covering the top of her half-empty wine glass with her hand.

"Well, as much as I'm genuinely enjoying this conversation," I say, "it looks like your wife might need some more pleasant company."

His gaze snaps over to her, and he must notice the same thing I did, because he says, "You're right. Want to accompany me over there?"

"Won't you lose your bet if she finds out you told me about it?" I tease, even as I stand to follow him.

"Probably, but I actually think you two would get along really well. I'll risk losing a trivial bet to introduce you two. Come on."

In any other case, I would worry that this was some elaborate setup for me to join them for the night, but there's no way he's been anything but genuine with our interactions.

He leads the way around the bar to where his wife sits, and when he leans in to kiss her cheek, the man who was encroaching on her space slinks away. Quentin is still standing in front of me and facing his wife, so I awkwardly shift on my feet until he steps aside to introduce us.

But before he can begin introductions, my heart stops. Even after all these years, I'd recognize her anywhere.

"Kat, this is my wife, Sarah. Sarah, this is—"

Sarah's face lights up with recognition and mild shock. "Oh my god, Kat?"

CHAPTER 4

SARAH

I can't believe it's really her. In all honesty, I thought I'd never see her again, even though she still occasionally makes an appearance in my daydreams.

"Sarah," she breathes. "Wow. It's been, what, over twenty years now?"

Jesus, that makes me feel old. "Yeah, I guess it would be that long now. Feels like forever ago." But at the same time, it feels like just yesterday. So many memories are flooding back as I look into her eyes.

"Wait, you two already know each other?" Quentin's eyes narrow as he looks between us.

"We were friends in college," Kat offers in explanation.

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I nod in agreement, even though that's a massive understatement. We weren't just friends. We were best friends. We were lovers. We were inseparable. The nostalgia is hitting me in full-force, making it hard to breathe.

"Well, what a coincidence!" Quentin clasps his hands together as Kat and I stare at each other in disbelief. His gaze lands on me, as I'm unusually silent. "Are you alright?"

I tear my gaze away from Kat to look at him and put on a smile that I hope is convincing. "Yeah, I'm fine. Just surprised." It's not a lie, but I don't mention that my fondest memories of her involve her sultry voice murmuring sensual words in my ear and her lips brushing against my skin.

Our time together was short but powerful. Unforgettable. A flame that burned bright but was snuffed out too fast.

My mind drifts back to those hazy days in college. Late nights studying turned into early mornings talking, laughing, and sometimes more. Kat had been a whirlwind in my life, a force of nature that had swept me off my feet. Our connection had been electric. Kat, with her wild spirit and spontaneity, had shown me a side of myself I hadn't known existed. She changed me for the better.

But when Kat had asked me for more in our final semester of college, I'd panicked. I had known our fun couldn't last forever, but a relationship felt surreal. I had cared for her, of course—probably more than I had ever cared about anyone up until that point—but things were so easy between us when everything was undefined. Defining things between us meant defining myself, and I was too afraid to commit.

Now, here she is, standing in front of me, her eyes just as piercing, her smile just as captivating. And suddenly, I'm nineteen again, full of exhilaration and uncertainty.

I shake off the shock, trying to focus on the present. "So, what have you been up to all these years?" I ask, managing to keep my voice steady despite the chaos in my mind.

Kat's gaze is intense, like she doesn't believe I'm really here. "I've been doing travel photography for the most part," she says. "I've seen some incredible places, met some amazing people. But I finally felt like it was time to settle down in one place, so here I am, back home."

"That's incredible," I say, and I mean it. I've always admired Kat's free spirit, her courage to go out and explore the world. She's always been fearless, which is something I've secretly envied as someone who tends to play it safe. "I've been here all along, teaching. Quentin and I got married and had two kids. The youngest left for college last week."

She gives me a wistful smile. "That's wonderful. I'm so happy for you."

Quentin watches our exchange with a curious expression. "Wow, it's a small world."

"It really is," Kat agrees, but her eyes never leave mine.

The air between us is heavy with the weight of our past. So many unspoken "what ifs" linger there.

Quentin seems to sense the shift in the atmosphere. He clears his throat and says, "Well, I think this calls for a celebration. Let me get us another round of drinks." He flags down the bartender and orders for us, giving me and Kat a moment to ourselves.

Kat leans in slightly and lowers her voice. "I missed you." She covers my hand with her own, and her touch sparks against my skin.

I shouldn't still feel this way about her.

"I missed you too," I whisper. Things between us had ended so abruptly. She had wanted more, and I was too afraid. My stupid, young mind had worried about the challenges that would come with dating a woman and moving away from home, and I had let my fear rule me. A part of me will always regret that, even though at the same time I could never regret the life I've built with Quentin.

"But I have to say," Kat continues, her smile softening as she looks at Quentin, "you've done well for yourself. He's quite the charmer."

I laugh, grateful for the shift in topic. "He is, isn't he? He's been an amazing partner." I glance at him, and he winks at me as he turns and hands us our drinks.

"So, Kat," Quentin says, "since you and Sarah were such good friends, you must have some great stories. I want to hear all about her college days."

Kat chuckles. "Oh, I have plenty of stories. But I have to warn you, they might paint a different picture of the Sarah you know now."

"Now I'm really interested."

My cheeks heat as my head fills with all the wild stories Kat could tell him. This could be dangerous. "Don't believe everything she says. I was young and still figuring things out."

"We all were," Kat replies with a mischievous glance in my direction. "But for someone who was so much of a rule follower, you could be swayed into adventures

pretty easily. Remember that time we snuck into a wedding reception in the fancy building right off campus?"

I groan and cover my face with my hand. "Oh my god, I haven't thought about that in years."

"I was so sure we were going to get caught. But it was worth it for the drinks and dessert. And the dancing, of course," she adds, flashing me a flirty smile. How could I forget the way she had whisked me away on that dance floor?

"Wait, you two crashed a wedding?" Quentin asks, raising his eyebrows.

"Like I said, I was young and reckless." I shake my head but can't hold back the smile that comes to my lips. Those days with Kat were some of the most exhilarating of my life, and the memory of her dragging me along while I second guessed everything fills me with nostalgia. That was always our dynamic: me, the rule follower, and her, the fearless woman who swept me off my feet and made every day an adventure.

Quentin smirks. "Well, it seems like I do have some more to learn about my wife, then."

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As the night wears on, the initial shock of seeing Kat again begins to fade, replaced by a comfortable familiarity. We laugh and reminisce, and I find myself relaxing into the easy intimacy we used to share. Quentin laughs right along with us as Kat regales him with stories—thankfully mild ones—of our past.

After a couple drinks and over an hour of us talking, Quentin leans in to speak in my ear so only I can hear. “Should we head to the back rooms?” His voice is low and suggestive, and a pleasant shiver runs through me. It’s what we came here to do, after all.

“Sure,” I say, but my heart sinks at the thought of walking away from Kat. I glance over at her and can’t help but remember the way she used to kiss me, the way she never shied away from telling me how much I meant to her.

Losing her the first time was the most painful heartbreak I’ve ever felt, and I don’t think I can walk away again without putting out some sort of lifeline.

“One second,” I tell Quentin. “I’m going to give Kat my phone number.”

He nods. “That’s a great idea. Maybe she can join your brunch group with the girls.”

“Right.” The idea of introducing Kat as just a friend to the other women feels weird, though I can’t exactly explain why. We can still be just friends... right?

“Quentin and I are going to the back,” I tell Kat. “But here.” I pull out my phone and create a new contact, then hand her my phone so she can type in her number. Once she does, I send her a text so she has my number as well.

“Have fun,” Kat says when I turn to leave. “I hope I’ll see you around.” I might be imagining things with the lights flashing around the room, but I swear she winks at me. Butterflies take flight in my stomach, and I bite back a smile as I follow Quentin through the black door on the back wall.

The hallway is dimly lit, but it’s still so familiar that I could probably find my way with my eyes closed. We linger in the hall with a few others and watch a couple through one of the windows that gives a view into their private room. The woman is stripping slowly as the man sits on the edge of the bed stroking his cock while watching her. It’s slow and sensual, and it doesn’t take long before the ache of need between my legs becomes unbearable.

“Let’s get our own room,” I whisper to Quentin.

He nods in agreement and guides me down the hall until we find an uninhabited room with a window to the hall.

We’ve always liked being watched, and I’m glad to see that his preferences haven’t changed.

As if reading my mind, he asks, “You okay with this room?”

“Yes.” I don’t tell him that I’m even more excited about the idea of being watched than I have been in quite a while.

Quentin locks the door before setting his gaze on me and stalking toward me with intense desire in his eyes.

“Turn around.”

That edge of authority in his tone shoots straight to my core, and I follow his

command without a word, turning to face the back wall.

Quentin's fingertips graze the back of my neck before he slowly pulls the zipper of my dress down, and he trails his fingers down my spine where the fabric parts, over the lace of the lingerie. Once the zipper is fully down, I slip my arms from the sleeves and the dress falls to the floor, the fabric pooling at my feet.

I step out of the dress, kicking it aside, and Quentin's eyes rake over my body when I turn toward him.

He cocks an eyebrow. "You dressed up for me."

"Do you like it?"

"I love it. You look fucking incredible."

I smile at his praise and stand before him, waiting for his next instructions with my hands clasped behind my back. At home, he often still takes control in the bedroom, but not to the degree he does here. At Club Caliber, the atmosphere—and often the excitement of knowing people may be watching on the other side of the window—amps up every element of our sex life, including his dominance and my submission.

Quentin steps closer, his hands skimming over my lace-covered curves as he presses his body against mine and kisses me hard. He threads his fingers through my hair and tugs lightly, and I moan into his mouth as I melt into him.

"I've missed this," he whispers when he finally pulls away.

"So have I."

His hands slide down my back to cup my ass, which he squeezes before giving me a devious smile. “Ready to give them a show?” He gestures toward the window. I glance at it out of instinct, knowing I won’t be able to see any faces, but I detect movement in the dark.

Who knows how many people might be watching—orwhomight be watching...

I nod, and Quentin spins me around to face the window and presses his body against my back. He’s already hard, and his cock presses against my ass as he snakes his arms to my front, pulls the straps off my shoulders, and peels the lacy fabric down my body until my breasts are exposed. When he flicks his thumbs over my nipples, I let my head fall back in the crook of his neck as my eyes close.

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The knowledge that people are watching us, seeing the way he touches me with the expertise that comes from so many years of knowing each other so intimately, sends electricity buzzing through my body.

Quentin slowly pulls off my lingerie, letting his touch linger on my sensitive skin as he removes the fabric and leaves me standing there completely naked.

“On the bed,” he commands. “And spread your legs so everyone out there can see that perfect pussy.”

Heat rises to my cheeks, but I comply. As I situate myself on the bed and spread my legs as much as I can, a familiar feeling settles in my gut. It’s the result of being so exposed, a mix between apprehension and exhilaration at doing something so taboo. I’ve always loved that feeling—the minor discomfort of feeling exposed but with a positive twist. Weirdly enough, it’s the same sort of frenetic energy I’d feel in a haunted house or... well, sneaking around with Kat.

Shit. I shouldn’t be thinking about her right now.

I partly recline on the bed as I watch Quentin undress before me. He takes his time slipping out of his clothes, purposefully forcing me to wait in anticipation, and I enjoy every second of it.

When he’s fully naked, he sits beside me on the bed so everyone still has a view of my body as he dips his head to my chest and plants kisses over my breasts before sucking a nipple into his mouth and grazing his teeth over it. I cry out at the sharp sensation that shoots straight to my core, and he plucks my other nipple with his

fingers until I'm arching my back and breathing heavy.

"That's right," he says, "show everyone out there watching us how good I make you feel."

I gasp as he slips his hand between my legs and pushes two fingers inside me.

"We have an audience," he murmurs, glancing toward the window where shadowy figures move on the other side. "They're all watching you, all wishing they were in my place getting to touch you like this."

The reminder that we're being watched makes Quentin's touch feel even more intense as he crooks his fingers inside me.

"Then make them jealous," I murmur. "Show them what they're missing."

Quentin needs no further encouragement. In one swift movement, he's flipping our positions so he's on his back and I'm straddling him.

Grabbing the back of my neck with one hand, he pulls my face to his and kisses me again as his erection rubs against my pussy. I grind against his hard length, putting much-needed pressure on my clit, and he groans softly.

"Ride me," he demands.

He doesn't need to ask me twice.

I grab his cock in one hand and guide it to my entrance before sinking down on it. Fuck, that feels good.

Quentin grabs my hips as I steady myself with my hands on his chest. Once I've

adjusted to his size, I lift my hips then slide back down, feeling his cock slide in and out of me. We find a rhythm, slow at first but increasing with every moment.

My hair falls across my face as I roll my hips, and the pressure inside me grows. Quentin's hand leaves my hip, but the absence of his touch is immediately followed by a sharp smack on my ass. I gasp at the sudden pain, but I fucking love it.

The pleasure builds inside me at the sting of his palm against my ass coupled with how he lifts his hips to fuck me from below. Even with me on top, he somehow manages to take control of the situation and put me at his mercy.

He notices my eyes fluttering closed as my orgasm threatens to overtake me.

"Are you going to come for me?"

"Yes," I breathe. "Right there. Please don't stop."

He keeps up the pace and pounds into me over and over again, and I reach down to rub my clit to push me over the edge.

My orgasm hits hard, and it takes every ounce of effort to keep myself upright as my body convulses.

"That's it, baby," Quentin pants, his voice strained. "Come for me. Let them see you come undone on my cock. Show everyone how fucking good I make you feel."

I cry out and shatter around him, and he picks up his pace as I come down from the high. Quentin follows a few seconds later, spilling into me with a low groan and gripping my hips so hard I wonder if his fingers will leave bruises.

After a moment, I roll onto the bed beside him, and we lie there for a while to catch

our breath.

Quentin turns his head to face me. “Just like old times,” he says with a playful grin.

I smile back at him, but it doesn’t quite reach my eyes, because as happy as I am, and as much as I love falling back into our dynamic like this, it’s not exactly like old times. One thing is different.

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Because while I'd normally be thinking about whether or not we'll have a second round, or maybe how we'll relax once we go home, instead I'm thinking about something—someone—else.

I can't get Kat out of my mind, and a part of me hopes she's been watching from the other side of that window.

Even worse, I want her to miss me in the same way I miss her, even if our past is long-gone.

CHAPTER 5

QUENTIN

"Ethan says he's settling in well," Sarah tells me before tossing her phone on the bed beside the massive pile of laundry.

"Are you texting him for updates already?" I tease. "He's only been gone a week."

She smirks at me from the other side of the bed. "Actually,hetextedmefirst."

"Well, I'm glad he's checking in. He knows his mother too well. Always worrying about everyone."

She rolls her eyes and throws a sock at me, and I laugh as I catch it. We both know how true my statement is, but that's just the kind of person she is. She worries so much about everyone else, not out of fear, but out of hoping everyone is as happy and

taken care of as possible.

We fall back into silence as we fold and hang up our clean laundry. It's a comfortable silence, but since we went to the club last night, I can tell Sarah's mind has been elsewhere. She's been getting lost in her thoughts all day today, though it's not hard to determine what—or who—caused that.

Reuniting with Kat last night shook her, though I can't quite figure out why. It's clear they used to be incredibly close, but I couldn't ignore the undercurrent of attraction between them. Sarah had tried to hide it, but by now I know all of the subtle behaviors that give her true feelings away.

What I can't figure out is what sort of past they have. Kat had said they were "good friends" back in the day, but between their obvious mutual attraction and the way Sarah had tensed up when Kat mentioned having stories about her, I have a suspicion that there was more to it than simple friendship.

Sarah has mentioned to me that she has gotten intimate with women in the past, but we never really talked about it in-depth. It could have been anything from a random make-out with a woman to regular sex, and I never really pushed for details. I'm honestly not even sure if she identifies as bisexual or not.

I've been debating all morning whether to talk to her about it or let her work through whatever's on her mind, but my curiosity nags at me more and more as the minutes pass.

"So, what's the deal with you and Kat?" I ask casually.

Sarah stops folding the shirt in front of her for a second. "What do you mean?"

"It seemed like seeing her affected you pretty strongly. I was just curious how...

close you were in the past.”

She sighs, as if she’s preparing for an admission, and starts to pick out matching socks from the laundry pile. I continue to put shirts on hangers, giving her time to gather her thoughts and not wanting her to feel pressured or on the spot.

“We were a little more than friends,” she admits. She glances up at me, as if looking for some kind of reaction, but I simply nod and stay casual. I’m not sure what sort of reaction she’s expecting from me, but she’s obviously nervous, and I want to give her the space to feel comfortable talking to me about this.

“Want to tell me about it?”

“Well, like you heard last night, Kat and I met in our last year of college. It was just an instant connection, and right away, we were best friends. We’d hang out constantly, do our school work together, go to parties. Then, things went a little further. I knew she was bi, and I was curious, so things slowly got... physical. Everything just kept escalating, and emotions complicated everything.”

“So, what happened?”

“She wanted more, and I couldn’t commit. We never really defined the relationship, but once the semester was close to ending, she asked me to make it official and move to Washington with her after graduation. I was too scared, and I wanted to stay here in Chicago. We had a big fight about it, and once we graduated, we went our separate ways.”

Sarah’s heartbreak is evident in her briefly unguarded expression. They genuinely cared about each other, much more than I had anticipated.

“I’m sorry,” I say, because I’m not sure what else I can say. Losing someone you care

about is never easy, and time never fully heals that sort of heartbreak. There's always a "What if?" that lingers after breakups like those.

Sarah shrugs. "It's fine. It was a long time ago, and I met you a year later. I can't bring myself to regret any of it because it led me here." Her eyes meet mine and she gives me a soft smile, but I can still see the hurt hiding beneath, though I don't doubt her sincerity.

I smile back at her. "And I'm so glad to call you mine."

There's a moment of silence while we finish putting away the last of the laundry, but when we both sit on the bed, I speak again.

"Can I ask you something?"

“Of course.”

“Do you still have feelings for her?”

Sarah turns toward me with a furrowed brow and rests her hand on my thigh.

“Quentin, I love you. I don’t want anyone else.”

We’ve never involved another person in our relationship, sexual or otherwise, but something about this situation has me wondering whether it might be good for Sarah to talk to Kat about all of this. I also can’t deny that I enjoyed Kat’s company immensely as well.

“I know you love me, and I love you. But you know that’s not what I asked.” I give her a small, encouraging smile, just enough to let her know that it’s okay to admit what she’s feeling. This is uncharted territory for us, and even though I can see right through her, I need her to be honest with me. Half-truths and hidden feelings are worse than the simple truth, no matter how difficult it may be to admit.

“I don’t know what to say...”

“Just be honest with me.” I keep my voice soft and reassuring. This isn’t an accusation, not even remotely. If anything, it’s a relief. I’d seen the way she looked at Kat, the way her body reacted at just the sight of her. A part of me had been bracing for her to outright deny it, and that would’ve worried me more.

“I guess I might still have some unresolved feelings.” Her gaze drops.

I lift her chin with my finger. “Look at me,” I say. “It’s okay. And honestly? I think it might be good for you to work through those feelings.”

Her brow furrows. “Work through them how?”

This isn’t how I had planned this conversation going, but as soon as the thought enters my mind, it feels right. So, I say it. “Talk to her. And if you want to, I’d be okay with you exploring whatever it is you feel for her.”

I watch Sarah carefully as she processes my words. Her fingers tighten against my thigh, her lips parting like she wants to say something but doesn’t quite know what. “You’re saying... you’d be okay with me exploring what I feel for Kat? You’re okay with me wanting—” She cuts herself off, shaking her head. “I don’t even know what I want.”

“That’s the thing,” I say. “You don’t have to know right now. There’s no pressure. But if you do want to figure it out, I’m okay with that.”

Sarah looks at me like she’s waiting for the catch. She’s expecting me to backtrack, to claim that I misspoke, but I don’t. Because, even to my own surprise, I mean every word of it.

“Are you sure?”

Squeezing her hand, I say, “Do you remember what you said at the club, when you challenged me to flirt with Kat before knowing it was her?”

She shakes her head. “You said you felt secure enough in our relationship that me flirting with another woman wouldn’t worry you. And while what we’re discussing might be more than flirting, the same rules apply. I know you’re mine no matter what.”

A trace of a smile pulls at her lips, but it quickly fades. She's conflicted, and I can't blame her. This isn't exactly a typical conversation for a married couple to have. But then again, who am I to say what's normal? It's not like people go around broadcasting their relationship dynamics in cases like this.

"I love you," she says. "I don't want to hurt you."

"I love you too. And you won't, as long as you're open and honest with me."

She stares at me, searching my face for any sign of doubt or resentment. I let her look, because there's nothing to find. I'm not worried about this. If anything, I feel relieved. Because if she's been repressing this for years, if a part of her has been aching for something she thought she could never have, I don't want to be the one keeping her from it.

Finally, she exhales. "I don't even know what I would say to her."

I shrug. "Just talk to her, catch up with her. You don't have to jump into anything heavy at first."

"I guess that's true. Okay," she says with finality, as if her decision has been made. "I'll text her and see if she'll get coffee with me."

"Good."

She leans forward and kisses me softly, and it feels like gratitude. For the first time today, the tension in her shoulders eases as she lets out a slow breath.

"Thank you," is all she says, and I can hear all the unspoken words hiding beneath those two.

CHAPTER 6

KAT

Sarah has always been my weakness.

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I knew it the moment I saw her across the club last night, but I should have known it before then, should have known it when she was the one person I never let myself think about too much. When I moved back to Chicago, I told myself I was returning for the city, for the familiarity of home. But if I'm really honest, a small part of me had wondered if I'd ever see her again.

Now she's here, sitting across from me in this little coffee shop, hands wrapped around a steaming cup of coffee, looking just as beautiful as she did twenty years ago. More, even. She still has that natural grace and kindness in her eyes, but now the years of experience and life have given her a complexity that makes me want to unravel every thought behind those eyes.

She taps her nails on the side of her coffee mug, clearly nervous and lost in her thoughts.

I'm not sure what I expected when I agreed to meet her, but I told myself I had to be careful. Keep things clear. I need to keep my boundaries firm, because if I let her in again only to lose her, I don't know if I could take it.

"So," she says with a small, tentative smile. "I feel like I should be asking you a million questions, but I don't even know where to start."

I return her smile and take a sip of my coffee. "Start anywhere. Anything you want to know."

She nods, tucking a loose strand of hair behind her ear. "Okay... What have you been up to all these years? I know you said last night that you traveled a lot, but where did

you go?”

I settle back in my chair, letting the familiarity between us take the edge off my nerves. “Everywhere, really. As you know, I went to Washington first, not far from Seattle.” Her lips turn up in a sad smile, because the statement is heavy with what’s unsaid. You could have gone with me. I rattle off a few more states. “I did a lot of freelance work. Lived out of a suitcase for a long time. It was exciting, but after a while, I wanted something a little more stable.” I pause, running my fingers along the rim of my mug. “And, well, I just got out of a relationship a few months ago, so it felt like the right time to come home.”

Sarah’s expression softens. “I’m sorry. That must have been hard.”

I shrug. “It was for the best. Chicago still feels like home, even after all these years.”

She smiles at that, and I wonder if she feels even a fraction of what I’m feeling—this odd pull between the past and the present, between distance and closeness. Between knowing I should be careful and wanting to throw caution to the wind.

Sarah inhales in a way that shows me she’s about to admit something, and I know whatever she’s about to say next is the real reason she asked me to meet her.

“I, uh, wanted to be honest with you about something,” she says. “Quentin and I talked after our night at the club. About you.”

I raise my eyebrows and wonder where the hell this is going to lead. “Oh?” I prompt.

“I told him about our past—about you and me. And I admitted I might still have some unresolved feelings about you. Obviously, I’m not going to assume you still have any feelings like that for me, but—”

I cut her off. “I do.”

Her eyes widen at the straightforward admission, but it’s true. I wasn’t going to tell her that considering she’s married, and I don’t want to make any waves, but if she can admit it, so can I.

“Well, in that case... Quentin and I talked about it a lot, and he said he’d be okay with me exploring things with you if that’s what I wanted to do.”

I blink. A slow, measured inhale is the only thing that keeps me from immediately reacting.

Of course. Of course, this is what’s happening. Married couples do this all the time—find a bisexual woman to toy with, to experiment with before ultimately going back to their regular, monogamous lives. I’ve seen it before. I’ve been in it before. And every time, it’s ended with me being the one left standing in the aftermath, wondering if I was ever more than just a thrill, just a phase to get out of their systems.

But Sarah wouldn’t do that, right?

She isn’t like them. She knows how much she meant to me—how much she still means to me, even now. However, it’s also been a long time since we’ve been together. How much has changed over the last twenty years?

I don’t know if I can risk the heartbreak of losing her a second time, but I also don’t know if I can give up the opportunity to have her in my arms again, even if it’s only temporary.

I run my thumb over the handle of my cup, staring down into my coffee. She’s watching me, waiting for my reaction, and I’m not sure what to say.

“Well,” I start. “That’s... unexpected.”

She lets out a nervous laugh. “Tell me about it. I’m just as surprised as you are.”

I should walk away. I should tell her that this isn’t a good idea, that I’ve had enough of being someone’s temporary fantasy, someone’s brief exploration before reality pulls them back to where they feel most comfortable.

But I don’t.

Because this is Sarah. And no matter how much I try to pretend otherwise, she’s always been different.

“So... what does that mean?” I ask, keeping my voice even. “For you, I mean.”

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She presses her lips together as she gathers her thoughts. “I don’t know. I don’t have all the answers yet. I just know that seeing you again brought back so many feelings and memories. Ones I haven’t let myself think about in a long time.”

I want to believe that this is real, that I’m not just an idea she’s entertaining for a little while before she decides she’s had enough. But experience has taught me to be careful, and I’m not sure she even knows what she wants. It’s likely this won’t be a long-term thing for her, and I need to decide if I’m okay with that.

“I feel the same way, but I need you to be honest with me. Is this just curiosity for you? Or is this something more?”

Her eyes flick to mine, and they show me just how conflicted she is. “It’s not just curiosity.” She swallows hard. “I think maybe it’s always been there. I just never let myself think about it too much. Life happened, with marriage and work and kids, and I pushed everything else to the back of my mind.” She exhales shakily. “But I can’t ignore it anymore.”

Something tightens in my chest. I wasn’t expecting her to be this open and vulnerable with me, and a part of me still wants to run. But a bigger part of me—the part that’s been aching for years, wondering “what if”—wants to stay.

I sigh, knowing I need to be honest with her too. “The issue is, I’ve been in situations like this before with married couples. And I’ve always ended up hurt and tossed to the side.”

Pain flashes across her expression, and I instantly regret phrasing it that way, but she

needs to know what this means for me.

She nods. “I get that. I don’t want to promise something I can’t follow through on, but I’d never intentionally hurt you after—” the rest of the sentence remains unspoken. “After I broke your heart the first time.” “I just don’t want to walk away from this without at least trying.”

I study her for a long moment, searching for any sign of hesitation. But all I see is sincerity, and despite my better judgment, hope flutters in my chest. She’s still being vague, but I know it’s not intentional. She’s just as clueless about how this will go as I am.

“Okay,” I say. “We can see where this goes, but let’s take it slow.”

Her eyes are filled with hope as she gives me a wide, genuine smile, and my heart bursts with affection for her. She’s so fucking beautiful.

I know I’m setting myself up for eventual heartbreak, because this certainly can’t last forever, but I can’t deny myself more time with her.

But God help me, I think I just agreed to fall for her all over again.

CHAPTER 7

SARAH

I didn’t expect to go back to the club so soon, but it had seemed like a reasonable meeting place. Plus, Quentin and I may as well take advantage of our last few weeks of freedom before school starts.

The pulsing bass of the music thrums through my body as Quentin and I step into

Club Caliber again, the atmosphere just as electric as it was last weekend. Excitement tightens in my chest, though this time, it's layered with a different kind of anticipation.

I glance at my phone for what must be the tenth time in the past five minutes. Kat said she was coming, but there's still a nervous edge inside me, an almost childish anxiety that she might change her mind. That I imagined the tension between us, the soft way she looked at me across the table at the coffee shop when we agreed to take this—whatever this is—one step at a time.

Quentin squeezes my hand, pulling me out of my thoughts. "She'll come." He knows me too well. I'm always worrying about something.

I nod in response but say nothing. One thing that's great about Kat is that she says what she means and is straight to the point. If she hadn't wanted to pursue this, she would have told me, so I'm not sure why I'm still so nervous.

We weave through the club, and the familiarity is calming. People lounge on the couches, some deep in conversation, others already tangled together in ways that will soon devolve into back-room debauchery.

As we settle into a pair of barstools, Quentin orders our drinks while I scan the crowd. The anticipation builds with each passing second until suddenly, I see her.

Kat steps into the club like she owns the place.

It's ridiculous how instantly my body reacts. Her dark hair cascades in waves down her back, and her full lips are painted a deep red. She's wearing a fitted black dress that hugs the curves I used to know so well, and fuck, I want to touch her so badly it hurts.

A tinge of guilt runs through me at my blatant desire for someone who's not my husband, but I remind myself that he's given me full permission to act on my feelings for her. He's encouraged it.

A knowing smirk plays at Quentin's lips when he turns away from the bar to hand me my drink and follows my gaze.

"She's gorgeous," he remarks.

My pulse quickens as she scans the room and her eyes lock on mine. "Yeah, she is."

Kat lifts a brow when she sees the two of us watching her, and her lips curve into a subtly wicked smile before she makes her way toward us.

I should try to compose myself before she reaches us, but I'm already entirely unraveled. Quentin's comment about Kat being gorgeous sticks in my mind, making me wonder how things might play out. While I've had plenty of fantasies about Kat, I somehow hadn't even considered if the three of us would do anything together. I have no clue if that's something Quentin or Kat would be interested in, but I suppose that's a conversation for later.

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“Hello, gorgeous,” Kat says as she slides onto the empty barstool beside me. Her voice has always had that confident, flirty edge to it, and it makes my stomach flip in excitement.

“Right back at you.” I laugh, shaking my head, trying to stave off the heat rising to my cheeks.

Quentin offers a friendly smile. “Glad you could make it.”

Kat’s gaze shifts briefly to him, giving him an appraising look and saying, “Thanks, me too,” before she returns her attention to me and stares at me long enough to make me squirm under her gaze. “You really do look beautiful.”

My heart leaps. “So do you.”

Quentin doesn’t seem fazed by the exchange. If anything, he seems amused by my reaction. He takes a slow sip of his drink, then casually drapes an arm over the back of my seat.

We all fall into easy conversation after that, talking about everything and nothing. I had been worried it would be awkward with the three of us together, but it isn’t. In fact, sitting here between my husband and the woman I used to care for feels right in a way I can’t quite explain.

There’s something electric about the air between us. Quentin, with his charming, attentive demeanor. Kat, with her confidence and sultry appeal. And me, between them, absorbing all this sensual energy until I’m ready to burst.

Somewhere between our first and second drinks, the conversation shifts to Club Caliber itself—what brought us here in the first place.

“So,” Kat says, swirling the last of her red wine in her glass. “How often do you two come here?”

“Not as often as we used to,” Quentin admits. “Life got busy for a while. But we’re trying to change that.”

Kat smirks. “Gotta keep things exciting, huh?” I sense the deeper meaning behind the phrase, though. She’s still worried she’s a temporary fixture here, someone to “spice things up” before Quentin and I go back to normal.

“Something like that,” I say, “but not exactly. This lifestyle is a part of who we are, not just a fun distraction. It’s only now that we’re able to explore that freely again, though.” Just as I noticed the underlying fear in her words, I hope she senses the double meaning in mine.

Kat hums, tapping a maroon nail against her wine glass. “Does that mean you two have a specific dynamic within all of this? Certain preferences?”

A thrill runs through me at the question. I steal a quick glance at Quentin, who only raises an eyebrow in encouragement.

“Yes. We’re in a Dom/sub dynamic, though it’s not a 24/7 thing. And we usually end up in one of the rooms here where others can watch...”

The corners of Kat’s lips lift in a curious smile. “Interesting”

“Mhm.” I take a sip of my wine to quell the awkward, nervous energy in my chest. I’ve never had a problem talking about it before, but saying it to Kat feels different,

though maybe that's because she and I have a past.

Kat leans in just a bit and lowers her voice as she says, "It doesn't surprise me that you're submissive. You always did like to let go of control."

My cheeks flush and I take another sip of wine.

Quentin chuckles beside me, clearly entertained by the exchange. "She does," he confirms, his voice warm as he brushes his fingers along my wrist. "And she's very good at it. Though it sounds like you have a pretty good idea of that already."

Kat pauses before saying, "Only a little bit."

It's true that while we had gotten involved physically as well as emotionally, both of us were so young that we didn't really know anything about kink or BDSM at that time. There are many things we never got the chance to do, but now...

"What about you?" I ask her. "What tempted you to come here in the first place?"

She shifts so her knee brushes against mine. "When I started traveling, I ended up getting more involved in the kink community in a couple different cities. Figured out I'm a switch, so I had some fun over the years."

Quentin studies her with open curiosity. "Is that so?" That seems to have piqued his interest. She not only is into both men and women, but apparently can be dominant or submissive. I also can't help but consider the implications. Is there a chance that all three of us become involved? I hadn't assumed there would be before, but with the way we've all been flirting tonight, I wonder...

Kat shrugs, but the glint in her eye suggests this is anything but casual. "I have my preferences," she says, "but I don't mind switching things up, depending on the right

partner.”

The air between us thickens with tension.

I don't know if it's the drinks, the club, or the years of wondering what it would be like to touch her again, but I don't hesitate when I reach out to thread my fingers through Quentin's, then do the same with Kat.

“Should we head to the back?” Kat asks.

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My breath hitches at the dark desire in her eyes. I glance over at Quentin, subconsciously worried he'll change his mind about this whole thing, but he simply nods.

I haven't been able to stop thinking about her since last weekend. I've been telling myself to tread carefully, to keep my emotions in check. But right now, with the heat of her gaze settling over me, I don't want to be careful.

She brings out the reckless side of me that wants to chase the highs and live in the moment.

"Yeah, let's go," I say.

"Well then—" she reaches out to drag the tip of her finger down my forearm "—let's play."

My heart pounds with anticipation as Kat leads me by the hand toward the back of the club. Quentin follows at Kat's request, which is both nerve-racking and fills me with relief. I don't want him to feel left out, but I can't help but wonder how he'll react to the two of us kissing, touching, or anything else.

We find an empty private room, though all the ones with windows to the hallway are occupied. Tonight, I'm okay with no one watching. This is exhilarating enough, being able to live out my long-lost fantasies with Kat.

Quentin locks the door behind us with a click that seems to resound through the silence. Now what?

Kat's eyes lock with mine, and she reaches out a hand. I take it, and she pulls me in closer to her, our bodies only inches away from each other. "I can't believe I get to touch you again," she whispers in awe.

And just like that, my resolve to take things slow shatters. I slide my hand over her shoulder and curl my fingers around the back of her neck before leaning in. The moment our lips meet, my world shifts.

Her touch overwhelms my body and my memory all at once. The softness of her lips, the feel of her body against mine, the way she consumes me with her kiss. She wraps her arms around my waist and pulls me in tightly, and every nerve in my body comes alive with need.

I moan into her mouth, my body already aching with the weight of everything I've denied myself for so long. She tilts her head, deepening the kiss and brushing her tongue against mine in a slow, deliberate tease. When I whimper and dig my nails into her shoulders, I feel her smile against my lips.

Behind me, on a chair in the far corner of the room, Quentin shifts, and the sudden reminder that we're not alone sends a thrill through me. He's watching me kiss her.

Kat must sense it because she pulls away just enough to murmur in her flirty tone, "Do you like that he's watching us?"

I nod.

"Good," she says, her lips brushing my jaw as her hands skim down my sides. "Then let's give him a show. But for your sake, I'm taking this slow," she adds.

I barely have time to process that before she's kissing me again, harder this time, needier. Her hands slide lower, gripping my hips as she presses me back against the

bed. I go willingly, my body already burning with need as I sink onto the mattress.

She follows, hovering over me as her hands press against my upper thighs before sliding up my body, over my stomach and breasts. Even at her slow pace, it's not enough. She places her hands on either side of my head and props herself up just enough so that her full bodyweight isn't on me but we're still pressed against each other as she leans down to trail kisses up my neck. Still, her body is against mine, and my pussy is already throbbing with need. I grind my hips against hers, and she sucks in a sharp breath before taking my bottom lip between her teeth, biting just hard enough to cause pain but not hard enough to draw blood.

I whimper as she pulls back, and I catch Quentin's gaze behind her. He watches us with an unreadable expression, but his posture is relaxed, and there's an obvious erection tenting his pants.

"I've dreamed about this," she murmurs, her lips brushing against my skin. "About you."

"Me too. More than I care to admit."

Something flashes in her eyes at that admission. She kisses me again, and this time, it's deeper, slower, filled with all the words we can't say.

When she pulls away, she stares at me with lust and longing before whispering, "I told you I was going to take this slow, and I'm sticking to that. But, I have an idea."

CHAPTER 8

QUENTIN

Sarah's chest is rising and falling with heavy breaths as Kat pulls away slightly. It's

been years since I've seen her so desperate with need.

My wife looks wrecked, and we've barely even started.

I can't see Kat's expression as she leans in to whisper against Sarah's ear. Whatever she says affects Sarah, though, because her eyes widen slightly before she nods and bites back a smile.

Then Kat stands, walks over to me, and rests a hand on my shoulder. My cock jumps at the contact. "Your turn. I'm taking this slow with Sarah, but I want to watch you fuck her if that's okay with you."

Holy. Fuck.

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I didn't know what I expected to happen tonight, but this wasn't it. But with the way Sarah is reclining on the bed with her thighs pressed together, I can't deny how much I love this. It's stirring something deep within me. Something primal and possessive, but in the best way possible.

I nod at Kat and rise from my seat, making my way over to my wife, who looks desperate to be touched.

"Sit up," I instruct.

She follows my direction, straightening her posture before looking up at me. I reach out, tangling my fingers in her hair, and tug just enough to test her. A gasp falls from her lips, and her body melts under my touch.

It's been too damn long since we've done this properly. Not just the hurried, desperate sex squeezed between the demands of life, but this. A real scene where Sarah lets go of everything and surrenders to me. Last weekend at the club was just the beginning.

I've missed this more than I realized.

"I want you to kneel for me. You can stay on the bed for tonight."

Sarah shifts so she's kneeling on the bed before me, and she settles into position. Her hands rest on her thighs, her back straight. So obedient. She clearly hasn't forgotten how to be a good little sub for me.

Seeing her like this fuels the fire burning within me, and I slide my thumb over her lower lip, watching her mouth part instinctively. “Such a good girl,” I praise.

I grip Sarah’s chin, tilting her face up until her gaze locks with mine. “You remember how this works?”

“Yes, Sir,” she whispers, and fuck, that response shoots straight to my cock.

Submission looks beautiful on her.

The tension between us is heavy as she waits for my next move. I let the silence stretch, loving the way she shifts under my gaze and looks up at me with desperation.

Kat, who’s sitting in the chair I had occupied minutes ago, crosses her legs. “She’s beautiful like this.”

I smirk, running my fingers along Sarah’s throat, tracing the neckline of her dress. “She is.”

Sarah shudders and goosebumps raise on her skin.

I lean in, my lips grazing her ear. “You want me to show her how I fuck you?” My voice is low, teasing. I know exactly how much she loves this.

She nods.

“Use your words,” I remind her.

“Yes, Sir.”

“Good girl.”

I slide my hand into Sarah's dress, my fingertips skimming the lace edge of her bra.

I don't rush. This is what we've been missing—the anticipation, the slow burn, the way she melts under my hands the longer I make her wait.

And with Kat watching, I take my time, determined to make this a night neither of them will forget.

“Do you remember what I used to do to you?” I ask softly. “How I used to tease you until you couldn't take it anymore?”

“Yes, Sir,” she breathes.

The way she squirms under my teasing touch as I run my hands over her body tells me she's enjoying this just as much as I am. Dipping my fingers under the hem of her dress, I slide the fabric up her thighs and past her hips to expose her panties. “I used to make you beg for it,” I continue. “You'd beg for me to touch you, beg me to fuck you.”

Sarah whimpers, squeezing her thighs together desperate for more friction. “Please,” she whispers.

I chuckle and lean in closer, dropping my voice to the low tone that always makes her go weak. “Beg for it.”

Behind us, Kat shifts on the chair, the sound of fabric against leather filling the otherwise quiet room. I glance over my shoulder at her to make sure she's not uncomfortable with this. Her gaze is fixed on us, full of interest and desire. Perfect.

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Sarah hesitates for a moment, biting her lip as if trying to hold back the plea building inside her. But eventually, her need to be touched outweighs anything else. “Please,” she whimpers. “I need you. I need you to fuck me. Please, I’m begging you.”

She sounds desperate, and I fucking love it. I pull her dress off over her head and toss it to the side, leaving her in only her bra and underwear.

She stares up at me with wide, pleading eyes, her chest rising and falling rapidly with each breath. I take a moment to drink in the sight of her, making sure I step aside slightly so Kat gets a view. I had worried that this might feel too performative with Kat watching us, but her presence only makes this even hotter.

I unhook Sarah’s bra and toss it beside her dress. Her nipples are already hard, and I take them between my fingers, rolling them and brushing my thumb over them until Sarah’s back is arching to press herself further into my touch.

Behind me, I hear Kat shift again, and the constant reminders of her presence only spur me on. My cock throbs, and I’m dying to bury it inside Sarah.

Sarah whimpers softly as I tweak her nipples before pulling away, a sound of both need and protest. I trail my fingers down her stomach until I reach her soaked panties. Dragging my fingers over the damp fabric, I revel in the sight of her squirming against my touch.

“Lay back,” I tell her, and she eagerly complies before I yank her panties off.

I stand back, taking in the sight of her completely naked body. Her thighs are damp,

and her pussy glistening, ready for me. I glance back at Kat, who's leaning forward in her chair, eyes locked onto Sarah. "Is this what you wanted to see?" I ask her.

"Yes," she breathes. Still holding eye contact, she lowers her hand between her legs and pauses, as if waiting for confirmation that this is okay. I give her a subtle nod, and she slips her hand under her dress and into her underwear.

Fuck, this night is so much better than I expected it to be.

I turn back to Sarah, who's watching us both with unrestrained desire. I unbuckle my belt, taking my time as I slip out of my pants to let the anticipation build. My cock springs free, catching Sarah's attention.

I spread her legs before kneeling on the bed before her and situating myself over her. She instinctively lifts her hips while I fist my cock and rub it up and down her slit, coating myself in her wetness.

"Please," she begs.

I give her what she wants.

Inch by inch, I fill her. She's so tight and warm, her inner muscles clenching around me as I push deeper and deeper into her pussy. Her head falls back as she lets out a low moan. I hold her there for a moment, letting her adjust to the feel of me inside her. Then, I start to move.

Each thrust is slow and deliberate, each withdrawal a tease. She rolls her hips against me, trying to match my rhythm. I lean forward to kiss her while I'm buried deep inside her, and her tongue entwines with mine.

Moments later, I break the kiss and glance over at Kat. Her eyes are glued to us, her

hand moving faster between her legs and her gaze hooded. The sight of her pleasuring herself while watching us fuck is intoxicating. I turn back to Sarah, who was also looking over at Kat, and I increase the pace as I fuck her harder and faster.

Sarah's moans fill the room, her body moving in sync with mine. I can feel her getting closer, her muscles tensing around me. I reach between us, my fingers finding her clit. I rub it in quick circles, driving her towards the edge. I'm getting close as well, but this is a race that I don't want to win.

"Come for me," I command in a low growl, knowing how much she loves when I take control. "Show her how beautiful you are when you come for me."

Sarah's body tenses a few seconds later and her nails dig into the skin of my shoulders. Her orgasm hits her hard, her body convulsing around me as she cries out. Seconds later, soft moans sound from behind me where Kat is coming on her own fingers, and I know I won't be able to hold out any longer. My own release builds quickly, and my cock throbs inside Sarah as I come, groaning and spilling into her.

Seconds pass, then a minute, and the room is silent aside from our collective breathing. I know we're all thinking the same thing: What comes next?

CHAPTER 9

KAT

My heart pounds as I pull into the driveway of Sarah and Quentin's house. It's exactly what I expected—a classic Chicago two-story with a neat front yard and small, welcoming porch. A perfectly nice home for a happy family. All it's missing is the white picket fence.

It hits me then how different their lives have been from mine. While they were raising

two kids and having the quintessential family life, I was traipsing around the country and avoiding putting down roots.

My phone buzzes in my pocket, and I pull it out to find a text from Sarah: “Stuck in traffic. Be there in about 20 mins. Sorry! Quentin's there though.”

Great. This won't be awkward at all.

I consider turning around and getting right back in my car, but before I can act on that impulse, the front door opens. Quentin stands there in jeans and a black t-shirt wearing a wide, genuine smile.

“Hey,” he says. “Sarah just texted me that she's running late. Come on in.”

Well, no turning back now.

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I follow him inside, taking in the tastefully decorated living room. Family photos line the walls, and I can't help but feel like a bit of an outsider, even though I know in reality that they wouldn't have invited me if they didn't want me here. When I had gotten Sarah's text a couple days after our night together at the club, I had been simultaneously elated and terrified.

The likelihood of this working out long-term isn't high, but the tiny spark of hope that it might is enough to risk the odds.

"Can I get you something to drink?" Quentin asks, leading me into the kitchen. "We've got wine, beer, or I can make you a cocktail."

"Wine would be great, thanks."

He leads me to the kitchen, which is modern and spotless. I perch on one of the barstools at the island while he opens a bottle of red and pours us each a glass. The silence stretches between us, neither of us knowing what to say.

"Well," he says, sliding a glass toward me, "This is a bit awkward."

I laugh. At least he's direct. "Just a bit."

Quentin leans against the counter opposite me, and I can't help but admire his constant sense of effortless charm. "You know, Sarah's told me a lot about your college days, but I feel like I barely know you."

"Well, what do you want to know?"

He asks some surface-level questions about my work and travels until there's a beat of silence again.

Finally, he asks, "What made you come back to Chicago after all these years?"

It's a loaded question, one I'm not sure I want to answer fully. But if I want this to work out, I know I need to be honest.

"I was tired," I admit. "Moving around and getting to explore was a lot of fun, but it's hard to feel like nowhere is really home. And even though I hadn't been here in a long time, Chicago has always felt like the place I belong. I missed the place... and the people."

"Did you expect to reconnect with Sarah at all?" His tone only holds curiosity, no judgment or accusation.

"Not actively. I didn't come back expecting to find her, or for any of this to happen. But I'd be lying if I said she wasn't part of why Chicago always felt like home."

Quentin takes a sip of his wine. "Well, I will say that this is new territory for us. But we're very big on open and honest communication, and she's told me a lot about how she feels about you."

"And what about you?" I ask, unable to help myself.

"What about me?"

"Are you content to let Sarah explore this on her own? Do you want to be involved?" I lean forward slightly. "Situations like this are always temperamental, so I want to be clear on what both of you expect out of this." I don't mention the fact that the three of us being in a sexual situation together, even if he and I didn't touch once, has had my

imagination going into overdrive.

He looks taken aback, like he hadn't considered that possibility. "I... hadn't really thought of that as an option," he admits. "I'm not sure how Sarah would feel about all three of us together."

I let my eyes drift over him, taking in his broad shoulders, the way his t-shirt clings to his chest. "Would you want to be involved if it were something she was interested in?"

"Would you want me to be?"

I smile. "You're avoiding the question."

"I guess I am," he chuckles. "I just want what would make Sarah happy."

Guess it's up to me to make the first move here, then. "Well, if she's into it, then I surely wouldn't mind all three of us getting involved. I'd be lying if I said I wasn't a little disappointed that first night when I saw your wedding ring, but now..."

The air between us shifts. I've just opened a door that I probably should've kept closed, but while my feelings for Sarah are much deeper, I also can't deny my growing attraction to Quentin. Before either of us can say anything more, we hear the front door open.

Sarah calls out. "I'm so sorry I'm late!"

Quentin and I share a look, one that acknowledges what just passed between us while silently agreeing to keep it between ourselves for now, just before Sarah bustles into the kitchen.

“Traffic was awful,” she says, oblivious to the thick tension in the room as she drops her purse on the counter. “I hope you two weren't too bored without me.”

If she only knew.

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Guilt and excitement war in my stomach as I watch her lean up to kiss Quentin hello. I shouldn't feel this thrill when his eyes meet mine over Sarah's shoulder.

“We managed to keep ourselves entertained,” Quentin says.

Sarah grins, looking between us. “Well, I'm glad you two are getting along.”

She moves to pour herself a glass of wine, and I can't help but notice how beautiful she looks, even frazzled from being in traffic. Her short blonde hair is slightly mussed, like she's been running her fingers through it in frustration, and her fitted t-shirt hugs her petite curves in all the right ways.

“So,” Sarah says, settling onto the barstool next to me, “what were you two talking about?”

“Just getting to know each other,” I say, trying to keep my voice steady. “Your husband's quite the conversationalist.”

Quentin catches my eye again, and the ghost of our earlier flirtation passes between us. “Kat's pretty interesting herself,” he says.

And just like that, we fall into easy conversation, the three of us sharing stories and laughing together. But there's an undercurrent now of tension that wasn't there before. Every time Quentin's hand brushes mine as he refills my wine glass, every time our eyes meet across the kitchen island, I feel it.

Sarah seems happy, watching us interact with a soft smile on her face. She has no

idea that while she was stuck in traffic, her husband and I were dancing around the possibility of something more, something that includes all three of us. And maybe I shouldn't assume, but I don't think she'd mind. I have a feeling that the idea of all three of us being together would be something she'd love.

I'll have to talk to her about it later, though Quentin may beat me to it.

So I stay quiet for now, sipping my wine and trying to focus on the present moment. On the way Sarah's knee presses against mine under the counter, on the sound of her laughter at Quentin's jokes, on the warmth of their home and their company, on the way I don't feel like so much of an outsider here anymore.

"Well," Sarah says once there's a lull of silence. "Shall we begin the festivities?"

CHAPTER 10

QUENTIN

The festivities Sarah alluded to are much tamer than I imagined they'd be—at least for now.

Sarah and Kat sit cross-legged on the floor, arguing playfully over their Scrabble tiles while I watch from the couch. They're both a few glasses of wine in, and their cheeks are flushed with alcohol and laughter. Sarah keeps shooting Kat a triumphant look whenever she plays a particularly good word.

A twinge of something—jealousy?—tugs at my chest. I'm tempted to ignore the feeling, but I force myself to think about it and get to the root of the problem. If there's any sort of negativity popping up now, I can't ignore it lest it fester into something deeper.

Okay, so I'm jealous of the affection my wife is giving and receiving from someone else, which makes sense in theory. It's that primal, possessive part of me fighting for dominance over rationality. But I've given her full permission to explore this, and I like Kat as well.

I reflect on the feeling, examine it, and come to the conclusion that my wife is getting something from Kat that she doesn't get from me. It's affection and intimacy, sure, but it's a different kind. One that I can't give her.

But that's the basis for most human relationships, isn't it? Every relationship, romantic or otherwise, gives us a unique type of love and connection. My relationship with one person might be based in our shared sense of humor and fun, while my relationship with another might be forged through our shared ideals and hobbies.

Sarah and I have more in common than not. She's not only my wife, but my best friend. But I'm realizing now that Kat gives her something I can't, something undefinable but obvious when I see the two of them together.

And that's okay.

It makes sense for my first reaction to be jealousy, especially when monogamy is such a central element to the culture we've been immersed in our entire lives, but the more I think about it, the more I realize that there's enough care and affection to go around. Sarah having feelings for Kat does nothing to detract from her feelings for me.

Kat leans over the Scrabble board and places a soft kiss on Sarah's lips before pulling away and sliding her line of letters into place.

"Triple word score," she says in a low, taunting voice, as if her kissing Sarah seconds before was a way to soften the blow.

Sarah groans dramatically and flops backward onto the carpet. “You're cheating. Quentin, she's totally cheating.”

I laugh. "Don't look at me. I'm just a spectator.”

“Thanks for the help,” Sarah pouts, but her eyes are filled with playfulness.

Kat reaches for her wine glass and takes a long sip. “You always were a sore loser,” she says with a wink.

The game continues, and eventually, after they’ve put it away, they both migrate to the couch. Sarah settles against my left side, her head resting on my shoulder, while Kat casually curls up on my right. The weight of them both against me feels right in a way I can’t quite explain.

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But I can't help but wonder, where does this end? It's evident that Sarah has feelings for Kat, and Kat has feelings for her, and I'm somewhere in between. Do I have feelings for Kat too? I'm starting to admit to myself that I might...

But how far can this actually go? We can't just bring another woman fully into our relationship... right?

The thought should terrify me. Should make me want to establish boundaries, to protect what Sarah and I have built over twenty years of marriage. But instead, I find myself wondering how it would work. How we would navigate the complexities of bringing another person into our relationship.

I don't know what to think, but I force myself to stop worrying for the time being.

Sarah reaches across me to grab her wine from the coffee table and her body brushes against mine. Kat shifts to make room, her hand landing casually on my thigh for balance. The touch isn't sexual, but it's intimate in a casual sort of way.

Sarah yawns, nuzzling closer to me. "I think I had too much wine. I can hardly stay awake."

I wrap my arm around Sarah's shoulders to pull her closer. Without thinking, I do the same with my other arm, and Kat accepts the invitation, settling against my side.

The three of us sit there in comfortable silence, the radio playing softly in the background. Despite the newness of this all, it feels so normal, like it's happened a million times before.

But the practical part of my brain keeps nagging at me. People would talk. Our kids would have questions. Our jobs could be affected. It's one thing to have an open marriage, to experiment with others. It's another thing entirely to bring someone else into your relationship permanently.

And yet...

I look down at Sarah, half-asleep against my chest, then at Kat, who's watching her with such tenderness it makes my heart ache. There's something here. Something real.

The jealousy I felt earlier transforms into something else, because I get it now. I get why Sarah is drawn to Kat, why she wants to explore this. It's not about filling a gap that's missing in our marriage. It's about adding something new, something that could make us all happier.

"We should probably get her to bed," Kat says softly, nodding at Sarah who's now fully asleep.

I nod, but neither of us moves. The moment feels too perfect to break.

"Thank you," I murmur, "for being patient with us while we figure this out."

Kat meets my eyes, and I see the same questions there that I've been asking myself all night. Where does this go? How far can it go? But I also see hope in her eyes that mirrors my own.

"Thank you for letting me be part of it," she responds. "And for trusting me with her."

CHAPTER 11

SARAH

The bed is empty when I wake up, and everything feels normal for a brief second before the events of last night come flooding back to me. Surprisingly, nothing sexual happened—likely due to my slight overconsumption of wine—but it was incredible all the same. I had fallen asleep with my heart brimming with affection.

This all feels too good to be true.

After checking my phone for notifications and pushing down the tiny twinge of disappointment at seeing nothing from Kat after last night, I roll out of bed and follow the smell of coffee to the kitchen. To my surprise, Quentin isn't the only one here. Kat sits across from him, sipping her black coffee and wearing one of my old t-shirts and a familiar pair of pajama pants.

She stayed the night.

For some reason, that warms my heart, even though I wasn't awake for it.

"Good morning, sunshine," she teases.

I make a beeline for the coffee pot, though I don't miss the slightly awkward silence, as if I interrupted their conversation. "Good morning."

After pouring myself a cup of coffee, I join the two of them at the table. We talk a bit, but a lot of the time is spent in comfortable silence. It feels so domestic, so normal, like we've been doing this our entire lives.

Quentin and I don't go back to work for a couple more weeks, and Kat says she doesn't have any work scheduled today—just an engagement photo shoot tomorrow—so it's an easy decision for the three of us to spend the day together.

We take our time getting ready for the day but make no plans to go anywhere. Maybe it's all in my head, but there's still an undercurrent of sexual tension flowing between the three of us after last night, and I'm dying to act on it.

But when Quentin leaves the room to take a shower, Kat and I can't keep our eyes off each other, and I know she feels it too. I'm just finishing washing the dishes from last night when Kat joins me in the kitchen, backing me up against the counter.

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My body immediately reacts to her touch, and the seconds stretch between us as she looks into my eyes.

“I want to kiss you,” she murmurs, pushing a strand of hair behind my ear.

“Then do it.”

That’s all the permission she needs. She presses her lips against my own, soft at first, but the second I arch my back to press against her, she deepens the kiss and takes control.

I melt into her demanding touch, and even though I have express permission to do this, it still gives me a thrill, like I’m breaking the rules and doing something I shouldn’t.

Kat and I both jump when Quentin clears his throat from the doorway, and heat rises to my cheeks. He’s raising an eyebrow and wearing a smirk as he looks between us, and I’m sure both of us look as sheepish as I feel. He’s clearly amused, though, and there’s a bulge at the front of his sweatpants that tells me he’s enjoying the show.

“Am I interrupting something, or am I allowed to join?”

Now that’s what I like to hear.

“Did you have something in mind?” Kat fires back with mischief in her eyes.

Quentin’s gaze shifts from me to her as he leans against the door frame and casually

shoves his hands in his pockets. His suave, charming demeanor makes butterflies take flight in my stomach. How the hell did I get so lucky to be here with not only him, but the beautiful dark-haired woman at my side as well?

“How do you two feel about me taking charge today? Of both of you?”

My eyes widen, and I nod before Kat answers with her signature sass, “I think I can handle embracing my sub side today.”

His voice takes on a dominant edge. “Good. Then both of you, follow me.”

My stomach flips as we follow him down the hall into our bedroom, where he turns and gives us both appraising looks.

I had planned on asking Kat and Quentin separately about how they’d feel about all three of us getting involved with each other rather than me being intimate individually with each of them, but it seems like they’re both fully on board with this.

“Kiss her again,” he tells me. Something sparks inside of me at the command in his tone. I’ve always loved when he takes control like this, and now, with Kat here, it’s even more exhilarating.

I turn toward Kat and pull her in, and we start right where we left off in the kitchen, our kiss passionate and intense. She wraps one arm around my waist while her free hand lifts to cup the side of my jaw.

When we finally break away from each other, her expression mirrors how I feel: needy, desperate, and entirely too turned on.

“Kat,” Quentin says, “Undress my wife. Sarah, you do the same to her when she’s done with you.”

Fuck, that's hot.

Kat's fingertips graze my skin as she lifts the hem of my t-shirt and pulls it up. I raise my arms so she can take it off, and she tosses it to the floor. She gives me a wicked grin before hooking her fingers over the waistband of my pants and underwear and pulling them down until they fall to the floor in a heap of fabric that I quickly step out of and kick to the side.

Once I'm bare before her, I mirror her movements, pulling off her clothes with slow, teasing touches.

We're both naked now as we look at Quentin expectantly. "Kneel," he commands, his voice filled with such authority that neither of us hesitates. We kneel before him and watch as he takes slow, measured steps to cover the space between us.

He reaches down, tilting my chin up to meet his gaze and doing the same to Kat with his other hand. "You're both so beautiful," he murmurs, tracing my lower lip with his thumb before he steps back slightly.

"On the bed." We stand, our bodies brushing against each other as we climb onto the bed together.

Something about doing this with Kat changes the dynamic, shifts it into something still familiar but with a twist. Submission has always been something I've enjoyed, but seeing this beautiful, headstrong woman who previously took control now following my husband's commands does something to me that I can't explain. It's erotic on an entirely different level.

"Touch her," Quentin demands, looking straight at me. "Make her feel good."

God, it's been so long since I've touched her like this. We kissed the other night, and

she had touched me, but I'd been at her mercy. Now, it's my turn.

I slide my hand down Kat's stomach, feeling way she shivers under my touch. My fingertips trail lower, until I reach the apex of her thighs and slip a finger through her wetness.

Kat gasps softly and lifts her hips to meet my touch.

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I go slow, taking my time and enjoying the way she loses control with every pass of my fingers. In my peripheral vision, Quentin is stroking his cock slowly while he watches us.

“Use your tongue,” he says, and I don't hesitate. I settle between her thighs, and even though I'm slightly nervous I'll be terrible at this after twenty years of not doing it, I dive right in.

Kat moans as I run my tongue up her slit and focus on her clit. Her reactions tell me I'm doing something right, and my confidence picks up as I eat her pussy with reckless abandon.

I'm not sure how long it is until the bed dips beside me with Quentin's weight, and then his hand is in my hair, gripping it against my scalp and using just enough pressure to force me to keep going.

“Fuck,” Quentin half-whispers. “Just like that. Make her come.”

I double my efforts, flicking my tongue over Kat's clit and slipping two fingers inside her. I know she's close with the way her hips move and the way she moans.

“Don't stop,” she gasps. “Please, don't stop.”

I don't. I can't. I'm lost in the taste of her, in the feel of Quentin's hand in my hair as he urges me on. He's still stroking himself, only adding to the frenetic energy passing between the three of us.

Kat comes with a sharp cry, her thighs clamping around my head as her whole body shakes. My jaw is sore, but I don't let up until I'm sure I've given her every last bit of pleasure I possibly can.

When I finally pull back, Quentin is tugging at my hair, pulling me up for a kiss, and it turns me on even more knowing he can taste Kat on my lips.

His hands dip between my legs, where I'm already wet and needy.

"I need you," I say, rocking my hips against his too-gentle touch.

"Not yet," Quentin taunts. He trails his fingers up my stomach, teasing my breasts. "You'll get what I give you when I give it to you. I'm the one in charge here."

I fake a pout, but he lays me down beside Kat, who seems to be recovering from her orgasm rather quickly.

He touches me torturously slowly, teasing me, and Kat joins in a moment later, taking one of my nipples in her mouth and sucking.

It doesn't take long before I'm panting and desperate for any sort of friction between my legs.

Kat kisses me while Quentin's fingers return to my clit, rubbing slow circles and building up my desperation. I moan into Kat's mouth as my muscles tense. I'm so fucking close, but Quentin is keeping me right on the edge and it's maddening.

"Fuck," Quentin groans. "I need to be inside you."

"Please."

He doesn't hesitate. In one swift motion, he positions himself above me and pushes his cock inside me, stretching me, filling me completely. I cry out at the suddenness of it, and my inner muscles clench around him.

Kat's hand slides between my legs, her palm against my clit and her fingers tight around the base of Quentin's cock. It might be the most erotic thing I've ever felt, and from the way Quentin groans, I think he might feel the same.

Quentin fucks me hard and fast while Kat manages to work both of us with her hand. He drives into me over and over again, and the bed creaks under the force of his movements.

I'm already at the precipice, ready to let go and give in to the overwhelming pleasure.

"Harder," I gasp. "Fuck me harder."

He obliges, pounding into me like his life depends on it, and the sound of skin against skin fills the room alongside our heavy breathing and moans of pleasure. That last bit of tension in my core pushes me over the edge, and I come hard.

I cry out just before Kat captures my lips with her own, and I whimper into her mouth as I convulse around Quentin's erection.

"You feel so good coming on my cock," Quentin says in stuttered breaths right before he pulses and spills into me.

We collapse into a tangle of limbs, with Kat's head on my shoulder and my hand in Quentin's. Eventually, the overwhelm subsides, and it's then that I find myself thinking, Nothing's ever felt so right.

CHAPTER 12

KAT

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The park is bathed in golden light, and the thicket of trees provides the perfect backdrop for a photo shoot. Somehow, we've managed to get even luckier, because the heavy summer humidity has lightened enough that I wasn't immediately sweating upon leaving the house.

The couple in front of me laughs as he spins her, and I snap a few pictures hoping to get a clear shot of their smiling faces while her dress whirls around her knees.

They're an adorable couple, in their early twenties and clearly in love. I'm shooting their engagement photos today, and they've been easy to work with, taking direction well and having fun while they're at it.

"Okay, get a little closer," I say, motioning with my hand. "Lean into each other. That's it, perfect."

The camera clicks as I snap a handful of shots then pull back to make sure they look alright before we move on to the next pose.

She grins and blushes as he whispers something in her ear, and it's obvious how much they care for each other. It's a look I've captured quite a few times since I started freelancing with engagements and weddings, but today, it stirs something deeper within me. Something bittersweet.

I can't help but think of Sarah and Quentin. The way they look at each other, the way they touch. There's a history there, a depth of love and understanding that only comes with time.

But I can't help but wonder, where does that leave me?

I snap a few more shots, adjusting the settings on my camera to capture the warmth of the sun filtering through the trees. The couple follows each of my directions, and they rarely stop smiling. I should be happy, lost in the moment, but my heart feels heavy as I continue to think about Sarah and Quentin.

Is there any chance a couple that's been together for twenty years would actually fundamentally change the entire dynamic of their relationship for me? The question has been weighing on me more and more after our last encounter. I've seen it before—couples inviting a third person in, only to realize it's not what they truly wanted.

I know I should be careful, but I can't lie to myself. I'm falling for Sarah all over again, and I'm not far behind with Quentin. But if this ends, they'll still have each other and I'll be the one left behind.

It's just so difficult to know where I stand with all of this. Even if their intentions are positive, nothing's ever certain.

"Alright, I think we've got everything we need," I say, lowering my camera and giving the couple a wide smile. Even despite my nagging worry, they were a joy to work with.

I let them know when they can expect the final photos back, and they thank me before walking away hand in hand.

After I've packed up my gear, I sit down on a nearby bench. The park is quieter now as the sun begins to set, casting long shadows across the grass. I pull out my phone and open my text thread with Sarah.

I need to know where I stand. I need to know if this is real, if there's a chance for something more. If this will remain solely physical for them, or if they feel the way I do. If they're falling for me like I'm falling for them.

Or if I'm just setting myself up for heartbreak.

I take a deep breath, typing out the words before I can talk myself out of it.

“Hey, can we talk?”

I hit send despite my racing heart. Then, I wait.

Minutes tick by, each one feeling like an eternity, and I start to second guess myself. Maybe I should have waited to say something. What if this whole conversation is happening too soon and I scare her—them—off?

But then, the screen lights up with a message from Sarah.

“Of course. Is everything okay?”

I blow out a slow breath.

“Yeah, everything is okay. I just would like to talk about some things. Can we meet up?”

“Sure. Just me, or Q too?”

Hmm, good question. It's not like it doesn't involve both of them, but I have a feeling this will be easier to do one-on-one. “Just you. Coffee, tomorrow at ten? Same place as last time?”

“Sounds great. I’ll see you then!” She adds a heart emoji to the end of the text, which I’ll admit does make me smile.

Now, I just have to survive the night and figure out what the hell I’m going to say to her tomorrow morning.

CHAPTER 13

SARAH

“Kat texted me today,” I tell Quentin.

He looks up from the bowl he’s currently mixing banana bread batter in. “Oh yeah? What did she say?”

“She wants to talk. In person.” Those three words— “Can we talk?”—have been circling in my mind all day. She hadn’t said about what, whether it’s good or bad, and it’s driving me crazy. I’ve replayed every moment of the past weekend, every touch, every kiss, every glance. I’ve never felt more alive, but what if it was all just a fleeting moment? What if reality is about to come crashing down?

Quentin doesn’t seem surprised, though. He simply wipes his hands on a dish towel and turns to face me in order to give me his full attention. “I had a feeling she might.”

Wait, what? “Why?” I ask.

He leans back against the counter, casually crossing his arms over his chest. “We had a conversation the other night, while you were still on your way home. Maybe it’s not my place to say it, but she has feelings for you. And I think she’s confused about where she stands, with you and with us.”

I take a deep breath, trying to process his words. Kat has feelings for me, and I have feelings for her. At least we’re on the same page, but that opens up the same question that’s been spinning in my head since this started—how far does this go?

“What did you say to her when she told you that?” I ask.

“I told her that this is new territory for us, that we're figuring it out as we go. But I also told her that I care about you and want you to be happy, whatever that might look like.”

I sigh. “I’m not sure what that looks like, though. This is all so complicated.”

“You have feelings for her, and she has feelings for you. Why does that have to be complicated?”

“Because I’m already married to you,” I say, as if he’s forgotten.

He opens his mouth to say something, pauses, then finally finds the right words. “Look,” he says, “I know this is sort of unprecedented, but I like Kat. I don’t know her nearly as well as you do yet, but if you’re interested in pursuing a real relationship with her, I’m fully on board. We can figure this out as we go, but it’s clearly not just a physical thing for any of us.”

Hope sparks inside me. Is that something we could really do? All three of us in a relationship together? It’s unconventional, sure, but I’d be lying if I said I hadn’t already secretly considered the idea. But what would our future look like?

Relationships are a lot harder to think about when you realize they can only end one of two ways: breaking up or being together forever. Both options are a little terrifying.

But if we were able to make it work, if Kat became a permanent part of our relationship...

“Okay,” I say. “I think I’d like that. I’ll talk to Kat about it tomorrow. As long as

we're all on the same page, I don't see why it couldn't work."

He flashes me an easy smile before turning back to the counter and getting back to work on his banana bread.

"As long as everyone is open and honest with each other, I'm happy," he says. "And honestly, it's been amazing watching you embrace this side of yourself."

Now it's my turn to smile. Despite the fact that Kat and I did have a somewhat intimate relationship in the past, I've suppressed my bisexuality for so many years, stupidly convincing myself that it was just a college phase. It's only now that I'm starting to come to terms with the fact that it's a part of who I am. Just because I haven't had a fully defined relationship with a woman doesn't mean this part of my identity is any less valid.

And coming to terms with that is one of the most liberating things I've ever felt.

The door to the coffee shop opens, and I look up, like I have every time it's opened since I got here. It's earlier than the time we had agreed on, but I couldn't stay in the house once I was ready for the day. All this nervous yet hopeful energy inside me is making me antsy.

Kat walks into the coffee shop, and her gaze lands on me. I'm sitting at the same table we'd sat at last time. It was only a couple weeks ago, but everything has changed in such a short amount of time. Our last meeting here had been surreal, and I'd been half worried she wouldn't show up. But that was the day we officially decided to explore this, and now it's blossomed into so much more.

If her message asking if we could talk was about these feelings, then everything will be okay. The chance that it isn't, that she's done with this—with me—is too painful to even consider.

I wave at Kat, who smiles and waves back before ordering her own coffee, waiting at the counter for it, then sliding into the seat across from me.

Regardless of what she says, I'm laying everything out on the table today. This is it. No more skirting around feelings. No more pretending this is just nostalgia or exploration.

"Hey," Kat says. "Thanks for meeting me on such short notice."

"Of course. I may as well take advantage of the rest of summer break while I have it," I laugh.

She smiles, but for a moment, neither of us says anything. The clink of mugs, the hiss of the steamer behind the counter, and the low hum of conversation around us all blur into the background. I'm suddenly hyper-aware of every movement she makes, every shift in her expression. Her brow is furrowed slightly as she stares into her coffee.

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“You okay?” I ask, because I need to break the silence.

“Yeah. Just a little nervous.”

I let out a breath. “Me too.”

I swirl the foam on top of my cappuccino with my spoon just to keep my hands busy. Finally, she speaks.

“I’ve thought about what I’m going to say all night, and I’m still not quite sure how to say it, but I’m going to try.”

I nod in encouragement, but my chest is tight with anxiety as I brace myself for whatever she’s about to say.

“I want you, and I care about you so much. I guess I just need to know where I stand in all of this, with you and Quentin. I need to know where the boundaries are, because wondering about it is driving me crazy. Is it just temporary for you two or—”

I cut her off. “Wait. Before you say any more, it might help if I say my piece.”

“Okay.”

“I talked to Quentin last night about all of this. I care about you too, and he’s starting to as well. If you’re open to it, we’re both on board with making this into something more.”

“What do you mean by ‘making this into something more?’”

“The three of us having a real relationship. I can’t pretend to have all the answers about how that works, and correct me if I’m wrong, but I don’t think any of us want to hold back anymore.”

Her eyes meet mine, and they’re so full of joy that my heart leaps in my chest. “Are you sure?” she asks, as if she doesn’t really believe this is happening.

“Absolutely.”

“But what about your kids? Your job? People will talk, and a lot of people will judge.”

It’s something I’ve already thought about, knowing it’ll be an awkward conversation with the kids once we introduce them. But dealing with nosey people in the community can be a bridge we cross if we get to it.

“We’ll handle it,” I tell Kat. “I’m not going to lose out on a relationship because I’m scared what people will think. Life’s too short for that.”

She grins. “So, does this mean I’m officially your girlfriend then?”

I chuckle, “I guess it does.”

CHAPTER 14

QUENTIN

This isn’t a mid-life crisis.

I know that's what some people would call it, what they'd assume if they knew what we were doing. A typical suburban man in his mid-forties, with a successful career and a decades-long marriage, suddenly opening his relationship? Yeah, I know exactly how people will gossip when they find out.

But that's not what this is. It's not some reckless decision in an attempt to fill a void or fix a problem. It's a genuine connection, and both Sarah and I have agreed upon our desire for a relationship with Kat regardless of the deviance from social norms.

This is too real and rare to ignore.

I glance across the table at Kat, who's laughing quietly at something Sarah just said. They're beside each other in the restaurant booth, and seeing the two of them side-by-side warms my heart.

This is our first date with the three of us. We'd been nervous about it—me, especially. How do we even do this? Do we act like it's just Sarah and I bringing along a friend? Do we hold hands in public? What happens if we run into a student's parent or a colleague?

We'd had that conversation before we left the house, sitting in the living room with Kat perched on the arm of the couch.

"What happens if someone sees us?" Sarah had asked nervously. "I mean, we work in schools. People talk. Maybe we should have a story straight."

I had worried long and hard about what all this might mean, but I had realized that when all is said and done, it doesn't matter. Non-monogamy is still frowned upon in a lot of communities, but ultimately, our happiness takes precedent over others' comfort.

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I had said as much when we discussed it, and Sarah had agreed.

Kat had nodded, but her expression was solemn when she said, “I don’t want you guys to wake up one day and realize this was all too complicated.”

I hadn’t had the words then to reassure her, though I tried, but I’d taken her hand and squeezed it, and Sarah had done the same, holding her between us. That was two hours ago. Now, sitting across from her at a dimly lit restaurant, watching her make Sarah laugh, I realize that nervousness was unwarranted.

Because this feels like the most natural thing in the world.

The waiter comes by to refill our drinks, glancing at the way Sarah and Kat are huddled together in the booth. He doesn’t comment, and I let myself settle back into my seat, taking a slow sip of my bourbon.

I’ve spent so much of my life worrying about how things should look, how relationships should work. It’s a byproduct of my job, I guess—working in administration means constantly thinking about public perception. But none of that can define this.

Kat is talking again, something about an art exhibit coming to the city soon. I watch her as she speaks, and another wave of affection flows through me. I had thought when all of this started that she was really here for Sarah—that she and Sarah were the ones with the feelings and attraction, and I was just adjacent to it. But I was wrong.

Because I'm falling for her too.

It snuck up on me. At first, Kat was the exciting unknown, this new person that brought out a different side of my wife that I hadn't seen before. But she and I had hit it off instantly, and with every moment we spent together, all of this grew into something more.

Sarah glances across the table at me with a smile still on her lips. "You're awfully quiet over there."

"Just thinking," I say. "I'm happy we're all here."

"Me too."

"Me three," Kat chimes in with a playful grin.

I reach across the table, taking each of their hands in mine and simply enjoying the moment. A second later, Sarah snorts out a laugh, and Kat and I give her a questioning look.

"Sorry," she laughs. "I just thought about the fact that if someone looked over here, they'd probably think we were praying over the bread basket."

We all burst into laughter just as the waiter returns to take our orders.

Dinner goes by quickly, with Kat regaling me with more college stories about her and Sarah, and once we've finished the last of our drinks, I look at my watch.

"Well, ladies, it's eight o' clock. Shall we head to the club?"

I'm met with two eager grins. "Hell yeah, let's go."

CHAPTER 15

KAT

We skip the bar at the club and head straight to the back rooms tonight. All three of us are eager to see where the night takes us, and as I follow Quentin and Sarah down the dark hallway, Sarah squeals with excitement when she finds a specific room open.

It's one of the few exhibition rooms that has a window to the outside hall, but this one is particularly interesting because it's the only one that has a mirror. It's one of those massive mirrors that leans against the wall, about a foot taller than me and a few feet wide, with ornate detail along the edges. I walk across the room to face it, thinking of all the possibilities this might hold, especially since the bed is directly in front of it. We could have some fun with this...

I turn, and we all stand there for a moment, glancing at each other and waiting to see who makes the first move.

I decide to take the lead. "Sarah?"

"Yes?"

"Come here." I beckon her over with my finger, and she happily complies. Once she's close, I gently grab her shoulders and spin her around so we're facing the mirror with her in front of me.

She catches my gaze in our reflections, and I slide my hands down her arms slowly, letting the tension build. I had already started teasing her at the restaurant, skimming my fingers on her bare thighs under the table. It won't take much to get either of us going.

“Look how beautiful you are,” I breathe as I lean down to kiss her neck.

Her breath hitches.

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Behind us, Quentin watches our reflections as I unzip Sarah's dress and let it fall to the floor. I take my time, grazing my fingertips over her skin before unhooking her bra and freeing her breasts.

"You ready to play?" I murmur.

She nods eagerly.

"Good. Kneel here."

Following my command, Sarah sinks to her knees facing the mirror and waits. Satisfied with her compliance, I make my way over to Quentin and undo the top few buttons of his shirt, exposing a bit of his chest and giving me a moment to talk with him.

To my surprise, he speaks first, softly enough for only me to hear. "I'm not into submitting myself, but I'd be happy to let you take the lead with Sarah tonight. I can follow your lead if that's what you want."

"That sounds perfect." He's correct in assuming that I'm in a more dominant headspace tonight, but I also don't want to step on his toes since I know that he's only a Dominant—not a switch like me—so this seems like a solid arrangement.

I plant a soft kiss on his lips and give him a flirty smile before making my way back over to Sarah, who's still kneeling, waiting for me. Quentin follows, two steps behind me, before taking a place at Sarah's side and standing over her, waiting for me to make the first move.

“Take off his pants,” I tell Sarah. “But stay on your knees.”

She reaches up to unlatch his belt buckle, then unbuttons his pants and pulls them down along with his boxers. His cock springs free, already hard and jutting out, and Sarah licks her lips.

At the same time, I slip out of my clothes, and seconds later, we’re all in front of the mirror in various states of undress. It’s incredibly erotic and simultaneously heartwarming seeing the three of us like this. We’re a weirdly perfect trio.

I lean down to speak to Sarah, threading my fingers through her hair as I do. “I want to watch you suck his cock.”

“Okay,” she whispers, her lips lifting in a small smile.

I lock eyes with Quentin, who steps in front of Sarah with his cock in hand.

“Show me how much you want this,” I tell her. “Let everyone watching out there see how well you take his cock down your throat.”

She doesn’t hesitate. She leans forward and closes her lips around him, bobbing her head to take him further and further each time. His head falls back and he groans, enjoying the feel of her mouth on him, and I know I can’t stand back and simply watch.

I need to touch her.

I drop to my knees behind her and circle my arms around her waist before slipping a finger into her panties and finding her swollen clit. She’s already so fucking wet, and as soon as I start moving my fingers, she moans with her lips around Quentin’s cock, which causes him to thrust even further into her mouth.

“Are you going to come for me this fast?” I taunt in her ear. She’s already grinding her hips against my fingers, and her moans have only grown louder.

She can’t answer, of course, because her mouth is occupied, but I know how much she loves that little bit of teasing.

I just can’t decide if I want to make her come now or draw it out.

Quentin makes my decision for me, because he pulls back, closes his eyes, and tries to steady his breathing. He’s close too.

I continue to rub Sarah’s clit from behind, just slowly and gently enough to keep her on the edge without pushing her over it.

“Hmm, what should we do next?” I tease. My voice is low and husky, and I’m just as turned on as the two of them.

Sarah’s mouth opens as if she’s about to say something, but she snaps it closed again, glancing at me in the mirror to see if I noticed.

I did.

“What are you thinking?” I ask, trying to draw it out of her despite her sudden shyness.

“I want to see you... with him.” Her gaze drops to the floor.

“Eyes on me,” I command. “Look at me when you tell me what you want.”

She lifts her head to meet my eyes in the mirror. Her skin is flushed, and I don’t know whether it’s from her arousal or her embarrassment. “I want to see you two together.”

She says it more confidently this time.

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“You want me to fuck your husband?” I smirk.

She nods.

“While you watch? While everyone out there watches?” I angle my head toward the window, where shadows move on the other side. I’m goading her now, because she seems to enjoy it just as much as I do, and I fucking love the adorable blush staining her cheeks.

“Yes.”

I glance up, and Quentin is staring down at us with a hooded gaze.

“You good with that?” I ask with a grin.

“Fuck yes I’m good with that.”

I look at Sarah and tell her she’s allowed to move wherever’s most comfortable just before Quentin and I are falling onto the bed in a flurry of movement.

He doesn’t go slow. Our movements are frenzied as we tear each others’ clothes off, and as soon as we’re naked, I straddle him and line his erection up at my entrance.

I sink down onto his cock and cry out as he stretches me, fills me. It’s been a long time since I’ve fucked a man, but I have to admit that the feeling of him inside me and his strong hands bracketing my hips is intoxicating.

Between the two of them, I could never want anything more.

Once I've adjusted to his size, I begin to move, riding him with desperation. I know I need to make myself come quickly, because he was hanging on by a thread after Sarah's zealous blowjob.

I rub my clit as I grind my hips with his cock inside me, and every nerve in my body seems to come alive.

It doesn't take long before I'm close to coming. I happen to glance over at Sarah when I catch her movement in my peripheral vision, and she's watching with rapt attention.

I flash her a wicked grin. "Care to join, or would you rather watch?"

She doesn't answer aloud, but she moves to join us on the bed.

"Ride his face while I ride his cock," I instruct.

She sucks in a breath but does as I say, carefully situating herself over Quentin's face and holding onto the metal bars of the bed frame to redistribute some of her weight.

It's then that I glance to the side and see our reflection in the mirror once again. "Look at how fucking perfect we are together."

Sarah and Quentin both turn their heads to follow my gaze, and we all simply stare for a minute. Then, I begin to move my hips again, and Quentin buries his face in Sarah's pussy. Sarah comes first, crying out and clutching the bed frame, and I'm not far behind her.

My orgasm hits me hard and without warning, and my inner muscles clench around

Quentin's throbbing cock as I fall apart, riding wave after wave of bliss. I'm overcome, not only with pleasure, but with a tender sort of intimacy at experiencing all this with the two of them.

Quentin comes a minute later, clearly having been trying to hold back for my sake, and groans with his release before we all collapse into a pile of tangled limbs and heavy breaths.

CHAPTER 16

SARAH

Everything is perfect. Who would have guessed that having a girlfriend with your husband would be so amazing? They're both in the kitchen while Kat teaches Quentin how to bake real bread from scratch—no banana bread this time around—and I'm changing out our bed sheets after a rather... spirited session between the three of us last night.

This is everything I had hoped it would be but dared not to dream about until recently. A few weeks have gone by, and each day is better than the last. I had never felt like something was missing between Quentin and me, but I also can't deny that Kat's presence in our lives has taken everything to another level. I don't think either of us had ever considered polyamory as an option, but it all feels so natural. Less like filling a gap and more like adding even more joy and love to an already happy marriage.

With Kat and Quentin, I'm able to be the truest, happiest version of myself. As I secure the clean sheet around one side of the mattress, I let my mind wander, considering what our future could look like. Kat's already spending more and more time here, and the idea of her moving in has me smiling to myself. No more texts to check if we're home before she comes over, no more planning our time

together—though, to be fair, we already spend more of our free time together than apart.

I'm fitting the bedsheet around the last corner of the bed when I hear yelling from the front of the house. At first, I think Kat and Quentin are messing around, but the smile falls from my face when it doesn't stop.

It's then that I realize that the yelling isn't coming from either one of them. And the voice is furious.

What the hell?

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I rush down the hallway only to find Ethan, our youngest son, standing in the middle of the living room facing the kitchen.

When he looks over at me, his face is red and he's seething with anger. Meanwhile, Quentin stands a few feet away with his palms raised in a placating gesture, and Kat is partly behind him, her eyes wide with fear.

"What happened?" I demand.

Ethan whirls around to face me fully, his eyes blazing. "They were kissing!" he shouts. "Dad's cheating on you in our own fucking house!"

My heart drops into my stomach, and for a moment, I'm frozen. But then, reality kicks in, and I know I have to defuse this situation before it spirals out of control.

"He's not," I say. "It's okay. Just calm down and let me explain."

Ethan's brow furrows as he looks between the three of us. His anger has morphed into suspicion.

"You better have a good explanation for this."

I take a deep breath and silently prepare myself for the conversation ahead. Ethan is still on edge, but I don't blame him. The hurt and confusion are written all over his face, and it breaks my heart to know that we're the cause of it.

"Let's talk in the other room," I say, and Ethan begrudgingly follows me down the

hall, though he casts a glance backward, as if he doesn't trust Quentin to be in the same room as Kat.

I hold back a sigh as I open the door to his brother's bedroom then close it behind him. It's the only room in the house that's neutral ground right now, so I figure it's the best place for us to have this talk.

He plops down on the bed and crosses his arms, clenching his jaw and raising an eyebrow at me in a silent demand. He's always been the outspoken, reactive one, though I can't blame him in this scenario.

I sit down next to him, though both of us face the door instead of each other.

"I understand why this was upsetting to walk into," I say, "and frankly, I would've been more worried if you hadn't reacted strongly." I huff out a laugh, but he doesn't react.

God, this is so awkward.

I take a deep breath. This isn't something I was prepared for today. And while I hadn't intended on hiding it from the kids, I hadn't exactly figured out how we'd tell them, either. Realistically, they're adults and are probably familiar with the idea of polyamory, but I'm guessing it's always awkward talking to your kid about a new relationship even in the most "normal" of circumstances.

"We were waiting to talk to you boys about this until you came home for the holidays. If I would've known you were coming, this wouldn't have happened this way."

He shrugs and mumbles, "Thought I'd come surprise you guys."

“And that makes me so happy,” I say. “I’m so glad you’re here.”

“Mhm.”

Alright, here goes nothing. “So... Kat is sort of a part of our relationship now.”

“Dad’s dating another woman and you’re just okay with it?” His tone is incredulous.

I’d laugh if the situation weren’t so tense. “Actually, I sort of dated Kat a long time ago, back when I was in college before I knew your dad.”

Ethan’s jaw drops as he looks up at me. “What?”

I chuckle. “Yeah. So, anyway, we ran into her one night, and one thing led to another, and now we’re both dating her.”

He’s silent for a moment, still watching me with incredulity, then shakes his head and mutters, “This is fuckin’ weird.”

This time, I do laugh. “Watch your language,” I warn, but it’s halfhearted at best.

He cracks a small smile, and the anxiety in my chest dissipates.

“I totally understand that this is weird for you. If you’re not comfortable having her around right now, that’s fair. But I do also want you to know that this is pretty serious between the three of us.”

I can see the wheels in his head turning. “I just don’t get it, but I guess if it works for you guys...” He shrugs.

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“That’s fair. Love comes in so many different forms, though, and I’m starting to realize that it doesn’t always have to fit into neat little boxes society puts us into. There’s not always one right way to do things.”

“Ugh, okay, I get it. Don’t get all sappy on me,” he says, but he leans to the side and bumps me with his shoulder in a show of reconciliation.

When we head back out to the living room area, Quentin is sitting on the couch alone. His head snaps up as we come into view, his eyes wide with worry.

“I’m getting a snack. Sorry for yelling or whatever,” Ethan says over his shoulder, already on his way to the kitchen.

Quentin stares at me and asks in a hushed tone, “So I take it that went alright?”

“As well as it could, I think. Where’s Kat?”

“She left. Said she’d give us some family time for the rest of the weekend but asked us to update her about how things went with Ethan.”

“Gotcha. Well, he said, quote, ‘This is fucking weird’ once I explained, but I don’t think he’s too upset by it or anything.”

“Good,” Quentin says, right as Ethan makes his way back into the living room with an ice cream bar in hand.

I send Kat a quick text to let her know everything is alright, and I can practically feel

her relief from over the phone. We make plans for her to come over again mid-week for dinner. We can introduce them in time, but for now, we'll settle into this new normal and see where things take us.

The rest of the day passes with Ethan telling us stories about his classes and his new friends, and we go out to dinner before spending the night playing games together.

Life has changed rapidly over the last few months, but spending time with Ethan brings back a sense of comfort and familiarity.

It might be difficult to know where the next few months—or years—may take us, but I know in my heart that I'll have the people I love most at my side no matter what, in all the seasons of life.

And honestly, I couldn't ask for anything more.

EPILOGUE

QUENTIN

The smell of roasted turkey and freshly baked pies permeates the house, and my stomach rumbles as I survey the steaming dishes sitting on the countertop. It's Thanksgiving, and our home is alive with the sound of laughter and conversation.

I stand at the kitchen counter, setting out the last of the plates, when I hear low laughter coming from behind me. I turn just in time to see Kat lean in and press a soft kiss to Sarah's lips. Sarah's eyes flutter closed, her hand reaching up to cup Kat's cheek, and the sight of them together fills me with a profound sense of contentment and love.

“Ugh, it was weird enough watching you two kiss, and now there's another one of

you?” Ethan's voice cuts through the moment, and Sarah laughs, pulling away from Kat with a grin.

“Aren’t you supposed to be setting the table?” Sarah asks.

Ethan rolls his eyes, but the half-smile he’s trying to hide tells me he's not really bothered. It's been a journey getting to this point. When Ethan first walked in on us that day, I thought our world might come crashing down. But Sarah had handled it with calmness and honesty, and Ethan listened and tried to understand.

And now, months later, here we are. Our family, a little different than last year, but whole and happy. It's more than I ever could have hoped for.

Xander wanders into the kitchen, following the sound of laughter. “What's going on in here?” he asks, looking between the four of us.

Sarah smiles, wrapping an arm around Kat's waist. “Just Ethan getting grossed out by affection. Nothing new,” she teases.

“Aaaand, I’m out,” Xander says, turning on a heel and leaving the same way he came.

We laugh again as Ethan follows close behind his brother.

Our family dynamic has always been one where we tease each other in harmless ways, and once we knew the boys were comfortable with Kat (and that she was comfortable with them), she slowly joined in on the fun.

We make our way into the dining room with hands full of food before laying out the array of dishes and taking our seats around the table. Immediately, the boys dig in, and the rest of us do too. It’s been a long day of cooking, and I’m more than ready to

enjoy this meal with the people I love most in this world.

The meal is filled with laughter as we share stories. Kat fits into our family seamlessly, and even though it's a little unconventional, it's perfect for us. She has started the process of moving in, a little bit at a time, and this home is slowly becoming hers as well.

After we finish our meal and deal with the chaos of cleaning up, Kat grabs her camera from its bag in the living room. "Alright, everyone, time for a family photo," she announces.

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Ethan and Xander groan good-naturedly, but they stand up and take their places beside Sarah and me against the wall. Kat snaps a few photos, capturing our laughter and smiles.

“Put the camera on a tripod and get in the picture,” Sarah insists.

Kat hesitates for a moment. “Are you sure? I wouldn’t want to—“

“Come on,” Xander encourages. “The sooner you do it, the sooner we can watch the football game.”

Kat laughs and concedes, setting up the camera and positioning it before putting it on a timer and hurriedly joining the group.

We huddle together, our arms wrapped around each other with wide smiles. The camera clicks a few seconds later, capturing the moment—a picture-perfect snapshot of our family.

As the boys dart away to turn on the football game, I lean in closer to Sarah and Kat, keeping my voice low. “Maybe we can put that camera to good use later... create some memories just for the three of us.” I waggle my eyebrows suggestively.

“I like the way you think,” Sarah laughs.

Kat grins. “Me too. I can’t believe I haven’t already thought of that.”

We finish cleaning up dinner before joining the boys in the living room, where Ethan

is shouting excitedly at the TV just as his team scores a touchdown. Sarah and Kat chuckle at his excitability while Ethan pulls out a deck of cards to start a game for those of us less enthused by football.

It's a genuinely perfect day.

I never could have imagined this, never would have thought that our love could grow and evolve in such a beautiful, unexpected way.

But here we are, and it's perfect. It's real. It's ours.

And I wouldn't have it any other way.

The End