



# Want Me

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**Category:** Erotic, Romance, Lesbian Romance

**Description:** Falling for your boss is always a bad idea, especially when you know she'll never feel the same.

Daphne Calloway was a powerhouse. Smart, capable, ambitious, and gorgeous enough to steal the heart of anyone she met. Including mine.

As her secretary, my job was to support her no matter what. So, I scheduled her meetings, organized her notes, answered all her emails, and helped her relieve her stress by any means necessary. Sometimes that meant booking a massage, and sometimes it meant getting down on my knees.

Despite our occasional physical relationship, I knew that she didn't return my feelings. One, she was straight, and two, she wasn't the type to mix business with pleasure. At least, not like that. I thought I had accepted my one-sided feelings until a rival makes me question what I'm willing to lose.

I wasn't going to give up, even if it was impossible. I would do whatever I could to make her want me just as much as I wanted her.

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# Page 1

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## Chapter 1

“Marina if you don’t stop fidgeting so help me God.”

Oops. “Sorry, Rich.”

My leg had been bouncing up and down for who knows how long, but I hadn’t noticed until he said something. It had probably started when Donovan went into Daphne’s office 37 minutes ago. Not that I was counting.

I pinched the bridge of my nose and tried to focus on the work in front of me. We were leaving in a few days for one of the biggest conferences of the year and Daphne was the headliner. It was a big deal.

This was going to be the first time Daphne acted as the lead representative for The Calloway Group. Everyone knew that she was going to take over the company someday - and that she was the best choice - but this weekend would be her first real test. I knew she was going to be amazing, but there was a lot of prep work.

In a perfect world, it would have just been me and Daphne going to the conference. As it turned out, it would be me, Daphne, and Donovan. Logically, I knew that he was on track to become an executive one day - and that he was a genuinely good worker. I also knew that he had a thing for Daphne and a chromosome I wasn’t sure I could compete with.

“Ready for our trip?”

My jaw clenched at the sound of his voice, but I was a professional, so I did my best to hide my annoyance. There was nowhere to hide in our office, with only Richard and I standing guard before Daphne and her brother Oliver's respective doors, so I had no choice but to acknowledge him. "Donovan." I spun around in my chair to face the blonde-haired blue-eyed devil leaving Daphne's office. "I'm always ready."

The corner of his lip twitched up. "I'm sure you are." I really couldn't stand him. "I look forward to seeing you in action." He held my gaze a fraction too long before dropping it. "Daphne asked that I send you in, she wanted your opinion on the presentation. Richard, always good to see you," he added, nodding to the other secretary.

As soon as he was gone Rich let out a whistle. "You think he flirts with everyone on purpose, or does it unconsciously?"

I shook my head. "No idea. And I'm not sure which is worse."

Richard just shrugged and went back to his work as I pushed back my chair. I gave a quick knock before opening Daphne's door.

"Come in."

Daphne had her face buried in printouts and reports, a highlighter in one hand and a pen in the other. As silly as it was, my heart pulsed as I looked at her. She was beautiful, as always, and I loved the way her brow crinkled when she focused.

When I reached her desk she leaned back. "Will you look at this for me?"

"Of course." I went behind her to look over her shoulder. The smell of her perfume hit me at once, and I leaned in toward the warm smell of amber.

She clicked around on her computer to pull up the presentation. She would be giving the Yesterday and Tomorrow talk they did every year at the conference. The organizers picked a company to sum up the notable events and advancements of the past year and to predict trends for the year to come. It was a massive undertaking and had the potential to make or break entire businesses.

“Do you think this blue is too blue?”

I managed to catch myself before I laughed. I should have known it was something like this.

Daphne was brilliant, genuinely brilliant, and she had a long list of accomplishments under her belt. Department heads from around the company would come to her for advice and approval, and our partners always wanted to work with her directly. Everyone saw her as a cool, confident, capable professional who had an innate talent for advertising and marketing. I saw her as the woman who pulled dozens of all-nighters and worked without breaks to ensure everything was perfect.

“I think it looks great,” I answered honestly. “It’s clear and bright enough to give an energized feeling, but not so much that it overshadows the content.”

She nodded absently, but I knew she was processing what I had said. “Alright. And the font is good?”

“Yep. I think changing anything would mess up the balance. It’s good as it is.”

Her shoulders relaxed, just a touch, and a pang went through my chest. She trusted my opinion, even though I was only her secretary. I wanted to read more into that, but I knew better.

“How are you feeling about the trip?”

She tensed again, instantly, and I had my answer. “I won’t let anyone down.” The words were robotic, like they had been repeating inside her mind.

I sighed. “I know you won’t, but that’s not what I meant.” I brought my hands to rest on her shoulders, feeling her jump at my touch. “What are you feeling?”

It took her a moment, but she began to relax. I started to massage her shoulders and neck, her muscles tight beneath my fingers.

“The last time we gave this talk was when my dad did it fifteen years ago.”

## Page 2

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“Right.”

“Within a month our stock prices went up 231%.”

“They did.”

“Three years ago Lauflin & Mars gave the talk, and it was awful. They went bankrupt within six months.”

“Maybe they were just bad at business.”

Daphne put her head in her hands, forcing me to adjust my angle. “I can’t screw this up, Marina. It has to be perfect.”

She was completely exhausted. “When’s the last time you slept through the night?” She just shook her head.

Something warm bloomed in my stomach and my body started to move on its own. I knew it was a bad idea, just like it had been the last six times, but I couldn’t stop myself as I gently pulled her chair away from her desk.

“Marina?” Daphne’s face showed her confusion, but her eyes widened as I settled on my knees. The floor dug into my skin, but my heart was beating so fast I didn’t notice.

“You really need to take better care of yourself, Daphne.” I kept my voice low and sweet. “Let me help you relax.”

Nothing in this world could compare to the taste of Daphne's pussy. She was musky and salty and alive, and just the smallest taste was enough to make me ravenous.

My fingers dug into the soft flesh of her thighs as I feasted. I had set in on her suddenly, not giving her a chance to become self-conscious. Her panties had disappeared in seconds, and once I had access I hadn't been able to stop myself.

She whimpered as my tongue dipped deeper inside her. I pulled back, just enough to rest my head on her thigh and look up at her. Her face was already flushed and her eyes were starting to turn glassy. I ran my hands over the fabric of her skirt in appreciation. "You did well wearing a skirt today," I praised. "You made it so easy for me to devour you."

A shudder ripped through her body and I knew that I had flipped her switch. She would never say it out loud, but Daphne loved to be praised. It turned her on, and I was more than happy to play along.

"That wasn't why," she stammered. "I wasn't thinking of that."

I pressed a kiss into the soft skin of her thigh. I loved the side of her that came out when she felt pleasure. Normally she kept everything inside, compartmentalizing so that she did everything perfectly. She hid her fears and anxieties from the world, but there was nowhere to hide with my mouth on her pussy.

She groaned as I turned my attention to her clit, circling it with the tip of my tongue. I used only the lightest pressure as I teased her, letting the pleasure build within her. "You've worked so hard," I purred. "You deserve a break."

Tentatively she stretched out one hand to weave through my hair. Her touch sent waves of heat right to my core. I flattened my tongue, dragging it up and down her clit until her breath started to hitch. "Marina," she pleaded.

I dipped my tongue back into her pussy and found her dripping. I wet two fingers in my mouth before pushing them deep inside her. She gasped, biting down on her wrist to keep from making noise.

“You’re so ready for me.” Her eyes had begun to water as they watched me pump my fingers into her cunt. “So wet,” I mused, her dampness filling the air with sound. “Do you like it when I fuck you like this?”

I had known that my feelings for Daphne were one-sided since they began. She wasn’t even gay. This had all begun as an excuse to help her relax, and I had taken advantage of her weakness to pleasure. There were so many questions I wanted to ask her, but I was afraid of her answers. So, I took the easy way out. I focused on the pleasure I could give her, and never took the extra step.

I curled my fingers inside her, earning another gasp. “Tell me.”

“I do,” she cried. “I like it.”

“Good girl.” I brought my fingers in and out of her, curling them on every inward thrust. My tongue found her clit once more and I alternated pressure as I rubbed against it.

“I’m close,” she whined, her fingers tightening on my hair.

Just a little more...and she came. Her muscles gripped my fingers as she moaned deep within her chest. I didn’t let off until the spasming stopped, but then I backed away.

“Better?” I asked.

She nodded, unable to form the words. I stood up, ignoring the heat between my legs.



As soon as I left her office I would go and take care of myself in the bathroom, or just wait for it to die down. That was how this relationship worked.

Daphne didn't stop me as I left, but I knew she was watching me. I paused with my hand on the doorknob, but didn't look back. "Let me know if you need anything else," I said, softly, then closed the door behind me.

## Chapter 2

## Page 3

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The drive from Manhattan to JFK was a bitch, but that's what best friends were for.

My fare was a venti vanilla latte and two slices of pumpkin loaf from Starbucks, which I paid happily. Ben and I kept up an easy conversation as we crawled through traffic. He was easy to talk to and I really did love the guy. A few years ago I had pounced on him after a few too many drinks at a team-building party and asked if he was gay. I had been right, but it wasn't my finest moment.

Rather than write me off he had tucked me into bed and listened while I rambled about falling for Daphne. Since then I had been shamelessly taking advantage of his driving prowess, and I had no intention of stopping.

We were finally close to the airport, but traffic was dragging. It was just past noon and our flight to LAX was scheduled to leave at 3:30, but I was willing to bet Daphne was already there. She wasn't one to cut it close.

"If you marry Oliver and I marry Daphne, whose house do you think we'll do Christmas at?"

Our conversation had turned, as it often did, to the Calloway siblings. Ben and Oliver had been dating for somewhere close to half a year, though they had known each other since they were kids. He was Oliver's driver, so technically we all worked together. It had made things tricky for them at first, but it had ended up working out.

The two of them had finally fessed up to their feelings and started dating for real, and since then things had been going smoothly. For them, at least.

“We’d probably do it at their mansion.” He was humoring me, but I appreciated it. Honestly, Ben and Oliver getting married felt very real and very likely. Me and Daphne...not so much.

I sighed. “If Daphne ends up with Donovan you have to be sure he gets the worst presents.”

“Obviously.”

This time I managed a laugh. He sounded so serious. Ben understood the gravity of his best friend duties.

After a health a pretty bad health scare, William - Oliver and Daphne’s dad - had gotten it into his head that his kids needed to settle down. William had found his soul mate in their mom, Violet, and hadn’t stopped loving her even after she died. He wanted them to have that same kind of love. Ben and Oliver had found that, but Daphne was still up in the air.

I stretched out my arms as we finally pulled up to the terminal. “Thanks for the ride.”

“Anytime. Let me know when you guys arrive.”

I gave him a mock salute. “Yes, sir.” I leaned over and gave him a quick hug. I hopped out and grabbed my bag from the backseat. “Love you,” I said before I closed the door.

“Love you, too,” he called.

After a final wave, I turned to go inside and Ben pulled out to head back home. I had already checked in on the app and had TSA pre-check courtesy of the company. I was ready to get this conference started.

“I’m going to throw myself in front of the next plane.”

My head was pounding, I had to pee, and my stomach was raging from the untold number of free pretzel packets I had eaten. We were on hour six of weather delays. Not only was there a massive storm system crossing through the middle of the country, but there had been some sort of technical error with flight control at LAX.

We had found three seats together originally, but after being called to different gates a million times we’d only been able to snag two. By that point every gate was absolutely packed, so I had just elected to sit on the floor and lean against Daphne’s legs, though I wasn’t exactly complaining.

I shifted, pressing my cheek into her knees. No skirt today, just some light linen pants: comfortable and practical. Boo.

Donovan had been dozing off and on but had finally settled on watching a movie on his phone. He had been surprisingly useful during this whole ordeal. We had sent him off to investigate before everything was officially announced, and he had done a sweep of the executive lounge. It ended up being filled to the brim and not worth the walk over, but I still appreciated the recon.

My legs were starting to cramp from sitting cross-legged for so long. I wobbled to my feet. “I’m going to go to the bathroom. If I’m not back in an hour I’m probably dead.”

“I’ll come too.” Daphne rose from her chair, stretching long and hard.

I set my bag down in her seat and motioned to Donovan that we were leaving. Getting through the terminal was like navigating a maze - if the maze was filled with crying babies and uncontrollable toddlers.

We finally made it to the closest bathroom and joined the outrageously long line.

“How are you feeling?” I asked.

Daphne tried to smile, but it came out more like a grimace. “I’m fine,” she lied.

I chewed at my lip. As much as I wanted to fix this for her, this time there was nothing I could do. “We’ll get there, okay? Your presentation isn’t even until Saturday, so we still have all of tomorrow for a buffer.”

She managed a weak chuckle. “You know good and well that I have a dozen meetings tomorrow.”

Yeah. She did. “Everyone will understand if it comes to that, but we still have time.”

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Daphne only nodded, but I could feel her tension. I took a risk and reached out my hand, grabbing hers and squeezing it.

She jumped at my touch but didn't pull away. "It's going to be okay, I mean it." I held her gaze. "We're going to make it in time."

Her worries slipped, just for a moment, and she offered me the first real smile I had seen from her all day. "Okay," was all she said, but she squeezed my hand, and I knew I would do whatever I could to keep that smile on her face.

It was 1 in the morning by the time we got to our hotel, but we made it.

We were all dead on our feet, but I managed to drag myself to the desk and check us in. I had called the hotel before we finally got on the plane and let them know we would be late, and it turned out we weren't the only ones impacted by the storms. They assured me that everything was fine and our rooms would be waiting for us.

I was ready to get my key, head to my room, and take a much-needed shower before completely passing out.

But that would have been too easy.

"Hey, Daph?" I called, trying to keep my voice light as exhaustion and frustration pulled at my skin. The woman behind the desk had a panicked expression as she clicked through her computer, searching for a way to fix the mistake. "There's an issue with our rooms."

## Chapter 3

I had never considered myself particularly religious, but when I woke up with Daphne in my arms I thought I might have been blessed. She was so lovely. Her blonde tresses had become messy in the night and scattered like ink blots over the hotel pillow. She faced me in her sleep, curled into me with my arm around her. I thought then that if I could wake to that sight every morning I would never know a bad day, but that wish was beyond me.

As much as I wanted to stay in that moment forever, my bladder had other plans. I pulled away as gently as I could, then raced to the bathroom.

The original booking had been for three Queen rooms - one for each of us. I knew that they had been made and confirmed because I had been the one to do it (I even had the confirmation email). Somehow there had been an issue with the hotel booking system and we had ended up with two Queen rooms.

It had been frustrating in the moment, especially after the hours and hours of delays, but after some rest I was able to let it go. The hotel was going to fix it today and that would be that. Besides, it wasn't like we would be spending much time in our rooms. It was the first official day of the conference and all of our schedules were packed.

By the time I brushed my teeth and washed my face, Daphne was awake, and she had already switched to business mode. She glanced up from her phone as I walked in. "Morning."

"Morning. Did you sleep well?"

She shrugged. "Well enough."

We had both beaten our alarms so we had plenty of time to get ready - which was just

as well. I had to make sure everything was ready for her presentation tomorrow morning and meet with several business contacts. We wouldn't have a free moment until the party after dinner tonight.

I changed while Daphne got ready in the bathroom. I had opted for a pantsuit since I would be running around all day. Once we were ready we headed down to grab some breakfast before we got pulled into the tide.

My business smile went on as soon as we stepped into the dining room, and we were off.

The hotel was attached to the convention center, so the dining room was already crawling with other representatives. Daphne got stuck talking with an executive while I was cornered by one of the conference organizers.

The rest of the day passed in a blur. I double and triple-checked that everything was ready for her presentation. Daphne's would be the first event tomorrow, right after breakfast, and it was expected that almost everyone would be in attendance. An IT guy and I ran through the presentation a few times and checked the lights. Satisfied that everything was set, I dove into the conference.

I didn't see Daphne or Donovan the entire day. We all had our own schedules and contacts to meet, and by dinner time I was beat.

I grabbed a sandwich and went up to hide in the room until it was time for the party. Off went my heels as I collapsed onto the bed and demolished my dinner. There was still about an hour until the party, so I set an alarm for half an hour and closed my eyes.

My rest was broken by the sound of Daphne moving around. I rubbed at my eyes the best I could without messing up my mascara.



“Sorry,” Daphne whispered. “I didn’t mean to wake you.”

I waved her away. “It’s fine, I needed to get up soon anyway.” It took me a second to fully come to, but once I did I felt my stomach clench.

Daphne was in the middle of getting dressed. Right in front of me.

She didn’t seem to care, or even notice, that she was only wearing her underwear. I gulped, looking away as my face flushed.

“Marina? Are you okay?”

I sucked in a breath. No, you’re so goddamn hot I don’t know what to do. “Yeah, just a little tired.” I pushed myself up from the bed. I needed to change into my own cocktail dress and touch up my makeup. I was going to look hot as fuck in front of all those advertising executives.

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“Could you do my zipper?”

Lord save me. “Sure.” Her dress was a skin-tight maroon that came just beneath her mid-thigh. I wanted to slip my hand beneath the fabric and feel the softness of her skin, but, with an unimaginable strength of will, I managed to zip her up.

I ordered my feet to carry me to the bathroom and got ready. My outfit of choice was a black mini-dress trimmed with lace. It was short enough to be dangerous while still holding on to some scrap of class.

Daphne was waiting for me when I came out, and I swear it took every ounce of composure in my body not to dive face-first into her cleavage.

“Donovan will meet us down there,” she said, checking something on her phone. She walked passed me, then paused. My heart stopped as she leaned in towards my neck. “You smell really good.”

“Thanks,” I squeaked. “Do you want some perfume?”

She lingered a moment longer, far too close to me, then pulled away. “Maybe tomorrow. You ready?”

This woman had been put on earth to torment me.

We made our way down to the room where the party was being held. It was already filled with people mingling and sipping on complimentary cocktails. There was a DJ set up against one wall and a long line of buffet tables against another.

“Let’s get a drink,” Daphne suggested, her lips close to my ear. I followed her without question to the bar where we each got a lemon drop martini.

The drink was good - and strong. The liquor burned my throat, but not so much it was unpleasant.

It only took a minute before Daphne saw someone she wanted to talk to and was swallowed up in the crowd. I was happy to lean against an empty stretch of the bar and sip my drink alone. I liked to people-watch anyway, and there were plenty of people at the party.

After having attended more than a few of these conferences I had learned that I occupied a useful space. I wasn’t at Daphne’s level where I needed to constantly be engaging, but I wasn’t one of the assistants scrambling back and forth. I knew who I needed to know, and I knew what I needed to get done. The rest was easy.

Honestly, I was good at my job. I made sure things flowed well and that everything - and everyone - was where it was supposed to be. With that already accomplished, I had nothing to do at the party other than relax.

“See anyone you like?”

I jumped at Donovan’s voice. The sound of his arrival had been covered by the DJ, but he settled against the bar beside me. “I’m not sure what you mean.”

His lip quirked up. “You and I both know how these things go. At least half the beds in this hotel are going to be empty tonight once people make their...connections.”

Well, he wasn’t wrong. I had never met anyone hornier than a business rep at a conference. “Speaking from experience?”

He shrugged. “Maybe. I’ve seen a few people I wouldn’t mind getting to know better, but don’t worry. I’m on my best behavior.”

“Oh?” I wanted to get out of this conversation. Truthfully, Donovan didn’t seem to be a bad guy, and he was without question an impressive worker, but I had no intention of getting close to my rival - whether he knew it or not.

He sipped at his drink, though I wasn’t sure what it was. “You know, I’ve always felt you and I could be friends,” he said, drifting away from the subject.

“And why’s that?”

He took another sip, swirling the clear liquid around in his glass before answering. “We have a lot in common. We’re both attractive, good at our jobs, and we’re after the same person.”

I froze. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.” There was no way he could have known about my feelings. Was I really that obvious?

He chuckled, and I had to admit he was attractive. I had never had an interest in men, but I’m sure he hit all the marks for those that did. Like Daphne.

“I like strong, powerful women, and I haven’t kept that a secret.” My mouth took on a hard line. “I’ve never minded a competition either, and I have no intention of dropping out. What about you?”

He threw me off balance. I struggled to keep a calm expression. It was one thing to act in the shadows, but I had never expected him to be so upfront. “If it’s a competition, you should know I never lose.” I hoped the words sounded more confident than I felt.

His mouth widened into a grin. The music blared around us as he leaned closer, his hand reaching out to tuck a strand of dark hair behind my ear. “I look forward to it.”

His hand lingered against my skin. I had gotten sucked into his vortex, freed only as a voice cut through the noise.

“What are you two up to?”

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Donovan's hand returned to his side as he turned to Daphne. I wasn't sure what expression I wore, but I knew my skin felt hot. Donovan held one finger up to his lips. "It's a secret," he answered coyly.

Irritation wormed its way through my chest. I didn't want her to get the wrong idea. "It's nothing," I said, hoping I sounded normal.

Daphne's face had a light flush, either from the warmth of all the bodies or the alcohol. "I came to get another drink," she explained, looking at Donovan. "But there's someone I want to introduce you to."

He pushed away from the bar immediately. "We'll talk again later." He winked at me before joining Daphne.

The two of them moved on and I was left alone to reflect. Out of everything, there was one thing that worried me. If Donovan had found out about my feelings for Daphne, then how long did I have before she figured it out, too?

"Come on, Daph, you need to take off your makeup."

I had lost track of Daphne during the party, but when I finally found her again she was three sheets to the wind. It had been a struggle just to get her back to our room, but she had no interest in going to sleep.

She flopped against the bed and kicked off her heels, sighing in exaggerated relief. "Feels so good," she groaned. Before I could try to wrangle her again she crawled up to her knees and fumbled for her zipper. When she couldn't reach it she groaned

again. “Marina help, it’s too tight.”

“This is why you should watch how much you drink,” I chided, though I’m sure she wasn’t listening. I undid her zipper and she shimmied out of the dress, leaving me to do my best to ignore her lingerie-clad body.

Freed from her constraints she laid down on the bed. I started to head to the bathroom to grab some makeup wipes when she called for me. “Marina, come here.”

“What is it? Do you feel sick?”

She waved at me to come closer. Once I sat beside her she pulled herself up and leaned against me, resting her chin against my shoulder. For a moment we just sat there, staring at each other, until she finally spoke.

“Kiss me.”

## Chapter 4

This was my second time waking up beside Daphne, but I couldn’t enjoy it as much as yesterday. I was confused, and a little sad.

Daphne had tried to kiss me, and I had rejected her.

As much as I wanted it to mean something, I knew she had been drunk. I knew that. No matter how badly I wanted her, how badly I wanted her to want me, I couldn’t take advantage of her while she was drunk. But, God, the way she looked at me when I pulled away had been like a stab to the heart.

Despite it all, she was still snuggled up beside me in her sleep. I had managed to take off most of her makeup before she passed out, but she was still only wearing her

underwear.

It was silly, almost. I knew how she tasted and the sounds she made, but looking at her undressed felt like a violation. Our relationship was strange, but it was all I had.

I sighed and got out of bed. A shower would clear my head, and I needed to be at the top of my game for the rest of the day.

When I came out of the bathroom, I found Daphne awake and sipping on a bottle of water. A flicker of anxiety taunted me, but she greeted me with a yawn and a “Morning,” like it was any other day.

I needed to pull myself together. She probably didn’t even remember that she tried to kiss me, let alone that I had pulled away. If she did she would probably be mortified, anyway.

I shut my eyes tight and sucked in a slow breath. Once my heart slowed down I got moving.

Twenty minutes later and I was dressed and ready to go, but Daphne was still in the bathroom. We still had some time until we needed to leave, but I’d rather be earlier than late for the presentation.

I gave it another few minutes then knocked on the door. “Hey, Daph? Do you need anything?” It was quiet for a moment, then the door opened. “Oh.”

She was a mess.

This was not the Daphne I had watched command rooms and dominate board meetings. This Daphne had shaky eyeliner and blotchy foundation, with her long hair in some shoddy half-up half-down bun. I sighed. “Okay, come with me.”



She let me lead her to the couch without protest and sat. I jumped back in the bathroom to grab as much as I could carry then dumped the products next to her on the couch. She let out a gasp as I climbed onto her lap to get the best angle, but she didn't move away.

I took off her makeup as gently as I could, then started the process from the beginning. I was confident in my skills - I had done both of my sister's makeup more times than I could count - but doing it on the girl I liked presented a challenge of its own.

Neither of us spoke, but we didn't need to. She was beautiful with or without makeup, but I wanted her to feel confident under the harsh stage light. A thin layer of foundation, a few dabs of concealer, and a swipe of a peachy blush later and the base was done.

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The eyes would be trickier. “What are you going for?”

She gave a weak shrug. “You decide.”

I cupped her chin with my hand and tilted her face up, doing my best not to get caught up in our closeness. Her gaze faltered a bit, but she followed my instructions. I moved with careful precision as I painted on a thick black line above her lashes. I opted just to emphasize her natural features and hope she didn’t look washed out beneath the lights.

“Look down.” A few swipes of mascara later and she was almost ready. “Go like this,” I said, parting my lips. She copied me and I dabbed a red across her lips. I gave it a few pats with my finger to blend, and then I was done.

I had a hint of regret as I got up from her lap, but I pushed it down. We managed to wrestle her hair into light waves that seemed almost intentional, and then she was ready. She had already gotten dressed before we started and looked every bit like an executive in her burnt orange pantsuit.

“Ready?” I asked, straightening her jacket.

She smiled at me, and I could see that spark of confidence back in her eye. “Of course.”

Daphne was perfect. There was no other way to describe it.

I sat with Donovan in one of the front rows as she gave her presentation. From the

moment she walked on stage she had the audience's attention, and everyone listened as she spoke. She talked for about half an hour then fielded questions. By the end, she had made people laugh and listen, and if she had had another hour I bet she could have made them cry.

We broke for a brief reception before the rest of the events started, and Donovan and I waiting for her by the door.

"She really is good," Donovan mused.

I couldn't help but smile. "She's a powerhouse."

When she finally came out she was beaming. "How'd I do?"

"Amazing. As always."

There was no party that night, and we were all so tired from everything that Daphne and I headed up to our room after dinner.

A thought crept into my head as Daphne dug through her suitcase. "The front desk said they would get us another room, but they never got back to me. Let me call them."

"It's fine," she said as soon as the words were out of my mouth. "We only have one more night anyway."

"Yeah, but they should still refund us at least."

"Don't worry about it," she insisted. She hesitated for another second, then added, "They had another room for us yesterday, but I didn't see a point in moving since we were already settled. Unless you'd rather get a new room for tonight."

“No, I don’t mind.” I couldn’t tell her that I was happy about it, just like I couldn’t let myself hope she had done it intentionally. But deep down inside, there was a glimmer of hope, foolish as it was.

I shook my head, trying to clear my thoughts. We had one more night sharing a bed, but I wasn’t going to make a move. I didn’t have a good excuse, anyway. Every time we had been intimate had been when Daphne was stressed and I could pass it off as ‘helping her relax.’

God, we had never even kissed.

That had been my hard line. I knew that if I kissed her, really kissed her, I wouldn’t have been able to survive. So, I worked around it. Since we had never gone much farther than me eating her out it hadn’t been a problem. That was one reason I had been so shocked the night before. She had told me to kiss her, and it had been hard to refuse.

“Marina?” Her voice pulled me from my thoughts. “Is it okay if I shower? I feel gross from running around.”

“Yeah, go ahead. I’ll take one after you.” I didn’t usually shower twice in one day, but I felt gross too. It was hard not to after walking around for hours.

She was quick and came out wearing one of the robes and we traded spots.

I returned freshly showered and ready for bed, to find Daphne laying on top of the covers, still in her robe.

“Daph?”

She didn’t look at me, instead focusing on her nails. “I haven’t had anything to drink

tonight.”

I was smart enough to guess she wasn’t talking about water. “And?”

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Her body shifted as she took in a deep breath. Then, with a slow, careful movement, she pulled down the corner of her robe, exposing her breast. This time she looked me straight in the eye. “And I want you to fuck me.”

### Chapter 5

I stood frozen, struggling to process the scene before me.

“You do?” The words sounded strange coming from my mouth, like they didn’t belong to me. “Are you sure?”

Rather than speak, she moved, letting the robe part around her as she rose to her knees. She was completely naked beneath the fabric and my pulse quickened at the sight of her. She crawled forward until she was at the edge of the bed and waited.

My feet moved without prompting until I was before her. She brought her arms up to rest on my shoulders and the scent of strawberry body wash drifted towards me.

“Are you going to reject me again?” Her eyes were clear and firm, their grey-green stare stripping me away.

My throat went tight. “I didn’t reject you,” I tried to explain. She had acted so normal earlier that I had thought she’d forgotten. “You were drunk.”

Daphne leaned towards me, pressing her forehead against my collarbone, the lightest touch enough to burn my skin. “What about now? I did a good job today, didn’t I?” Her head fell back, looking up at me. “Don’t I deserve a reward?”

There were some tests we were meant to fail, and this was one of them. I stepped away and a flicker of worry filled her gaze, but I didn't give her time to doubt.

I pushed her back until she was flat against the bed with her legs hanging off, the most delicious meal I had ever seen. I kept my movements small and slow as I pulled away the rest of the robe, allowing nothing to hide her from me.

Heat rushed through my veins as a familiar hunger began to torment me. I wanted to touch her, and taste her, and make her cry with a pleasure only I could deliver.

So I did.

I pressed one knee into the bed at the apex of her thighs while I leaned over her, feeling her gasp as I filled my hands with her breasts. I'd never touched her skin directly like this, but she was warm and she was soft and she was waiting.

I dropped my head down to her chest and kissed her breast. Soft kisses, one after another, all around her round flesh until I reached her nipple. I sucked on the firm bump, letting it harden beneath my tongue.

Daphne moaned and the sound went straight to my core. Over the handful of times we had been intimate I had learned that she was vocal about her pleasure, and she could be loud. It had set off something dangerous inside me. I wanted to make her scream.

I kept playing with her nipple as I squeezed her other breast. Excitement bubbled inside me but I pushed it down as I best I could. As much as I wanted to devour her, I wanted to tease her more.

My right hand drifted down, dancing over her stomach. I let my fingers skim across her skin, her muscles tensing beneath my touch.

“Marina,” she whimpered, but I could only smile.

I rolled my teeth around her nipple, earning a gasp for my efforts. My hand dipped down, finally reaching her heat and finding it...drenched.

“Daph,” I raised my head. “Did you touch yourself in the shower?”

Her face was bright red, her flush extending down her neck. She didn’t answer, but she didn’t need to. In this moment there was nothing she could hide from me. My blood was racing so fast that my entire body tingled, and I was so turned on I was throbbing.

It seemed I couldn’t afford to tease her anymore.

I pulled away from her in an instant, my knees slamming into the ugly hotel carpet. They stung from the impact, but I barely noticed. I found salvation as my fingers sank into the soft flesh of her thighs and pushed them wide, so desperate that I couldn’t waste time enjoying the view. We both moaned as my tongue found her pussy, and I knew then that she had ruined me.

I licked her slowly, dragging the point of my tongue from her entrance to her clit over and over again, spreading her arousal across her skin. The muscles in her thighs twitched beneath my grasp, but I held her in place. I was feasting, and I couldn’t stand to be denied.

Fingers twisted into my hair, stealing my attention. I raised my eyes to find hers, having been so focused I hadn’t noticed her sit up. She was wearing an expression I loved, eyes narrowed with pleasure and her bottom lip sucked between her teeth. I shivered as she watched me work, electrifying me with her gaze.

I slid my hands up her thighs until I was close enough to press my thumb against her



clit. I sat back on my heels as I circled the spot, unable to take my eyes off her core. She was hairless there - not that I cared either way - but the skin was still a little bit red. It was a silly thought, and I wouldn't voice it, but I couldn't help wondering if she had done it for me, with this in mind.

I pressed my lips against the inside of her thigh and sucked, hard enough to leave a mark. That was what I wanted, after all. To mark her as mine. To claim her. If I could never truly have her, I would take what I could get.

Her fingers tightened their grip as I sucked on her skin, then pulled me gently back toward her pussy. "More," she ordered, her voice betraying her lust.

I grinned. "Yes, Ms. Calloway," I purred, increasing the pressure against her clit. Her eyes fluttered closed and another whimper slipped through her lips. "You've worked so hard for this presentation you deserve to be pampered." Another moan as her grip tightened even more, my scalp stinging as she pulled my hair. "You did well." This time when I smiled, it was for myself. "I was so proud watching you up there. You're amazing."

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She opened her eyes at that, furrowing her brow. She studied my face, looking for something I wasn't willing to share, her lips parting as she started to speak. "Marina -"

I shifted my hand to press two fingers into her hole while my thumb rubbed against her clit, quickly enough to take back control of the situation. She cried out as I entered her, relishing the velvet softness of her innermost places. I curled my fingers, alternating between them and my thumb to keep her just at the edge. Her muscles were tightening at every touch, so close to release.

"You're so honest here," I said, thrusting hard inside her. "You're so wet I can add a third finger." The only sounds coming from her mouth were the moans she tried to hold back, so I took it as approval. The third finger went in smoothly, and I focused on pounding into her hole. I let my thumb drop away and brought my mouth back to her clit, sucking on it lightly.

"I'm going to cum," she breathed, curling towards me. That brought her face so close, too close. It made me want to kiss her, but I knew I couldn't.

"Look at me, Daphne," I whispered, and she did. We were so close I could feel the tears of pleasure forming along her waterline. "Cum." It only took a few more seconds of pressure against her clit before I felt her spasm around my fingers. She cried out, clutching me as best she could in our position, but I didn't stop fucking her until she was done.

Her eyes were heavy, but satisfied, as she looked at me. I leaned back and rested my head against her thigh, giving her time to catch her breath, but then something

changed. I could see it happen, see the thought form behind her eyes.

She was going to kiss me.

She moved forward, slowly, and it took every ounce of willpower I still had to turn my head away. She froze, then pull away, releasing her hold on my hair. Part of me was afraid to see what expression she was making, but I looked anyway. My heart ached at the confusion and rejection painted on her face.

“I save those kisses for my lovers,” I said, a half-assed explanation, but the best I could do at the moment.

Her eyes widened, and it took her a moment to speak. “Oh. Sorry.”

Questions I wanted to ask bubbled up inside me, but I couldn’t let them out. What was our relationship? Did she want more than just sex from me? Why did she look so sad?

It wasn’t the time to ask, or maybe it was. Truthfully, it didn’t matter. I couldn’t ask those things of her, no matter how badly I wanted to. Because I was afraid. My love was one-sided, but as long as it was a secret I could stay beside her. If she knew how I felt about her...I couldn’t bear it. I was sure it would end our physical relationship, but what about our professional? Would she have me transferred? Maybe it would be for the best, but I wasn’t ready. I didn’t know if I ever would be.

As the silence grew between us I realized my fingers were still inside her. I pulled them out and admired the wetness that coated them. No matter what, I knew I could satisfy her like this.

“I’ve only ever used my fingers and tongue on you,” I said suddenly, switching gears. “Have you ever been fucked with a dildo?”

She gulped and flicked her eyes to my fingers. “Not...not by someone else,” she admitted, and immediately my mind was filled with images of her masturbating. The heat that had died down inside me came back with a vengeance at the thought.

I swirled one finger around her entrance, teasing it. “I could fuck you for hours with a strap-on,” I mused, dipping back inside her. “I would hold you down and fuck you until real dicks can’t compare.” She clenched as I pulled the finger out and ran it over my tongue in one slow motion, letting her flavor fill my mouth. “But maybe they already can’t.”

A shiver ran through her body. God, I was mean, but she brought out the worst in me. And the best, I supposed. She made every part of me feel alive.

Her chest heaved as she watched me, entranced. Finally, she cleared her throat. “It’s not fair if I’m the only one naked.”

I blinked. I had already forgotten I was still dressed, though I was just in my pajamas.

She reached out and took my hand, pulling me up until I was standing. There was a hesitation written on her face, but she overcame whatever held her back and copied me, licking her own essence off my other fingers. My mind started short-circuiting at the erotic display, but she didn’t give me time to struggle. Her hands tugged at my shorts, sending them falling to my ankles. She looked at me expectantly, waiting for me to take off my T-shirt.

It was my turn to hesitate.

Daphne had never seen me naked before. Our relations outside of work had always been focused on her. That made it easy. That way I could hide. A tongue is a tongue and fingers are fingers, no matter the gender; but if she saw me naked, there would be no pretending.

I hesitated too long. “I want to touch you, too,” she whispered, suddenly unable to look at me.

She was the only person I had ever met who could break me so easily. I took a deep breath and kicked my shorts away. Daphne moved to the side as I climbed onto the bed. I faced away from her as I slid off my underwear.

Gently, I leaned against her, giving her time to adjust and catch me. I let myself nestle against her chest as her legs parted on either side of me.

Her body was stiff, so I took the lead. I took one of her hands and pressed it against my stomach, over my shirt. “Touch me.”

Her chest rose as she sucked in a breath, and for a second I thought she was going to run away; but then her hand moved.

She slipped her hand beneath my shirt and brushed up my stomach until she reached my breasts. Her movements were sure, eager, almost, as she fondled me. I gasped as her other hand snuck beneath my shirt to play with the other. “Fuck,” I whispered. It felt so good to have her touch me. My breasts felt like they were going to burst, and I was sure that wetness was gathering between my legs.

“Do you like that?” she murmured, half to herself and half to me.

“Yes,” I breathed, then moaned as she pinched my nipple. Every place she touched felt amazing, but her movements were clumsy. She was exploring, trying to figure out how and where to touch. At any other moment I would have been happy to become her toy, but this was torture.

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I tilted my head until my lips were pressed into her neck. “Daphne, please. It’s not enough.” My legs were pressed together, squirming. I wanted to touch myself to relieve the pressure, but I didn’t want to turn her off.

It only took a second for understanding to reach her. I thought there would be some reluctance, but she dropped one hand to my thigh in an instant, pushing me open while her other remained at my breast. I spread my legs for her, my need outweighing everything else.

Her fingers brushed the engorged head of my clit and I groaned at the sensation. I needed it so bad I couldn’t think straight.

“Tell me what to do,” she whispered. “Tell me how to make you feel good.”

I nuzzled into her neck as my hands twisted in the sheets around us. “Touch me the way you touch yourself.” I was almost begging. “Anything you do will feel good.”

Her movements were slow at first, like she was still figuring it out, but it was more than enough. Her fingers rubbed around my clit in a firm circular motion or dipped through my folds to tease at my opening. It was torture, and it was bliss.

I came quickly, violently, crying out as I found my release. She let me slump against her, one hand still squeezing my breast.

Daphne sighed, but it was one of contentedness. She shifted slightly, and I felt her lips press into my hair. I looked up at her, searching her face for some reason behind the kiss. She only smiled. “That much is fine, right? Even though we aren’t lovers.”

They were my own words, but they stung. More than anything I wanted to believe I heard a trace of reluctance on her tongue, a whisper of regret. But my mind was hazy and I couldn't trust myself.

When I didn't answer she just drifted back until she was lying against the pillows, holding me to her chest. I was happy just being able to touch her, even though our position wasn't the most comfortable - and she still had my boob in her hand. So, we just laid there, in a quiet of our own creation.

"This was a good trip," she said, suddenly.

I breathed out, letting my lungs empty. "Yeah," I said. "It was."

## Chapter 6

There was a peace that followed big events, and we fell into it after the conference. The first few days were spent debriefing and following up on new business contacts, then Daphne had to give another presentation before the board about the conference. It was exhausting and we hardly had a moment to rest, but things calmed down by the end of the week.

I hadn't had a chance to catch up with Ben since we got back, but I managed to drag him to the cafeteria for lunch on Thursday. I secured a buffalo wrap (minus the blue cheese) while he grabbed a BLT and we settled down at an empty table to chat.

Naturally, the first thing I did was inform him that Daphne and I had slept together again, which caused him to choke on his first bite.

He coughed into his arm while I bit into my wrap. When he finally regained his composure he stared at me. "I thought you were done with that?"

I chewed slowly to buy myself more time. I hadn't told him about that time a few days before we left, and I decided to keep that to myself. "This was different." His face told me he didn't believe me. "It was!" I insisted. "Listen, on Friday night she got wasted at the party and tried to kiss me." His eyebrow went up, but I answered before he had a chance to ask. "No, I didn't let her. I thought she would forget, but then the next night...she was the one who initiated it. She's never done that before."

I knew Ben was worried about me. He knew what it was like to hold on to one-sided feelings, though his turned out to be less one-sided than he thought. It hurt. It was hard. But I couldn't help it.

"How do you know it's different this time?"

The words stung because they were the same ones plaguing me. "It just is. It feels like something changed between us. I don't know how to explain it."

He sighed. "I don't want to see you get hurt any more than you already are."

"I know." He was looking out for me, just like he always did. "I'm not ready to give up on this." I chewed on my lip. "There's something else. Donovan knows about my feelings."

"How?"

I just shrugged. "I guess I was too obvious. He said something about how he thinks we would get along since we both are after the same person."

Ben let his head tilt to the side. "Was he flirting with you?"

"He flirts with everyone, so who knows?"



There was a worry I couldn't shake no matter how hard I tried. I had known Daphne for years now. I knew she didn't love me, and I wasn't expecting her to suddenly proclaim her feelings, but there was always that quiet fear at the back of my brain that she didn't feel anything at all for me. The worst part was, I couldn't blame her. I was just her secretary and, while I was great at my job, there was a difference between us that couldn't be denied. She was going to be CEO one day. I was going to be secretary to the CEO one day. It wasn't the same.

Donovan could keep up with her. His family wasn't on the same elite level as the Calloways, but they were respected well enough. Donovan had risen through the ranks at The Calloway Group and had quickly made a name for himself. William had taken him on as something like a protege, and it was no secret that he was fond of him. It was obvious that he was being bumped from department to department as a way of training and preparing him for higher leadership roles later on. Whenever there was a big project in development or important contracts in the works, he was there. And worst of all, he deserved it. He excelled at any role they gave him. It was exhausting.

I took another bite of my wrap, the wind let out of my sails. Ben noticed and nudged me with his foot beneath the table. "Hey, you're still hotter than Donovan."

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That managed to make me laugh. “Definitely.”

The afternoon saw me chained to my desk returning emails and squeezing in meetings. I had noticed an increase over the last few months, and up until now I had been able to brush it off as a natural consequence of Daphne’s success. But the requests for consultations and new project proposals had been flooding our office to the point that it was clear something had changed.

It was common knowledge that Daphne would become the next CEO once Mr. Calloway stepped down, but as far as I knew that was still a long way away. But maybe I was wrong.

It certainly felt like more and more responsibilities were being thrown at Daphne, and that more and more people were coming to her for advice and approval. Still, she hadn’t said anything to me, and - personal issues aside - that was information I needed to have.

I leaned back in my chair after replying to another email requesting a lunch meeting with Daphne. There were still a good fifteen emails and at least three voicemails I hadn’t gotten to yet, but it was already well after 5 and I had a list of notes to go over with her before we left for the day.

Oliver had left early and Richard was on his way out. I said goodbye to him and took my notepad to Daphne’s office.

“You might be the most popular person in this company,” I said as I took a seat across from her.

She let out a weak laugh. “I don’t know about that.”

The circles under her eyes were deeper and darker than usual. I bit at my lip. “Are you doing okay, Daph? There’s a lot of work coming your way.”

She mustered up a smile. “I’m fine. He hasn’t said anything to me, but my dad’s been putting more responsibility on us - me and Oliver, I mean. I can handle it.”

I wanted to ask if that responsibility extended to her personal life, but I held back. There had been a comfortable feeling between the two of us since last weekend and I didn’t want to upset that. She had been normal, as had I, since we slept together. We had a professional relationship to maintain. It was necessary, I knew that, but that didn’t change the way my body burned when she was near, or stop my mind from drifting towards her.

Normal. I had to act normal. I brought out my notes and started going through them. It only took about twenty minutes. When we were done I dropped my notepad onto her desk and propped my head in my hand. “This week has crawled by,” I complained.

Daphne chuckled. “You’re right. But after tomorrow we can take a break.”

I nodded and let silence fall around us. She could be such a force when it called for it, but I liked these moments the best. I saw the real Daphne in the quiet; the girl who had worked so hard for so long, but had loved every second of it. How could I help but love her when I had seen how she could shine?

Her grey-green eyes met mine and held our gaze for a heartbeat. I wanted nothing more than to reach out and touch her, but I was a coward. I was afraid to scare her away. Relieving her stress, rewarding her; they were all excuses that did nothing but push away any sign of emotion. I had never regretted our relationship, as strange as it

was, but there were times when it became harder to accept it.

Her eyes slid away and went back to her computer screen. I glanced down at my phone. It was getting close to 6. I was about to ask if she had dinner plans when a knock at the door cut me off.

“Come in,” she called after a few seconds. There was a tightness in her voice that hadn’t been there before.

It was Donovan.

He grinned as he came in, and irritation nipped at my heart.

“Nice to see you as always, Ms. Ramos.”

I gave him a forced smile. “You too, Mr. Sellers.”

I’m sure my face showed my annoyance, but he only looked pleased. His gaze shifted to Daphne. “Ready to go?”

I looked back at her, but she wouldn’t meet my eye. “Where are you going?” I asked, trying to keep my voice light.

She busied her hands with gathering her things and turning off her computer as she spoke. “Donovan and I are going to get dinner. We have some things to discuss.”

Daphne was a good businesswoman. She might be nervous, but she would always keep a cool head when it counted. But she had a tell. It was small, and it only came out when she was hiding something. She would crack the knuckles on her right hand and keep going through the motions even after they’d popped. And she was doing it now.

“I’m sure you have a lot to talk about,” I said, turning back to Donovan. Any doubts I had were silenced by the look on his face.

It was a date.

They were going on a date.

He let his head tilt to the side and poured all his charm into his smile. “I’m looking forward to getting to know Daphne better. She’s really something, but I’m sure you already knew that.”

My lips took on a hard line. I had faced worse than him. I had overcome the looks of sleazy executives, the touch of handsy CEOs, and advances from nepotism hires that thought they could do no wrong. I could handle Donovan Sellers. At least, that’s what I told myself.

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But when Daphne stood and walked over to stand beside him, I felt something break. She looked good beside him. They were both attractive, and they carried a confidence that came from a lifetime of success.

I was going to be left behind.

Daphne managed to look everywhere but forward as I rose. And why not? There was no reason to look at me.

“Have fun,” I said, proud of how even my voice was. “I’ll see you later, then.”

Daphne only nodded before she turned and left, Donovan at her heels. They left the door open behind them and I watched them leave.

I steadied myself on the back of the chair and stood there for a few seconds, gathering myself. Then I pulled out my phone.

He picked up after a few rings. “Hey.”

“Ben?” This time I couldn’t hold back the shake in my voice. “Can I come over?”

### Chapter 7

“Idon’tknowwhatyou see in her, anyway.”

I rolled my eyes. “Of courseyouwouldn’t, she’s your sister.”

Ben was at Oliver's apartment when I called, but had invited me over anyway. I had half expected Oliver to be mad at my disruption of their night together, but he hadn't complained. He and I had never been close, though we were friendly enough. Now that he was dating my best friend I kept a closer eye on him, but so far I approved.

Oliver grimaced before taking another sip of his rosé. "I love her and all, but she's a workaholic without any friends. She's been high-strung since the day she was born."

Ben dropped a plate of crackers on the coffee table. I had claimed a spot on the floor leaning against the table while Ben and Oliver shared the couch. I narrowed my eyes at Oliver as I nibbled on a cracker. "She's dedicated and it's obvious that she cares about the company. Plus she can be really nice and sweet but then flip it and become a bad-ass businesswoman. And she's so fucking cute. And smart. And, God, she's so sexy when she's feeling good."

"Pause." Oliver held up a finger. "I would rather cover my ears with cement than listen to you talk about fucking my sister."

I stuck out my tongue but didn't argue. My two sisters were still in high school, and I didn't want to hear about them having sex either, so I let it drop.

Instead, I took a long drink of wine, finishing off my second glass. I stuck out my empty glass at Ben who obligingly refilled it. The rosé was slowly starting to get to me. My head leaned forward till my cheek landed on the coffee table. They were being nice to me because we all knew it was hopeless. I was being pitied, and I hated it, but there was nothing I could do.

The cool wood was nice against my alcohol-flushed skin. I let my eyes drift closed for a moment. "Just seeing her makes me happy. I want to support her and stand beside her no matter what." I buried my face in my arms. "But I'm not Donovan. I'm just her secretary." I choked out a miserable laugh. "I told him that I don't lose, but

there's no way I could win against him. It's not even a competition."

Neither of them said anything at first, then I heard Oliver sigh. "It's not fair to compare yourself to him." His voice was soft, more gentle than I had ever heard him. "Daphne's straight. She was happy for me, and proud when I came out to her and told her that Ben and I were dating, but I've never had a feeling that she was gay."

I knew that. I also knew that she had tried to kiss me and that she would beg me to make her cum. But none of that meant anything if I couldn't reach her heart.

"I never thought you were gay," Ben said, quietly.

Tears cropped up in my eyes as he tried to support me. I really loved that man, and with time I thought I would come to love Oliver too. It was silly of me to throw a pity party when I had so many people on my side. There was a hurt inside me that would take a long time to heal, but it would pass. I wasn't alone.

I pushed myself up and dabbed at my eyes. "Alright," I announced, "I'm moving on."

Skepticism replaced their concern, but I was serious. I took another sip of wine and let it tingle on my tongue. "Ben, I will love you forever if you make me a grilled cheese."

His eyes went wide for a moment, then he shook his head. "You'll love me forever no matter what; I already know there's no getting rid of you." I grinned as he stood up from the couch. "Oliver?"

"The day I say no to a grilled cheese is the day you put me in the ground."

Ben rolled his eyes but the tension seemed to have faded. "The things I do for you people," he griped as he headed into the kitchen.



Oliver chuckled and bit into a cracker. “So, you’re really giving up on her?”

I nodded and the movement made my head spin. “It’s time.”

“And what’s your plan? You still have to see her every day.”

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I drained my glass and reached for the bottle. “I need a rebound. Immediately.”

“Immediately?”

“I need to find a hot girl and have a wild, sweaty night and fuck all my feelings out.” It was an appealing plan, if I did say so myself. “And it needs to be tonight.”

His eyebrows shot up. “Tonight? You sure?”

I slapped my hand down on the table. “Course I am. The sooner the better. She’s out there doing who-knows-what with Donovan so why shouldn’t I?” My head was turning cloudy, but the more I thought about it the better the idea seemed. “Take me somewhere, I need my head to be between a woman’s thighs.”

Oliver looked back toward the kitchen where I’m sure Ben was choosing to ignore our conversation. “I’m not sure that’s a great plan.”

“Oli I swear I will be so annoying unless you take me to a gay bar.”

He pinched the bridge of his nose, debating how much more annoying I could get. Finally, he sighed. “There’s this one place. It isn’t exactly a gay bar, but if you want to hook up with someone...” He pursed his lips. “Let me see if I can get us in.” He pulled out his phone, then paused. “You absolutely cannot tell Daphne about this place.”

I nodded so hard that I made myself dizzy. “Pinky promise.”

One grilled cheese and a few glasses of wine later Ben parked in front of a quiet-looking building. It was plain, with no signs or storefronts other than a simple one with the name of the place: Required.

Ben had been grumpy the whole drive. It had taken some convincing to get him to agree - mostly from Oliver.

I went to open the car door and found it locked. "Ben?"

He sighed from the front seat. "Look, this isn't a normal bar."

"It's a sex club." I had already gotten the spiel from Oliver.

"I can't believe we're back here," he muttered, more to himself than anyone else. He twisted around to face me. "As soon as you want to leave let me know, alright? I want you to get over Daphne and if this'll help then we'll try it, but the second anyone starts feeling uncomfortable we're leaving."

I gave him a mock salute. "Sir, yes sir."

My head spun a bit as I stepped onto the sidewalk but I recovered as Ben led us inside. It looked like a normal bar. There were only a few people inside but they seemed like average bar patrons.

"Are we in the right place?" I whispered to Oliver.

He nodded, then waved to the bartender. She gave him a thumbs up and we continued further into the bar. "You a regular?" I asked, half joking. He didn't answer.

There was a door at the back with a key-code lock - which Oliver quickly entered.

Purple and pink neon lights cast a murky glow into the long room. After a short entry hall, we arrived at another bar, but these patrons were anything but average.

“Oh.” I let out a low whistle. “It really is a sex club.”

Tables were filled with people in various stages of undress, some with drinks and some with...devices. Alcoves ran along the left wall, and while some had their curtains drawn, others were wide open.

My breath caught in my throat as we were bombarded with sights and sounds that were far from expected. But, while there were plenty of people caught up in their own worlds, there were more whose attention was focused on the stage.

A raised, round stage stood at the back of the room. It was hard to tell from where we were standing, but it seemed like the room opened up at the end, maybe forming a flipped L, with the stage at the joint. It was a burlesque, with half a dozen men and women entertaining their audience. And the audience was certainly entertained.

“I wasn’t sure I’d see you here again,” said a new man, interrupting my thoughts.

“It’s a special case,” Ben admitted. Even without the awkward tension radiating from Ben I recognized the man. He was Logan Graves, a member of one of the most wealthy and powerful families on the east coast - and Oliver’s friend.

He looked me up and down. “I hear you need to get laid.”

“News travels fast.” Ben had never liked Logan, but he didn’t seem so bad to me. I would have to remember to interrogate him later, but I had other things on my mind.

He nodded back towards the bar. “Drinks are on the house, courtesy of my Master.” Ben scoffed, but Oliver only smiled. “The show should be wrapping up soon, but feel

free to watch the ending. In fact, feel free to watch anything, as long as it's in the open." He winked at me. "I hope you find what you're looking for."

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I turned towards the others and found Ben with a protective arm around Oliver, who clearly found his possessiveness hilarious. "I'm going to explore."

Ben didn't look pleased, but he dipped his head. "We'll be around."

Maybe there was something in the air, or maybe it was the wine, but my blood was boiling. There was so much happening around me that I didn't know where to look, but I could feel the excitement gathering within me. I didn't feel like myself. I felt free.

My feet carried me towards the stage to catch the end of the show. All the actors were gorgeous, and they moved in a carefully coordinated dance around the front of the stage. It was hard to pick who to watch, but I found myself drawn to the woman closest to me.

She was stunning, her dark hair in locks decorated with beads and cuffs. Every movement was slow and sensual, her body fluid and alive. By the time I arrived, she only had her panties left, and her breasts swayed as she moved, the piercing in each of her nipples reflecting the lights.

I was entranced, just like those around me - though, unlike most of them, my hands weren't down my pants.

They were almost to the end. After another minute she let her panties fall to her ankles and kicked them off into the crowd. They landed close beside me, and someone grabbed them, but I was too focused on her to notice. And for a moment, she was looking at me.

Once the show was done and they left the stage I found myself wandering over to the bar. I wasn't sure how Logan had spread the word, but the bartender gave me my drink for free. I was sipping on a Cosmo when I felt her arrive.

She was just as beautiful close-up, if not more. I smiled as she leaned against the bar, only a few inches away. She wore a thin lavender slip that came halfway down her thigh and showed off the lines of her nipple piercings. If I hadn't already had so much to drink I might have been able to keep my gaze off her chest, but I felt my eyes slip.

"Is it good?" she asked, looking down at my drink. I nodded, but before I could speak she cupped the hand that held the glass and brought it to her lips. I felt a shiver race down my spine, her eyes locked on mine as she drank.

I don't know how it happened, or who moved first, but in an instant, her mouth was on mine. My body lit up with a fire that I had tried to dim for the last four years. Her skin burned against me, and it was glorious.

I moaned as my back pressed against the bar, the pain only adding to the pleasure. Her tongue snaked against mine, hot and hungry, and I could barely stand the desperation between my legs. This was everything I wanted, though I could never have imagined finding a partner like her.

Her knee parted my thighs, rubbing against my core. I could feel my heartbeat as the blood rushed into my pussy, my hips moving out of my control.

My fingers grasped at the thin fabric covering her back as she broke away from my lips and turned to my neck. A soft groan escaped me as she sucked against the delicate skin, over and over, marking her claim.

She smelled so good, and her kisses were divine. It had been so long since I had really kissed anyone. I had spent so long trying not to kiss Daphne that I hadn't

realized how much I missed it. But now I was putty in this woman's hands, and I didn't even know her name. My underwear was already wet from my arousal, and there was so much lust building inside me that it would only take the smallest touch to make me cum.

Her teeth scratched against my neck before she pulled away, nipping at my bottom lip. She let her tongue slide along my jawline, nearly turning me to jelly, until she reached my ear. "I have a room upstairs," she purred, pressing against me. I could feel the points of her piercings rub into my skin. "Join me?"

It was a question as much as it was a command, but she waited for my answer. I didn't even need to think about it, right? This was what I wanted. This was why we had come.

A night with her to forget about Daphne. A night to free myself. And all I had to do was leap.

## Chapter 8

Turnedoutthat25was too old to go drinking on a work night.

I sat at my desk and tried to nurse a hangover through the blindingly bright light of my computer screen. Black coffee could only do so much and I was already on my third cup.

Rich was taking a cruel glee in my misery. He kept calling me with the loudest voice he use without actually yelling. I was going to murder him.

My only saving grace was that Daphne would be busy for most of the day. She had a morning meeting with her dad, then a lunch meeting, then a video call at 1. I wasn't confident I could face her in my current state. Especially not after what I did last



night.

I ran my fingers through my hair and groaned. I had gone off the deep end. Not only had I forced Ben and Oliver to take me to a goddamn sex club, but I just had to go and make out with a burlesque dancer. At least I hadn't gone further than that.

God, I was so embarrassed. After talking all high and mighty about how I was going to find a girl and forget all about Daphne I managed to blow the perfect chance. I still wasn't sure what stopped me. There had been no lack of attraction and I was more than willing, but I just hadn't been able to do it. Her lips had been so soft, and shit she was so hot, but it wasn't right. She wasn't what I wanted.

The phone rang, startling me from my thoughts. It took every ounce of professionalism in me to switch on my secretary voice, but I did it.

I started to feel better by lunchtime and managed to eat most of my sandwich. By the time I got back to my desk, my headache had mostly left me, but there was a dull heaviness throughout my body like lead had been poured beneath my skin.

Daphne should have been finishing up her lunch meeting by then, and, knowing her, I had about twenty minutes before she was back in the office. I pushed back my keyboard and let my head drop to my desk, reveling in the joy of shutting my eyes.

"Why don't you just go home early?" Richard asked, rolling over to me on his chair. "It's Friday, anyway. Just call it a day."

I shook my head, though it was hard with half my face pressed into my desk. "I'm good, I just need to close my eyes for a bit. Daphne should be back around the hour, so just throw something at me when she comes in."

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He clicked his tongue and rolled away, and I was left in delicious darkness.

“Marina? Are you okay?”

The moment I heard her voice my stomach clenched. My eyes burned when I opened them, angry at being denied their rest. I pushed my hair behind my shoulders as I sat up, trying to pull myself together. A concern I didn't deserve was carved into Daphne's face as she looked down at me, her hand heavy on my shoulder.

“I'm so sorry,” I hurried to apologize. “I didn't mean to fall asleep.” I shot a look at Richard but he showed no remorse, the bastard.

Daphne just shook her head as she looked me over, searching for some sign I was unwell. Her eyes went wide.

I frowned. “Daphne?”

Her lips parted for a moment but she caught herself and took a step back. “My meeting's starting. Go home if you need to.” She left abruptly, as though something had scared her off.

Once her door shut I glared at Richard, but he ignored me. I just needed to focus and get through the rest of the day so I could go home and curl up in bed and spend the entire weekend in a vegetative state.

I got in a solid hour of work before Daphne pinged me on our messenger.

Are you still here?

Yep

The chat went silent for a moment. Then, finally, she sent the next message.

Come to my office.

It was rare that she was so direct with me, but I wasn't going to waste time thinking about it. I hopped up from my desk and went to see her.

She was looking down at her desk as I took a seat across from her. I broke the silence. "Do you need something?"

It felt like an eternity before her eyes rose towards me. I waited for her to meet my gaze, but she didn't. Instead, she looked at my neck.

"Why do you have a hickey?"

Fuck.

My mouth went dry as I reached up to my neck on instinct. I had been so out of it that morning I hadn't even noticed. "I didn't..." I felt around until I found a sore spot. "I didn't realize that was there."

There was no softness on Daphne's face as she looked at me, only a cold, harsh mask. "Who gave it to you?"

My mind scrambled, searching for an answer. Did I tell her the truth? That I had made out with a burlesque dancer at a sex club? Fuck. I wanted to crawl back into bed and hide from the world.

I could tell she was angry, though I wasn't sure why. She was using the voice she saved for berating managers when they made mistakes, or when the old men that liked to ignore her authority questioned her decisions. It was a hard voice, devoid of emotion. In all the years I had worked for her, she had never used it on me.

But then, why did I need to explain myself? I let my hand drop back to my side and felt my fingers curl into my palms. I had gone to the club because I was ready to move past this relationship - if it could even be called that. She had some nerve questioning me when I knew she had gone on that date with Donovan, maybe even spent the night with him.

She was angry, and so was I.

"It doesn't concern you."

Her eyes went wide, the shock at my words giving her pause. Adrenaline rushed through me until I felt like I could burst, but I didn't back down. This might have been the first time I had pushed back against her, and neither of us knew how it would turn out.

She rose from her chair, her hands on her desk. "What did you say?"

"I said it doesn't concern you," I repeated, my voice rising. "My personal life has nothing to do with you, and yours has nothing to do with mine."

I watched her throat tighten as she struggled to maintain her composure. "It has everything to do with me," she spat, her anger taking hold. "Every part of your life concerns me, especially when you come to work with a fucking hickey on your neck for everyone to see. I expect a level of professionalism from all my staff, but especially from you."

For a moment I was frozen, struggling to process her words. Then, I snapped.

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“Howdareyou?” I hissed. “Don’t you dare question my professionalism or my work. I handle everything and I do it perfectly so you can focus on your job. How I spend my free time is my choice, just like you can choose to go fuck Donovan in your free time.”

She recoiled a bit. “I never slept with Donovan -”

I rolled my eyes. “I’m not blind, Daphne. You think it wasn’t obvious that you two went on a date last night?”

“It wasn’t a date!” She was shouting now, but I couldn’t spare a moment to care.

“Don’t lie to me,” I yelled back. She was so close to me, just like she always was, but the distance that remained was insurmountable. “Everyone knows your dad wants you to settle down soon, and he’s pushing for Donovan. I know you, Daphne. I know how much his opinion means to you.”

There it was. She could say whatever she liked, but the truth was that I knew her as well as I knew myself. I knew her habits, her favorite things. I knew the way she looked when she was sad, when she was in pain. No matter how hard she tried, she couldn’t hide from me. And it was there on her face. The guilt. It wove itself around her eyes, weighing her down.

I closed my eyes and pinched the bridge of my nose, trying to fight down the headache that was returning. “I’m an adult, Daph. I’m single and I’m free to go to sex clubs and make out with whoever I want.”

A strangled gasp filled the air between us. When I opened my eyes again Daphne was, different. The anger had gone and left her deflated. “You...kissed them?”

Why did she look so betrayed?

My chance to ask was stolen as the door behind me was thrown open. “What the hell are you two doing in here?” Oliver demanded, his long strides reaching us in seconds. He paused as his eyes flicked back and forth between us. I didn’t know what expression I was making, but it was enough to steal some of his fire.

Daphne fell back into her chair and let out a weak chuckle. “We were just discussing Marina’s trip to a sex club.”

I winced at her words, but Oliver rounded on me before I could respond. “Damn it, Rina you pinky promised.”

“What?” Daphne blinked up at us. “You knew?”

His mouth opened and closed as he struggled to find the words. I jumped in, trying to help. “He and Ben took me, but I sort of made them.” I didn’t know why I was defending them, but I couldn’t seem to stop myself.

It was the wrong thing to say.

“You took her to a sex club?” Daphne found her voice again, raising it louder than before. “What the fuck is wrong with you?”

“It’s none of your business,” I reminded her, though it did little good. She narrowed her eyes and was about to start arguing when a new voice interrupted.

“You went to a sex club, Ramos? Which one?”

It was Donovan.

Of course it was.

I rubbed my hands across my face. I wasn't even surprised at this point. "Required."

He leaned against the doorframe, watching us with crossed arms. "I've heard rumors about a new one opening soon, but Required's still the best around."

"Donovan, you..." Daphne shook her head. "You've been too?"

He grinned. "I've never been one to deny a taste of pleasure."

Silence engulfed the four of us, heavy enough to squeeze the breath from my lungs. All the energy had been sucked from my body and I just wanted to collapse.

Daphne was the next one to speak. "So, everyone's been to this...club...but me?" She was quiet for a few more moments, then stood again. "Then take me."

"What?" I frowned.

"Take me to Required."

My body went stiff as I waited for someone to argue with her, or to convince her that she was being ridiculous.

No one did.



Oliver only sighed, all the resistance leaving his body. “Let me call Logan.”

### Chapter 9

Ithadtobea bad joke. After the most awkward car ride of my life I had ended up in a private room above a sex club with the woman I loved, and my rival, both of whom were listening intently as Logan gave us a tour of the available sex toys.

I had taken a seat on the California King that took up most of the room while I struggled to make sense of my surroundings. The wall directly across from the bed was an enormous window with a one-way tint. I hadn't noticed it the night before, but the main room of the club was two stories high and had dozens of similar rooms on the second floor. We could see out, but they couldn't see in, and Logan was quick to assure us that the windows were reinforced and strong enough to hold up to 600 pounds.

The other wall was lined with cabinets chock full of sex toys. They really covered all their bases. Dildos and strap-ons, whips and gags, blindfolds, ropes, pocket pussies, anal beads, even those thin things you stick down men's urethras - bougies? Whatever they were I was happy to stay far away from them.

Daphne and Donovan were hanging on Logan's every word as he walked them through all the room had to offer. There was a drawer filled with condoms of more varieties and flavors than I had ever imagined, right next to one stuffed with dental damns and latex gloves. There was no telling how much lube there was in the building. Requited may have been a sex club, but they could have been the poster child for safe and responsible sex.

I hadn't expected to be set up in a private room like this, and I couldn't fight the nerves that gathered in my stomach. Whatever Oliver had said to Logan had led to us getting the VIP treatment. What exactly was the plan here? Were we just supposed to sit around and talk about our feelings? I felt suffocated within the dark purple walls and dim light, like I was trapped in a viper's den.

A knock at the door gathered our attention. A man I had never seen before opened the door, a bottle of Grey Goose in his hand.

"Reese." It was Logan's voice, but it was filled with an unexpected brightness. I looked back at him and found his face lit up. Oh. Looked like there was more keeping Logan at the club than just the work. At least that helped explain why one of the core members of the Graves family would end up at a place like Required.

The man - Reese - smiled as he stepped into the room. He was certainly handsome, but in a quiet way. Logan, and Donovan for that matter, were both handsome in a charismatic, movie star kind of way. Reese was the kind of handsome that could hide in the wings but would dazzle you once you saw him - dark hair, dark skin, chiseled jaw, and a thin crop of stubble across his cheeks. Still, none of them could compare to Daphne, though that might have been the lesbian part of me talking.

"I thought you might need this," he said, motioning to the bottle.

He set it on the table in the corner - which we had also been informed was sturdy enough to hold multiple bodies at a time - and pulled out three shot glasses.

"Oliver said you three needed some space to work some things out." Logan crossed to Reese and looped his arm around his waist. "You have this room till morning." He grinned up at him, oozing seduction. "I'll take care of the bill."

Reese only nodded, not swayed by Logan's charms. "If you need anything, just press

the buzzer by the door.”

“I’m not busy tonight, so I’ll come if you call. Otherwise, my Master and I will be downstairs.” He winked, and Reese seemed unsurprised by it all.

With that, they left, and the three of us were alone.

“Those two are definitely fucking, right?” Donovan wasted no time in breaking the silence.

I ignored him. “What are we doing here, Daph? What’s the point of all this?”

Donovan chuckled and went to the table. “It’s obvious, isn’t it?” He unscrewed the bottle and filled each of the shot glasses. He knocked one back before turning back to us. “Daphne needs to choose between us, but she can’t decide.” He shrugged. “I’ve been interested in you for a while too, Marina, so I’m game.”

I frowned. “You’re...interested in me?” I had always viewed us as rivals, and I had assumed he thought similarly.

He just waved his hand. “Don’t worry, I know I’m not your type.” The way he said it made me think he knew I was a lesbian, but I had never said as much to him.

I wasn’t sure what to say, but Daphne intervened by marching over to the table and tossing one of the shots down her throat. She slammed the glass back down on the table, then took the third one as well. When she spun around there was a new fire in her eyes. “He’s right. Let’s settle this.”

I gaped at them, my brain unable to process what they were saying. They wanted to have a threesome? To figure out her feelings? That was the most ridiculous thing I had ever heard. I didn’t even want to have sex with Donovan, or any man.

“You can’t be serious,” was all I could manage. It wasn’t what Daphne wanted to hear.

She stalked towards me without missing a beat and crawled into my lap, straddling me. She was so close I could smell the vodka on her breath. “Won’t you fuck me, Marina?” she whispered into my ear. Her hips ground against me. “I want you.”

Her eyes were glassy and laden with desire. But, there was something else hidden in their depths. Desperation.

I closed my eyes. “Fuck.”

I liked to think I was ready to meet any curveball life could throw at me, but I never expected to find my tongue deep in Daphne’s cunt while she sucked Donovan’s cock. There was a pang of jealousy that had burrowed inside of me, but, as much as I hated to admit it, it was kind of hot. She looked so sweet as she tried to take his cock, and something primal burned as she struggled.

Daphne was stripped completely naked, as was Donovan. She had pulled my shirt over my head before I realized what she was doing, but I still wore my bra.

I had pushed her down and dragged her legs onto my shoulders as I devoured her, and at some point, Donovan had rested her head on his leg for ease of access. I should have hated it; all of it. It should have destroyed me to watch him stroke her head as she choked on his cock, but fuck, it turned me on.

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I leaned back on my heels to nibble on her inner thigh. “You’re doing so well,” I said, running my hands over her legs. “I had no idea you were such a slut.”

She whimpered as tears started to gather in her eyes. Donovan rested his hand against the back of her head, pushing her to take him deeper. “Fuck,” he groaned. “It feels so good.”

I ran a finger over her entrance, wet with arousal. “You’re already dripping.” Two fingers slid inside her with ease. Her muscles clenched so hard I could barely move. “Are you ready to cum?”

A garbled affirmation came from her throat, but Donovan didn’t let her stop. I was mesmerized by the scene before me, and the way her breasts shook as she bobbed her head. She was so sexy I didn’t know what to do.

Donovan clicked his tongue. “Don’t forget about me,” he chided, his hips starting to move. There was an edge to his voice. He was close too. “I’m going to cum in your mouth, and you’re going to swallow it all like a good girl.”

Her pussy tightened and something close to a moan rumbled in her chest. I licked at her clit, fucking her faster with my fingers.

Tears were pouring down her face as Donovan fucked her mouth, but she had her hands wrapped around the base of his cock, pumping in time. She came hard around my fingers, her back arching towards the ceiling from the pleasure. Donovan came a few seconds later, filling her with his seed.

I slowed, letting her come down. Donovan pulled his cock out of her mouth and she let her lips fall open, showing that she had swallowed it all. “Good girl,” he crooned as she looked up at him in a daze.

He glanced at me, a devilish look in his eye. “We can’t forget about Marina. She hasn’t cum yet.”

Her glassy eyes turned to me, bright and eager. I leaned back, “It’s okay, you don’t have to-”

She frowned. “I want to make you feel good, too.”

Shit. That woman could ask me to commit murder and I would do it with a smile on my face.

I stood and stepped out of my pants, kicking my underwear away. Daphne’s tongue darted out to lick her lips, and I swear I almost passed out. I was too weak to protest so I let her pull me onto the bed, settling up against the pillows.

She was on her stomach, her perky little ass in the air as she spread my legs. No matter how determined she was, I still saw her hesitate. “Daph,” I whispered, cupping her chin in my hand. “Just touch me however you want.”

Our eyes met for a moment, and something pulsed between us. Then she was on me.

If anything I had expected her to use her fingers, but never in a million years did I think she would start eating me out. I gasped as her tongue pressed against my clit. There was an awkwardness in her movements like she was still unsure, but by that point I was practically buzzing with desire. “That’s so good,” I moaned, resting my hand against the top of her head. “Just like that.”

What she lacked in technique she made up for with fervor. It wouldn't take much for me to burst.

My hips were moving on their own as the pressure built within me. My mind was so filled with pleasure that I didn't realize Donovan had moved until I heard the slap as he brought his hand down on Daphne's ass. She whines, squirming beneath his touch.

"You look so cute between her thighs."

He brought his hand down again and again, spanking her hard enough to mark her skin, but she never stopped eating my pussy.

"Yes, Daph, I'm so close." I couldn't hold in my voice as she increased the pressure, sucking my clit between her lips. "I'm going to cum."

I cried out as I came, my entire body feeling the release. I sank against the pillows as she looked up at me beneath her lashes, curiosity and pride mixed inside her gaze.

"That was so good," I breathed, as Donovan spanked her one last time.

He ran his hand over her ass, smoothing over the red spots. "You made me hard again," he said, palming his cock. "You'll have to take responsibility."

## Chapter 10

Donovan let out a sigh of pure pleasure as he pressed the head of his cock against Daphne's entrance. I watched her face change as he pushed further in, letting her swallow him whole. A condom wrapper lay ripped open on the bed, though I had been too focused on Daphne to notice him moving around, and there were three unopened beside it. Someone had big plans.

It was strange. The woman I loved was being fucked by my rival and I couldn't look away. I had just cum, but the bliss on her face as he buried his cock in her depths was enough to reignite the heat in my pussy. My cheeks started to flush as his hands dug into her hips, forcing her up so she could take more of him.

“Just like that,” he murmured through gritted teeth. “You can take it.”

I gulped, unable to tear my eyes away from Daphne's face. She was pink and full of lust, whimpering as Donovan began to thrust.

My hand caressed her cheek, directing her attention back towards me. “Does it feel good?” I purred, rubbing my thumb across her lips. She nodded once before parting her lips and taking my thumb into her mouth. She kept her eyes on me as she sucked, running her teeth across my skin. I had never felt this before, this kind of desire. I wanted to control her, to bring her so much pleasure that she was destroyed, only to build her up and do it all again.



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Gently, I pulled my thumb out of her mouth and smoothed my hands along her neck. We had never talked about breath play before, not that we had ever had a chance. An old partner had done it on me once, but I hadn't enjoyed it much then. But now I could feel my fingers itch to dig into her throat.

She arched into my hold like she knew what I was after. I didn't want to push her too far, so I was going to keep it simple. My fingers pressed against the sides of her neck, lightly at first, as I studied her reaction. Her eyes fluttered, and she made no move to pull away.

I increased the pressure in bursts, going slowly. Her pulse raced beneath my skin, but she relaxed into my grip, trusting me. My heart climbed into my throat. She trusted me. She knew I would never do anything to hurt her.

"Fuck," Donovan winced. "If you squeeze any harder you'll break my dick," he griped, but the smile on his face told me he wasn't really complaining. He quickened his pace, thrusting in and out of her with a chorus of grunts and groans. "I'm so close."

I held Daphne in my hands, making sure she kept looking at me. I had tightened my grip as much as I dared, and I felt a sick satisfaction as she panted in my grasp.

She let out a garbled wail as she came, with Donovan following soon after. As my hands fell away from her throat, the pale skin blotted with red, I could feel something awakening within me. It was new and raw, but it was there. This wasn't the time to explore what it meant, but the sight of Daphne coming apart beneath me filled me with a raging lust I couldn't seem to shake.

But Donovan dropped to the bed, shaking me from my thoughts as Daphne rested between my legs.

We sat in the stillness for a few seconds, their heavy breathing the only sound in the room. Finally, he tilted his head towards me. “You’re behind, Marina. We’ve both cum twice, but you’ve only had one.” A lazy grin climbed across his face. “I’d be glad to give your pussy some attention.”

“Bold of you to think I’d let you touch me, let alone fuck me.”

He shrugged and fell back against the bed. “As you like. Though, I’d be more than happy to let you fuck me.”

His words took us by surprise. He said it like it was the simplest thing in the world, but surely I misunderstood. He’d let me fuck him?

That feeling came back, creeping in on quiet feet, and I finally realized what it was.

Power.

I had spent so much time trying to get close to Daphne that I had locked myself in a box, doing whatever I could to become desirable to her. In all that time I hadn’t noticed what I was missing. I wanted to dominate. I wanted to demand.

The words were out of my mouth before I could stop myself. But it was just as well. I didn’t want to stop.

“I wouldn’t mind making you cry.”

Fucking Donovan Sellers with a strap-on while he buried his dick in Daphne’s pussy wasn’t on my BINGO card, but at least now I could confidently add ‘adaptability’ to

my resume. After all of this, I wouldn't be too surprised to find a termination notice on my desk next Monday. HR would have me shipped to Siberia if they found out.

But God, it was worth it.

I had never given much thought to Donovan's sexual proclivities, but the man clearly had a wide avenue of experience. He had zero qualms about preparing his ass for a dildo; in fact, he seemed excited about it. I certainly wasn't judging, but I was surprised. I had noticed him flirting with Richard a few times in the past, but I had brushed it off as his personality. Now, I was wondering if there was something more.

He had prepared himself well, and the dildo slid inside him with nothing more than the expected resistance. He had picked it himself, and I supposed it was true that he always was an over-achiever.

There was a second piece that curled inward from the bottom of the dildo that rubbed against my clit every time I moved. It was a little dangerous.

I was slow at first, not wanting to hurt him. He took it well, but I could see how it affected him. His legs began to quiver, and if he hadn't already been on his knees he might have fallen.

He had Daphne on all fours, his hands tight around her hips. I stood behind him, his pleasure at my mercy.

I pushed the bright purple dildo farther into his ass until it was halfway inside him. He gasped, unable to hold back his moans.

"Good boy," I praised. "But I didn't say you could stop moving."

He whimpered but started to move his hips. He was trapped between us; every thrust

forward into Daphne's cunt meant he would spear himself on my dildo as he moved back. His skin was red as his body began to shake, but I knew he loved it. I could feel it.

"You like it, don't you?" I whispered into his ear, my blood rich with power. "You like being used."

Again his answer came as a warbled whine, but with each backward thrust he was taking the dildo deeper and deeper.

"You like having my cock inside you. You're so greedy," I purred. Up until then, I had let him do all the work, but I began to move my hips. A cry cleared his throat as the dildo went in deeper, almost seated to the hilt. I rested my chin on his shoulder to admire the view below me. Daphne's body pulsed with each thrust, her ass jiggling with the impact. I slid my hand over the curve of her ass, still red from Donovan's spankings. "Both of you are such little whores. What would everyone at the office think if they could see you now?"

Daphne's arms gave out and her head dropped to the bed. She twisted the sheets beneath her hands and I wasn't sure how much more she could take. I wanted to push her to the edge, then catch her when she fell.

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“Fuck,” Donovan grunted, his fingers digging hard into Daphne’s skin.

My body moved on its own, so fast I couldn’t catch up. I grabbed his hair and pulled back until he was facing the ceiling. A cute cry escaped his lips as I forced him back. “I didn’t give you permission to speak.”

I felt a delicious shiver crawl down my spine at the sight of tears gathering in his eyes. “Do you want to stop?” I whispered.

He shook his head, and I smiled. “Good boy.” I kept my grip on his hair, his blonde locks soft against my skin. “Just a bit more and you’ll take all of my cock. Can you do it?” He nodded. “Then take it.”

He cried as I pushed the rest of the way into him, propping one leg up on the bed to steady myself. I allowed him a few seconds to adjust, then pulled out. His hips moved back on their own, chasing me. I yanked his hair back farther. “You’ll move when I tell you to.”

I gave Daphne’s ass a gentle slap. “Your cock is mine,” I said. “When I moved forward you’ll fill Daphne’s pussy, when I move back so will you. Understand?” Another nod. “Good.”

I had pulled halfway out of him as I was talking, but I thrust back in suddenly. It took him a moment but he did as he was told, and sank inside Daphne. They were both moaning so much I knew they were already close, but I wasn’t going to stop till I was satisfied.

I started to move, thrusting in and out while Donovan echoed me. I could feel his strength start to give out, but with every movement the piece moved against my clit, drawing me closer to an orgasm.

“This is my cock,” I rasped, “and I’m the one fucking both of you. Your perfect, wet pussy is being stretched with my fucking cock, Daphne. And my cock is pounding your tight little asshole, Donovan. You’re mine now, and I’m not letting you go until I’m satisfied.”

Daphne panted as she tried to form words. “I can’t,” she whined. “Please, Marina, I want to cum.”

I clicked my tongue. “You can do better than that.”

She twisted her head to look up at me, tears streaming down her face. “Fuck my pussy harder with your cock and rub my clit, I’m begging you. Please, Marina, please.”

I released my hold on Donovan’s hair. “You heard her,” I whispered. “Rub her clit.”

Without me keeping him upright he slumped over her back, pinning her down as the rest of the strength left his body. But he did as he was told.

Daphne moaned when Donovan’s fingers found her sweet spot. I was close too, with the extra part of the dildo hitting just the right spot. I sped up, pushing them both to their limit.

“Go ahead,” I said, gritting my teeth. “Cum.”

I couldn’t tell who came first, but the three of us found our releases. It took a solid minute before I came back to myself, still dazed.

With an immense effort, Donovan pushed himself up and let his dick slide out of Marina. The condom was full and glistened from her essence.

He leaned back against me, startling me, with the dildo still deep in his ass. He turned his face up to me with a contented grin. "I underestimated you, Ramos."

I just laughed, his hair soft on my skin. "You wouldn't be the first."

His head rested against my shoulder, closer to me than I had let a man get in a long time. When his hand cupped my chin and drew me in I didn't resist, and I let him brush his lips against mine.

It was far from a proper kiss, and even after this, I knew that I would never have feelings for him, sexual or otherwise. The enjoyment I had found there came from the domination, the power. It was something I would explore further, but it didn't change the fact that I was only interested in one of them.

But Daphne gasped.

I had been riding so high on endorphins that the kiss had come on instinct, with no thought behind it. But I had told Daphne I save my kisses for my lovers, though that had always been a lie.

My eyes went wide as I realized what I had done. She stared at us like we were a danger to her; like we were strangers. "I need to go," she blurted out, jumping from the bed.

Donovan was as confused as I was. I pulled the dildo out of his ass, but I was still bound up in the strap-on rig. "Daphne-" I tried, struggling to undo the straps, but she moved too quickly.

She didn't look back as she threw on her clothes. She was out of the door impossibly fast, and I finally understood.

The idea that I could be in a relationship like that with Donovan was too much. It hurt her to see the man she wanted with me. I had never really had a chance.

Reality sunk in, stealing the breath from my lungs. It was one thing when it was just sex, but the possibility that I would steal Donovan away from her was too much. But I wouldn't. I only loved her.

It didn't matter. It hadn't mattered when we first began our physical relationship, and it didn't matter now. I just stood there, staring at the door, a hollowness growing inside me. After all, I could give her all the pleasure in the world, but she would never give me her heart.



### Chapter 11

Daphne didn't come to work on Monday.

There was a note on her personal schedule saying she would be working from home. That was all.

I had spent the entire weekend going over everything in my mind: the threesome, all the times I had been intimate with Daphne, all the moments I had questioned her feelings towards me. I knew that I loved her, but despite everything, I still didn't know how she felt towards me. And I finally realized that was the answer.

All those moments I was questioning, all those glances and looks I so desperately wanted to mean something were just...moments. There was no deeper meaning. There was no happily ever after. She had enjoyed our physical relationship, but that was all it was. She didn't love me, and she never would.

Part of me was relieved that I didn't have to face her. I wasn't sure how I would act, or what expression I would make. I knew that I was being ridiculous. Here I was, a grown woman, letting myself be dragged around by what amounted to little more than a high school crush. My mind knew I needed to let it go, but God it was hard. It hurt.

Richard was unusually nice to me, though it was hard to know if he was acting on Oliver's orders or if he could pick up on my mood. Either way, I was grateful.

I was so full of dread on Tuesday morning that my hands shook opening the door, but

I made it in. Richard looked up as I walked in, then cut his eyes over to Daphne's door. "She's here," he said. He always knew what I was thinking.

I took a breath, focusing on the feeling as my lungs filled. Before I had left the night before I'd checked her schedule and knew she was free in the morning. Delaying the inevitable would only make it worse.

It had never been so hard to knock on her door, but I managed. After a few seconds I went in, closing it behind me.

There she was, sitting behind her desk just as she always did. She kept her eyes on her computer, typing away at something as I crossed to the open seat. My heart was beating so loudly she must have heard it, but I forced myself to sit.

After a few seconds, it was clear she wasn't going to speak first, so I cleared my throat. "Daphne—"

She held up a finger, cutting me off. I chewed on my lip as her typing resumed, her fingers speeding across her keyboard. The waiting did little to settle my nerves and I still wasn't sure what I was going to say. My mind had become an empty expanse with no help to offer my mouth.

Finally, the clicking of her keyboard fell silent, and she turned to me. There was nothing. No sadness, or anger. No light, or shadow. Her face was blank as she looked at me, as though I was a stranger.

My heart crawled into my throat, desperate for an end to the pain. "I wanted to talk—"

"I'm leaving in half an hour," she said, cutting me off again.

I frowned. "Leaving where?" There was nothing on her schedule.

“Los Angeles. It was a last-minute decision. I’ll be back Saturday and I’ve already dealt with this week’s schedule.”

My stomach swirled. I was always the one who handled changes to her schedule, no matter how short the notice. For her not to tell me...something was wrong.

I swallowed hard, trying to make room for my voice. “Do you need me to go with you?”

“No.” It was what I expected, but the finality of the word bit me to the core. She shifted in her seat, some unidentifiable emotion flashing behind her eyes. “Donovan will be joining me, so you won’t be needed.”

“I see.” I managed to force the corners of my mouth up. “Let me know if there’s anything you need. If you’ll excuse me, I have some calls to make.”

There was nothing else to say. My vision started to blur as I stood, and all I could do was pray she didn’t see the tears forming. I made it past my desk and into the hall before they started to fall. There were too many fucking people in the hallways, everyone arriving like always for a normal day of work. I kept as close to the wall as I could until I reached the closest bathroom and locked myself in the stall.

My body slumped against the wall as my legs began to shake. Sobs pushed their way past my lips, and I was beyond grateful that the bathroom was empty.

I didn’t know when it had happened, but Daphne had realized my feelings. I should have been relieved that she let me down so gently, but her words kept repeating in my head: you won’t be needed.

She didn’t need me. She didn’t want me. She had made her choice.

It would be Daphne and Donovan after all. I had lost. All that was left was for me to accept it, but I wasn't sure if I could. When it came down to it, would I be able to watch her and Donovan together? Would I be able to stand it as they grew closer while I remained nothing more than her secretary?

Hot tears streamed down my face, smearing mascara around my eyes. I shouldn't have been surprised. This was always how it was going to end. My feelings for her would continue to be unrequited, and I would have to make peace with that, no matter how badly it hurt.

## Chapter 12

The days dragged on, and Daphne was gone. In my heart, I knew it was a good thing to have some space from each other, but that didn't stop me from glancing at her door, or keep my thoughts from drifting to her. I missed her. I missed her presence, her voice, and the way her eyes crinkled when she smiled at me. But none of those moments belonged to me anymore, if they ever had.

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Still, I did my job. I answer calls and emails and coordinated with other departments. Work allowed me to focus my mental energy, and I threw myself into it. That made the days easier, at least. But my nights were my own to sit in silence.

Ben spent a few nights at my place trying to cheer me up. I was more grateful to him than I would ever be able to explain. He really was my best friend. We stayed up late watching shitty movies and gorging ourselves with popcorn till we made ourselves sick, 6 A.M. alarm be damned.

Despite his efforts, I must have looked rough. Rich was extra nice to me, which was his way of saying I looked like hell. I appreciated it anyway.

By the time Friday appeared I knew I had to make a choice. Half a year ago before Ben and Oliver finally figured out their feelings, Ben had thought about quitting. He was Oliver's driver, so he saw him every day. He hadn't known if he could survive seeing Oliver fall in love with someone else. It had worked out for them, but it had been hard. At the time I couldn't imagine ever quitting my job, but now I wasn't so sure. I understood now how he felt then, and I was at a loss.

“Want to go grab something to eat?”

I blinked up at Richard as he pulled me out of a daze. It was lunchtime and I hadn't even noticed. I shook my head. “I'm not hungry, thanks though.”

He frowned, but didn't push me. We weren't friends outside of the office, but I knew we cared for each other in our own ways. I felt bad that I had made him worry.

With Richard gone I was left alone - save for Oliver who was eating in his office while finishing a proposal. Usually I didn't mind the quiet; it meant I had a chance to catch my breath. But this time it was stifling.

Without thinking I pulled up a new document on my computer and let my fingers handle the rest. I needed to make my choice.

Thirty minutes later I knocked on Oliver's door.

"Come in."

I had spent so much time right outside this office, but I'd only gone inside a handful of times. The paper in my right hand was hot, fresh out of the printer. It stung where it touched my skin as though it was made of poison, but I only gripped it tighter.

Oliver smiled when he saw me, but I could see the pity hidden behind it. I hated it. It had been hopeless from the beginning, I knew that now, but he had always been kind to me.

I gave him a weak smile as I took a seat across from him. "Hi," I said, cringing at my voice.

His lips pressed into a hard line as he looked me over. "How are you feeling?"

God, I felt so embarrassed. I cleared my throat, forcing my expression to even out. I set the paper on his desk, smoothing down the non-existent wrinkles.

"What's this?"

"My letter of resignation."

His eyes shut. “Rina, you don’t need to do that.”

“I do.” No matter how much air I sucked into my lungs I couldn’t seem to calm down. “This isn’t sustainable, Oli, and it’s not professional.” I almost laughed as I said the word. Nothing about how I’ve acted was professional, and I had dragged them all into it. “I think it’s for the best that Daphne finds a new secretary. I would be happy to transfer somewhere else in the company, or I can start to look for work elsewhere.”

He shook his head. “I don’t have a right to make judgments about professionalism after everything that Ben and I have done,” he winced at the thought, “but that aside, you are good at your job. You can keep up with Daphne, which is more than most of the people we work with. I know you’re in a bad place right now, but I don’t want to see you make a decision you’ll regret.”

This time the smile I gave him was real. “I’m glad that you and Ben ended up together,” I said, and I meant it. “You’re a good one, you know? But I can’t do this. I love her, as crazy as it is, and I want her to be happy. If Donovan makes her happy, then I wish them the best. I just don’t think I can be here and see that happiness every day, knowing that I’m not a part of it.”

Oliver dropped his chin into his hands and stared at my resignation. A single piece of paper managed to fill the room until everything else disappeared.

When Oliver spoke again his voice had changed. It was heavy and tired. “My sister and I have always kept a comfortable distance. We love each other, and we’re able to work together without problems, but we aren’t as close as we could be. It’s no one’s fault, and I’m not blaming anyone, but sometimes I wish things were different. She’s only a few years older, but it’s always felt like a distance I can’t bridge.” He leaned back in his chair and ran his fingers through his hair. “Dad never pressured us to take over the company; at least, not that I know of. Some companies are still caught up in

the idea of keeping it in the family - like Logan's. But the decision was left to us.

"I've always wanted to work here because I was proud of it. Not the money, or the status, or the name, but because it was something my family built. I want to protect it and see it grow. I think Daphne feels the same, but it's different for her. She's always held herself to impossibly high standards at work and in her personal life." He paused, gathering his thoughts. "If this is really what you think is best, I won't stand in your way. I know we aren't as close as you are with Ben, but I like you, and I want us to be friends."

"We are friends."

He smiled. "Then, as friends, I have a favor to ask you. Before you make the final decision, will you talk to Daphne? Face to face. I think it would be good for you, for the both of you."

My jaw clenched, my body tensing at the thought. He was right, though. I knew he was. It wasn't fair of me to run away without explaining myself, not after all our time together.

Slowly, I nodded, and Oliver relaxed. "But I don't know if she'll talk to me," I admitted. "She's been avoiding me. She didn't even tell me about this trip."

He tapped his fingers against his desk. "I might have an idea."



### Chapter 13

I had only visited the Calloway mansion once before, and that had been a short trip to grab some files. It had been years since either of the Calloway children had lived at home, but they came and went as they pleased and still used their childhood bedrooms.

The house was magnificent. It was massive, as expected of the Calloways, with more rooms than I could count. It was daunting to be surrounded by such unapologetic wealth, but Oliver was blind to it after a lifetime in those halls.

He had led me to the kitchen and pulled out an array of crackers to snack on while we waited. Oliver seemed content to lead the conversation and told me story after story from when he and Ben were kids. I could only half listen, though I enjoyed the stories. The other half of me was overwhelmed as we waited for Daphne to arrive.

Oliver had called her before her plane left Los Angeles and asked her to meet him at their home. He had said it was an emergency but didn't go into detail. Her plane had already landed at JFK, so there was nothing to do but wait.

I had gone through more than half the crackers despite the knots in my stomach. There was so much anxious energy inside me that I felt like I was buzzing, and every minute that passed only made it worse.

I had no idea what I was going to say to her. Oliver had asked that I tell her what I felt, that I faced her honestly. At this point, I wasn't sure I knew what I felt. Everything was a mess, and my legs itched to run away. But I didn't. I owed it to

myself to see this through.

When the front door opened my mind went blank. A white-hot terror gripped my insides, but Oliver just nodded at me with a smile. He seemed to believe that everything would work out. I wish I shared his confidence.

“Oliver?”

“In the kitchen,” he called.

“What is going on?” she demanded, her voice traveling in from the hallway. The whirr of her rolling suitcase punctuated her arrival. “What was so important I had to come straight here after a six-hour -” she swallowed the end of her sentence as she saw me sitting at the kitchen island. Her brows formed a deep V between her eyes. “Marina, why are you here?”

Oliver stood as I scrambled to come up with an answer, saving me from the question. “I brought her here.” He dropped his hand on my shoulder and gave it a quick squeeze before walking over to Daphne.

She didn’t take her eyes off me until he stopped beside her and pulled something out of his pocket. She tilted her head towards him as she took what he offered, and my heart dropped. “What’s this?”

“Oliver,” I hissed, anger gathering in the base of my stomach.

He ignored me. “Marina’s resignation.” Instantly her eyes shot back to me, so wide they looked close to popping out of her face. “Dad shouldn’t be back until next week, so you have the house to yourselves. I thought you two should discuss it in private.” He looked back at me over his shoulder, unapologetic. “I’ll be at Ben’s after this,” he said. “If you need us.” And with that, he was gone.

I was going to murder him. He hadn't said anything about giving her that letter, but now there was no way around it. I guess I was jumping in head first.

Daphne had a death grip on the paper, so tight her hand was starting to shake. "Resignation?"

Fine. No more hiding.

"I don't think we should work together anymore."

"Why?"

I sighed. "Daph, I can't do this. It's obvious that you've figured out my feelings, and with Donovan -" I paused, struggling to find my words. "It's not healthy. I'll train my replacement and then we can go our separate ways."

I'd imagined a dozen different ways she might react, from anger, to embarrassment, to denial. But I never thought I would see her cry.

"You love him that much?" she whispered, tears gathering in her eyes.

Wait.

Him?

I frowned, my mind unable to keep up. I held up a hand, "Hold on, hold on. Him?"

Her throat tightened as she fought down her emotions. "Donovan. I know that you're in love with him." She turned away, unable to face me.

I was so confused I didn't know where to begin. "Daph, I don't love Donovan. I

barely even like him.”

She shook her head, looking down at the floor. “Don’t lie to me, Marina. Every time the two of you are in a room together there’s so much tension you could cut it with a butter knife.”

Tension? With Donovan? “Daphne, I’m a lesbian. I am not in love with Donovan.”

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When she finally turned back to me her eyes were red and smeared with mascara. “You had sex with him,” she snapped, her words laced with anger and pain.

“So did you!” I hadn’t intended for my voice to rise, but it did. I tried to hold it in and fight it back, but there was something new growing in my chest. Something bright, warm, and dangerous. Hope. Hope that she was reacting like this because I meant something to her; something that I had been missing this whole time.

Her lips quivered. “You kissed him,” she whispered.

“What?”

“You kissed him,” she repeated, her voice shaking. “You kissed him, and you kissed someone at that fucking club, but you’ve never kissed me.” Her tears were falling freely now, and she didn’t bother to hide them. “You said that you only kiss your lovers, but you’ve never kissed me.”

I’ve always been impulsive. There would be moments when I lost all sense of reason and acted purely on instinct. It took a while, but, eventually, I learned to control it. To think before I acted. But this time, I didn’t need to think.

The moment my lips met hers I knew I would never be able to kiss anyone else. Nothing could compare to the woman I loved.

When I finally pulled away I buried my head in the crook of her neck, unable to look at her. “I never kissed you because I knew I wouldn’t be able to hide how much I love you.”

She didn't answer at first, but then her arms came up and wrapped around me, like she was afraid I would try to escape. "Really?"

I nodded into her shoulder. "I've been jealous of Donovan because he has a thing for you. When we all slept together...it wasn't that I was attracted to him, it was more of a power thing. I don't really know how to describe it, but the kiss was just something that happened. I don't feel anything towards him. You're the one that I want."

Her hands moved tentatively up and down my back as if she was unsure how to touch me. "I want you, too," she whispered, her lips pressed into my hair. "I'm in love with you. Only you."

We stayed like that for a time, just holding each other. My legs felt like jelly, but she kept me standing. I could have stood there forever, but as the worry and fear fell away, something else took its place.

"Daphne," I nuzzled against her skin. "I want to spend the night with you."

She pressed a gentle kiss against the top of my head. "We can go back to my place."

"I can't wait that long." Heat was already pooling between my legs. I tilted my hips forward to rub against her body.

I felt her throat contract as she gulped. "My room is upstairs." She whimpered as I dragged my tongue along her neck. "I need to shower; I was on a plane for six hours."

My head rolled back far enough to look at her, and I grinned at the flush rising into her face. "I'll join you."

Chapter 14

My first impression of Daphne's childhood bedroom was that it was huge and it was floral. The wallpaper was a pinkish white covered in depictions of flowering vines. It wasn't exactly what I had expected, but I only had a few moments to look around before Daphne pulled me into her bathroom.

It was bright and white, with swirled marble and tasteful abstract art against the walls. This felt more like Daphne than her room, but, again, my chance to examine my surroundings was quickly cut away as Daphne pinned me against the wall, devouring me in her kiss.

Now that we had started I doubted we would ever be able to stop, and so be it. Her tongue twisted around mine, pulling me in. Every touch burned but the pain was addicting.

Her clothes came off and so did mine. We were finally bared to each other, no more secrets between us. Just as it was always meant to be.

I let my mouth drop to rest against her neck, peppering her skin with kisses. "Marina," she breathed, "I need to shower."

"You started this," I hummed, letting my hands roam freely across her body. I caressed and I squeezed and I filled my hands with her soft flesh, drawing her always closer to me.

"And I thought you were going to join me."

Touché.

Reluctantly, I let my arms fall to my sides. She stepped over our pile of discarded clothes and crossed to the shower - which was just as large as I had expected. She slid open the glass door and fiddled with the handles until water came rushing from the

shower head. After a few seconds, she checked the temperature with her finger and deemed it warm enough to enter.

Not interested in wasting any time, I hopped in after her and pushed her back against the grey tile as the water sluiced over our bodies. There was no resistance, no hesitation in her kiss, only an eager energy I matched ten-fold.

We stayed kissing like that until steam began to build around us and I finally broke away. There was a bench in the corner and I took the opportunity to plop down and catch my breath. I had been so anxious leading up to this moment that I hadn't realized the strain on my mind, but now that everything was cleared up I could feel the toll it had taken.

All the stress and tension left my body and I was lighter than I had been in years. I smiled, unable to hold it in. "You're so beautiful."



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If her face wasn't already flushed from the heat of the water, I was sure she would have blushed. She was beautiful, gorgeous, divine. Every part of her was breathtaking. I loved her eyes and her lips, I loved her hair, I loved her breasts, I loved the roundness of her stomach. Her thighs were thick and firm and I would gladly have given my life between them. I loved the moles on her arms and the freckles across her nose. She would give any goddess a run for her money. And she wanted me.

The tiles were cool as I leaned back against them, slick from the water and steam. "You lived here till you went to college, right?"

Daphne nodded, though I could see the confusion in her eyes. "I still stay here sometimes, though."

"Then, have you masturbated in here?"

Her eyes went wide, shocked at the question. I didn't speak again, waiting for her. After a moment she nodded. "I have."

A delicious impulse made my fingers itch. I rose from the bench and stepped forward until our bodies pressed together. I heard Daphne's breath catch as anticipation took hold, but she didn't know what I had in mind.

I reached over her and pulled the shower head out of its stand. It head had multiple settings, and it wasn't long before I found one I liked. "Daphne," brought my face forward until our lips were only a hairsbreadth apart. "Spread your legs."

She was like a doll in my hands. Daphne could barely keep herself upright, her arms wrapped around my neck the only thing keeping her from collapsing.

Every sound she made amplified against the tile walls until we were surrounded by her pleasure. I had selected a setting with medium pressure - enough to drive her crazy, but not enough to be painful. It was a delicate balance, but I had plenty of personal experience. The water had to be the right temperature - not too hot, not too cold (unless it was an intentional choice) - and it needed to stay focused on her clit, not dip too far down. Judging from the lust that filled her eyes, everything was as it needed to be.

“You’re so cute,” I purred, leaning in to lick drops of water from her lips. “Such a good girl.”

“More,” was all she managed, her voice hoarse and wanting.

I chuckled. “Don’t be greedy.” I nudged the control and weakened the flow of water, to which she immediately pouted. I brought my face forward until my lips were beside her ear. “Your body belongs to me now. I decide how it’s used.”

She didn’t speak, but her body answered for her. Her chest filled as she sucked in air, her nipples hard and taunt against my breasts.

I nibbled on her earlobe, thoroughly enjoying her reactions. “Am I understood?” Daphne nodded without hesitation. “Good.” I moved the shower head in a slow circle around her clit, teasing her even more. “This is my pussy, but as long as you behave I’ll take good care of her.”

“I’ll behave,” she whimpered.

My blood burned as it raced through my veins, heating me from within. I had fallen

in love with the Daphne who was set to take over the company and was a force to be reckoned with. I loved how strong she was, how confident. I loved her dedication and perseverance. But the Daphne that stood before me now needed to be taken care of. She needed to be pampered and punished, worshipped and whipped. And I would do it all.

Without giving her warning I increased the pressure, sending the hard streams of water straight to her clit. She screamed as she came, violently, forcefully, wonderfully. Her legs gave out as she succumbed to her ecstasy and she sank to the tile floor. I followed her down until I was kneeling above her.

She wore a dazed expression as she came down from her high, but then she laughed, and the sound swelled my heart. She brought her hand up to rest on my cheek. "I never expected you to get so bossy during sex." Her thumb drifted across my lower lip. "I must have trained you well."

I couldn't help but smile. "I learned from the best."

I was wearing Daphne's old pajamas, in Daphne's bed, in Daphne's childhood home. If this was a dream I was happy to sleep forever, but it wasn't a dream. It was real and my cheeks hurt from smiling.

After we finished in the shower - i.e. Daphne pushed me down on the shower bench so she could eat me out before actually washing up - we collapsed on her bed in a fit of giggles and wet hair.

I wasn't sure how long we had talked, but it was well into the night by the time we realized we had missed dinner. At that point we were too tired to care, so we just remained in each other's arms.

There was a lot to talk about, and not all of it was pleasant, but we were open and

honest.

It turned out that William Calloway had suggested more than once that Daphne give Donovan a chance, but she had never been interested. Donovan was expected to rise high in the company, so Daphne had been giving him extra attention and training. She hadn't noticed his feelings towards her until the threesome because she had been too focused on the idea that he and I were somehow a thing. I reassured her a dozen times that I had absolutely no romantic or sexual attraction to him; that I was, in fact, a lesbian. A lesbian with possible dom tendencies that had been newly awakened, but a lesbian nonetheless.

She thought she was bi, and that she had been attracted to women before, though it took her a while to understand it. She had first become conscious of me a few years after I started working for her, and that was why she had been so open the first time I made a move on her. After that, she started to become confused until she finally realized she had feelings for me. It all become complicated with jealousy every time she saw Donovan and I interact.

Incidentally, that had been the reason she took him with her on her last trip. Not so they could spend time together, but so he was away from me. Her head had been all over the place and she had wanted some space from me but didn't want to leave us alone in New York. She proved herself to be the most adult out of all of us on the trip and made her feelings clear to Donovan. She liked and respected him as a colleague and nothing that happened would jeopardize that, but she couldn't return his affection. She said he had taken the news well, and that he might have already seen it coming.

And she was insistent they had never gone on a date. She swore that the one night they had left together had been to discuss an upcoming project they wanted Donovan to head. They had talked over dinner, then gone their separate ways.

For my part, I confessed that I had fallen for her almost as soon as I started working for her. It was almost embarrassing to admit, but it made her smile, so it was worth it.

We finally fell silent as sleep began to creep in. She moved to turn out the light but I interrupted her. “I’d never have expected your room to look like this. Your apartment is all dark and sleek, the opposite of this.”

She laid back against the pillow, smiling softly up at the ceiling. “My mom decorated it.”

Oh.

I had never met Violet Calloway, but her memory was strong. There was a portrait of her hanging in Williams's office and a large dedication to her in the main lobby. Daphne didn't speak of her often, and neither did Oliver, but when they did it was impossible not to feel the love.

"It was so silly," she continued. "This is the wallpaper she put up before I was born. I tried to convince her to let me change it for years, but she wouldn't budge. She said it felt like I was growing up too fast." She chuckled. "After she died I couldn't bring myself to change anything. Now it just reminds me of her."

I shifted over to nuzzle against her arm. "Then I was wrong. It's perfect."

She kissed my forehead. "I wish she could have met you. She would have loved you."

A heavy glob of emotion stuck in my throat. I felt like I was going to cry, though there was no real reason. I wrapped my hands around her arm and held on like she was the only thing keeping me from being swept away. "I love you."

She stretched to the side to turn out the light. We were cradled by the darkness, and I felt more at peace than I had in a long time.

"I love you, too," she whispered, and I knew at that moment that I would never let anything take her from me.

Daphne's face was the first thing I saw when I opened my eyes. She was already awake, looking at me. Her mouth curled up into a smile as she saw me wake.

"Good morning."

"Morning."

I had never known how lovely such a simple thing could be. She had the covers tucked up under her chin and wiggled around until her hand popped up. She brushed the hair out of my face then patted the top of my head. Fuck, she was so cute.

"Are you hungry?" she asked. "I'm not the best cook, but I can make a mean omelet."

"That sounds perfect."

Her smile widened and she hopped out of bed. I sat up to follow her but she appeared beside me, holding out her hand. My heart skipped a goddamn beat as I took it and let her lead me into the hallway.

I laced my fingers into hers as we walked down the stairs. We were nearly to the kitchen when I smelled it. "Did you already start some coffee?"

Daphne paled, and I had my answer. As soon as we stepped into the kitchen we found him sipping from a mug. Daphne tightened her grip. "Dad. I thought you weren't coming home till later in the week."

I felt like I was going to throw up. I had met Mr. Calloway hundreds of times, but that was always as Daphne's secretary. I slid my hand out of hers and pulled at the hem of my shirt, beyond grateful that Daphne had lent me a pair of pajama shorts.

Mr. Calloway took another sip of coffee before setting down his mug and looking at

us. “Daphne, I thought that was your suitcase; though I can’t say I was expecting to see you here either.” His eyes flicked to me and up went his eyebrow. “Your secretary, huh?” He shook his head as a smile spread across his face. “That’s my girl.”

Having breakfast with my CEO the morning after fucking his daughter wasn’t my worst morning-after story, but I was sure I would never live it down.

William had poured us each a cup of coffee while Daphne started on the omelets in silence. I was at a complete loss. I drank my coffee on auto-pilot, trying to decide if I should get Ben to fake an emergency.

No one spoke until Daphne sat three plates with omelets down in front of us. They looked delicious, but I was feeling queasy from the atmosphere. William, however, had no such qualms and dug in.

Daphne and I eventually followed suit, sharing a glance across the round kitchen table. It was delicious, but I only managed about half of it.

When William finished he leaned back in his chair, his eyes focused downward as he started to speak. “We always send a company float to Pride, but it’s been a few years since I went. We should all go together next year.”

Daphne burst into tears.

I froze, torn between the urge to comfort her and the idea of being affectionate in front of her dad. William beat me to it.

He stood up and went to stand behind her, putting his hand down on her shoulder. I had the feeling I was looking upon something private, but I was unable to look away. She had never hidden her admiration for her father. His opinion was the one that



mattered the most to her, and she had dedicated herself to his company. The idea that he could be disappointed in her or her choices must have been weighing on her more than I knew.

“Why are you crying, sweetheart?”

She leaned into his touch, pressing her head against his arm. “I love her,” she sobbed. “Is that okay?”

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William bent forward until he was halfway cradling her in the chair. “I love you and your brother unconditionally. I don’t care if you’re gay or straight, or anything else. I just want you to be happy. Okay?”

She let out a sound somewhere in between a sob and a hiccup as she nodded. I hadn’t realized it, but I had started crying too. I wiped away the tears that spilled down my cheeks and lowered my head, doing my best to give them some privacy.

After another minute or two, she ran out of tears, and William stepped away. He smiled at me, filled with warmth.

“On another day I’d like to talk with you more, Marina, if you don’t mind.”

“I’d like that.”

He patted the top of Daphne’s head. “I think there are some documents I need to sign at the office, so I’ll head out. Save me some time this week and I’ll arrange a dinner - for all of us - Oliver and Ben included.”

We both managed to nod. He gave me a final smile, then turned and left.

Once he was gone Daphne came around the table and swung herself over to sit in my lap. I wrapped my arms around her as she buried her head in my neck. I didn’t say anything, just smoothed a hand up and down her back until she was ready.

Eventually, she calmed down and rested her cheek against my shoulder. “Did that scare you away?”

I almost laughed. “Not a chance.”

She trailed a finger across my collarbone, tracing invisible designs into my skin. “You know, I’m different when I’m not working.”

“Oh?”

“I can be stubborn, and childish. And demanding. Can you really put up with all that?”

“I look forward to it.”

Daphne went quiet for a moment, then in a small voice said, “I’ll never let you go, and I can be a lot to handle. Will you still want me after all that?”

I inhaled deeply, breathing in the smell of her. Strawberry body wash with a hint of coffee. “I’m already yours, Ms. Calloway. I’ll take you as you are, and I wouldn’t change a thing.”

It was a vow I intended to keep, and I was going to spend the rest of my life seeing it through.

A Contract

“You can’t be serious.” Daphne kept her voice down, even though no one could hear us with her office door closed.

“You know I am.”

We were in a battle of wills and Daphne still hadn’t realized I was going to win. The point of contention sat on her desk between us, the orange silicone bright against the dark wood grain. It was a test, for both of us, but there was no real knowing what the

results would be.

The smell of fresh coffee wafted between us, courtesy of the Starbucks down the street. Hers sat untouched while I was nearly done with my latte.

“Marina, I can’t.” She was incredulous, but she shouldn’t have been.

“You can.” I settled back in the chair and crossed my legs. “You will.”

I imagined I saw steam blowing out of her ears and held back a laugh. I knew I was being cruel, but I wasn’t going to back down.

She chewed on the inside of her cheek, glancing down at the orange vibrator. “All day is too much.”

I just shrugged and took another sip of my latte, the last dregs of caramel syrup hitting my tongue. “Is it?”

Daphne huffed and snatched it off her desk. “Fine. I’ll be back in a minute.”

“Just put it in here.”

The look on her face was sharp enough to kill, but it didn’t phase me. We stared at each other for a good 5 seconds, then she dropped her shoulders. “Close your eyes.”

I complied, though I’d seen everything she had to hide by now. Her movements were quiet, but I could hear the telltale swish as her pants dropped to the floor. A few more moments and she gasped, and I bit down a smile. She had done it.

I waited till I heard her sit, then asked, “Can I open them?”

“Yes.”

She was a lovely sight to behold. Her face was flushed and she squirmed in her chair. A small, kind part of me thought that I had tormented her enough. It was a very small part.

Daphne cried out as I swept my finger over my phone screen, activating the vibrator she had so obediently stuck inside her pussy. Her eyes went wide, but I didn't let off. "Marina," she gasped, clutching at the edge of her desk.

I only smiled. "All day," I reminded her. It was her punishment.