

# **Daddy in Disguise**

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Category: Erotic, Romance

**Description:** I've wanted Sparrow Hart for years. The only things standing in my way are her brother and my dark, dominant side. When we're both invited to the same masquerade party, I know it's time to make my move. To claim what is mine. But when Daddy comes out to play, will Sparrow fly away or will she willingly submit?

Total Pages (Source): 19

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Sparrow

"Oh, my God!" I scream. "This cannot be happening!"

I pull the garment out of the box and groan. This is a nightmare. Tonight, my brother Thatcher is hosting the largest masquerade party in Los Angeles to celebrate the grand opening of his nightclub, The Monarch.

"What's wrong," Thatcher asks, leaning against the doorway of my bedroom.

"My costume." I pout. "I was planning on going as Marie Antoinette tonight but that's not what they sent me."

"What did they send?" He pushes himself away from the door frame and walks toward me and the disaster spread out on my bed.

"I don't even know." I pick up the costume and hold it up for him to see. "What do you think it is?"

He eyes the frilly blue satin dress. "Is that . . . Little Bo Peep?" He peers into the large box the costume came in and reaches inside. "Yep." He holds a curved shepherd's hook up and grins. "Hope you find some lost sheep tonight, little sis."

He walks away, chuckling, leaving me to deal with this disaster on my own.

I reach for my phone and call the costume store. "Hi," I begin when someone answers. "I think I was sent the wrong costume."

The woman on the other end asks for my name so she can look up my reservation. "Marie Antoinette, right?" she asks without much enthusiasm.

"Yes," I confirm.

"And that's not what you received?"

"No. I was sent Little Bo Peep." I cringe as the words come out of my mouth. "Do you still have the Marie Antoinette costume?"

"No, I'm sorry."

"Anything else? Cinderella?"

"Most of our costumes are already rented."

"Well, what do you have left?"

"You're welcome to come down and look. We have sexy nurse still available, and Playboy bunny."

I flick my gaze to the digital clock on my bedside table. Los Angeles traffic is terrible, and I cannot be late to Thatcher's party. I sigh and accept my fate. "That's okay. I'll just wear the costume I was sent."

The conversation ends and I stare at the mountain of ruffles on my bed. It's a masquerade, right? Maybe no one will even recognize me.

I head down to the kitchen and find Thatcher sitting at the island, hunched over, furiously typing on his laptop, no doubt working on last minute preparations for tonight.

"Found your sheep yet?" he asks with a quirk of his lips.

I narrow my gaze in his direction and stick out my tongue. "What's your costume?"

"Phantom of the Opera."

"Are Carter and Hunter coming?"

"Of course. They're my best friends."

I plop down on a stool across from him and pick at the bowl of trail mix in front of him. "Carter hasn't been around much lately. Did you guys get into a fight?"

Thatcher grunts and shrugs. "He's just been busy."

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Carter St. James is my brother's best friend, and he's normally a staple around our house along with their other friend, Hunter Maxwell. I'm embarrassed to admit I miss Carter's near constant presence in our house. When you practically raise yourself because your parents are never around, having someone stable like Carter around is comforting. It also doesn't hurt that he's handsome.

"Why do you care anyway?" Thatcher asks. "I didn't think you liked him."

Carter might be the strong, silent type but there's a lot about him to like. Dark hair, dark eyes, angular jaw, he could pass for one of Hollywood's stars instead of a video game designer. My feelings for him go beyond a crush but that's not something I'm going to admit to my brother.

"I was just curious," I respond.

We talk for a little while longer about the grand opening of Thatcher's club. He's been working on it for so long, and I'm incredibly proud of him. When I notice the time, I sigh while glancing at the stairs. "Well, I guess it's time to transform myself into Little Bo Peep."

My brother laughs. "Just don't go looking for Little Boy Blue. He might want you to blow more than his horn."

"That's disgusting."

I stomp up the stairs to the bedroom and the costume waiting for me. I pick it up and inspect it a little more closely. There's a corset, and the skirt is shorter than I expect.

With a groan, I undress and try it on.

I'm surprised by how well it fits and by its subtle sexiness. The tight bodice hugs my waist and pushes my boobs up. The full skirt stops mid-thigh and I know if I bed over, I'll give everyone at the party quite the view. There's a pair of ruffled panties with the rest of the garment but the thought of wearing someone else's underwear makes me gag. Thankfully, I own a black pair that will work perfectly.

I'm putting the finishing touches on my make-up when I catch sight of Thatcher's reflection in my bathroom mirror. He looks amazing with his black satin cape tied around his shoulders and his dark hair slicked back. He places a white half-mask over his face and says, "What do you think?"

I smile. "You look great." I turn to face him, my skirt swishing along my thighs. "Do I look okay?"

His jaw drops slightly. "I think I'm going to have to keep a close eye on you tonight because more than a few lost sheep might find you."

I grin. "Let's hope so!"

His expression turns serious, and I catch the faintest tick of his jaw. "What if this ends up being a huge failure, Sparrow?"

I step toward him and slip my arms around his waist, careful not to rest my face against his chest so he doesn't end up covered in blush and powder. I squeeze him tight and say, "Tonight is going to be amazing and you're going to succeed."

He returns my embrace, holding me close. "How do you know?"

"You've never failed at anything in your life, Thatcher."

"There's a first time for everything."

I look at him, my eyes meeting his. "You've worked so hard to get this club open. Just remember what Uncle Lou used to say: hard work is always rewarded."

He tugs on a coiled lock of my hair and smiles. "Thanks. I needed to hear that."

I pop up onto my tiptoes and kiss his cheek. "You're welcome."

He starts to turn but stops and looks back at me. "Whatever you're looking for tonight, I hope you find it."

He turns away, leaving me with my thoughts. What am I looking for? A hot one-night stand would be fun, but I've moved on from those. I want something beyond just a night. An image of Carter flashes through my mind and I wonder if I'll be able to pick him out from among the sea of costumed attendees. Fingers crossed.

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#### Carter

Ilook ridiculous. I cannot believe I'm even wearing this, but Thatcher let it slip his sister Sparrow planned to dress as Marie Antoinette. I've been in love with her for years, and tonight, I'm going to make my move. But first, I needed a little help. It didn't take much, just a couple hundred bucks, to convince the owner of the costume shop to send Sparrow the wrong outfit.

I place the cartoon mask over my face and put a brown cowboy hat on my head, giving my reflection another once over before removing them both. The black town car I hired for the evening arrives and the moment I step out of my house, I know there's no going back.

Sparrow is worth every ounce of humiliation I might suffer. She's worth every bit of effort it took to create such an elaborate scheme. I only hope it doesn't blow up in my face.

Every guy knows dating your best friend's little sister is forbidden, unless you get explicit permission. But when it comes to Sparrow, I'm just going to take what I want, and ask for Thatcher's forgiveness later.

Tonight, I'm going to leave with the woman of my dreams even if I must drag her kicking and screaming.

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I smile at the thought. I wouldn't mind if she put up a fight. My hand twitches reflexively at the idea of having Sparrow spread across my lap, her ass in the air, ready to be spanked.

When I arrive at the club, there's already a large crowd inside. My body vibrates and I'm not sure whether it's the bass of the music blaring or my nerves.

Sparrow is easy to spot. It's not because she's the most beautiful woman in the club, but the shepherd's hook she's carrying is like a beacon, guiding me right to her.

I make my way through the mass of people grinding against each other. My gaze somehow remains locked on Sparrow, who's swaying to the beat of the music, unaware of the eyes watching her. The ridiculous fluff and frill of the costume doesn't seem silly on her curves. The dress fits her perfectly, hugging her waist and pushing up her chest. My mouth waters. I want to taste her; I want to gorge myself on every inch of her creamy skin.

My feet carry me the last few paces until she's right in front of me, moving her hips back and forth as if to tease me. I reach out with tentative hands and slide them around her waist before leaning forward and whispering in her ear, "Howdy ma'am."

She stiffens before turning to face me. Even behind a mask of white, I can tell she's annoyed.

Before she scolds me, I tug her close and say, "You've got a friend in me."

She laughs in response. "Is that the best you can do?"

A laugh rumbles in my chest. "Give me a chance and I can show you exactly what I can do."

And then, as if possessed by someone else, I grab her hand and place it against my erection. Her eyes widen with shock, and I expect her to pull away, to slap me, but she doesn't. Instead, she responds to my challenge with a purr and a sultry smile.

"Hello, Woody." Her voice is sweet and coy before the hand covering my dick tightens and squeezes. "Who do you think you are? Do you really think you can approach a woman like that?"

I take a step back and her hand drops. My mind is blank. I can't just let her walk away from me, but her challenge is a turn-on and I know what I must do. Show her who I truly am and hope for the best. My sexual proclivities aren't for everyone, and they've been my deepest, darkest secret for years.

Her eyes are still blazing with fury behind her mask, but I close the distance between us, again grabbing her around the waist. "When I see something I want, I don't ask for permission. I just take it."

She huffs, seemingly annoyed by my response. When she opens her mouth, most likely to scold me, I place a finger over her lips and then slide my other hand down the length of her frilly skirt before slipping it under the layers of ruffle.

"If you hate what I've done so much, then why are you aroused?" My voice isn't much louder than a whisper, but her expression tells me she heard me clearly.

When she doesn't answer me, I take another risk and press my hand against the front of her soaked panties, pushing the heel of my palm against her. Her eyes flutter closed, and a moan escapes her lips.

"We shouldn't do this here," she finally says.

I smile. "Then where should we go?"

She uses her hand to push mine away from beneath her skirt. At first, I'm disappointed but she doesn't let go. Instead, she leads me through the crowd toward the edge of the dance floor.

She turns her head toward me, and I catch a glimpse of mischief glittering in her eyes. "Someplace private."

3

#### **Sparrow**

Itold myself I wasn't interested in another one-night stand, but something about this mysterious stranger dressed as everyone's favorite deputy is alluring and seductive, even with a stupid cartoon mask covering half of his face.

Before Thatcher and I left this evening, I boldly predicted I'd be able to pick out all our friends, even though they would be in disguise. I was wrong because I haven't recognized anyone, which is disconcerting. But something about the cowboy trailing behind me seems familiar. Maybe that's why I let him touch me so intimately. Something inside of me instinctively trusted him.

I stop in the darkened hallway and turn. "Tell me your name."

"You know who I am," he replies cryptically.

"I'm serious. Before I let you touch me again, I want to know your name."

He laughs and shakes his head. Then he advances toward me, forcing me to back up until I hit the wall behind me. He places his hands on either side of my body, caging me with his much larger frame. The tension between us is palpable. All I can see are his full lips and angular jaw. It would be easier if I could see his eyes. If I could see their color or their expression, I wouldn't feel so unsettled.

"You can call me Daddy, little bird."

I suppress the laugh bubbling inside of me because even though I can't see his entire face, I know he's serious from the firm line of his mouth. And when his tongue swipes along his bottom lip, my entire body shivers with desire. I'd be lying if I said I didn't want him to touch me again but the thought of his kneeling in front of me and placing his mouth against me makes me needy.

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"Okay," I whisper. "Daddy."

He leans forward and growls as he grazes his lips along the curve of my neck. "Fuck, little bird. I like the way you say that."

My head falls back, exposing the column of my throat and immediately, the heat of his mouth is against my skin, trailing scorching kisses up until he reaches my jaw and finally my lips.

His kiss is consuming, as though he owns me. As though he's sucking the breath from my body.

It makes me tremble. It leaves me weak-kneed and boneless.

His kiss renders me vulnerable. He could take anything from me in this moment as long as his lips never leave mine.

And then it ends all too soon. He pulls away but only a fraction. "Tell me what you want," he demands. "I touched you once without your permission. I stole a kiss without your consent, but I will not go further until you tell me this is what you want."

"I want you," I breathe out.

"You want me to fuck you?"

"Yes."

"Yes, what?"

The words fall from my lips so easily. "Yes, Daddy. I want you to fuck me."

"Where?"

"Right here."

"And do you trust me to protect you, little bird, from any prying eyes?"

I nod my head. "Yes, Daddy."

He backs away to unbuckle his pants. "Show Daddy your pussy. Show me what's going to be mine."

My heart beats wildly in my chest and my breaths are more like pants. Who is this mysterious man taking command of me? I reach for him, my fingers touching the edge of his mask before he snarls and swats my hand away.

"Keep your hands to yourself," he barks. "Unless they're wrapped around my cock."

His chastisement burns in my chest and heats my cheeks.

He places a finger under my chin and tilts my head up. "You didn't know the rules, little bird. There are only two. If you want me to stop, just tell me."

"And the other rule?"

"Our masks stay on. No names, no identities."

Disappointment fills me but it's consumed easily by my own desire. I want to know

his name, see his face, but I need him to soothe the throbbing ache between my legs.

"Tell me you agree," he says. "Otherwise, we're through here."

"I agree."

His smile is wicked. "Then show me your pussy. Show me what I'm about to claim."

My hands tremble as they gather the skirt of my dress, lifting it until he can see the black lace panties covering me. I expect him to be disappointed, but his smile widens into a grin.

"Black lace is perfect, but I want what's underneath more." He steps forward, grabs the side of my underwear in his fist, and yanks, pulling the fabric against my skin until it tears. He's relentless as he keeps tugging until there's nothing but scraps in his hand.

"I want to taste you so badly, but I don't have time to savor you properly. So, it's going to be a quick, rough fuck." He dips his fingers between the folds of my pussy, tempting and teasing me until a moan escapes my lips. "Hold tight to your dress and spread your legs."

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I widen my stance, but I'm captivated by the sight of him freeing his cock from the confines of his pants. He dips his head as he aligns himself between my legs, the head of his cock pushing into the seam of my pussy before notching himself at my entrance. He lets go of himself and places his hand under my ass, lifting me. My legs automatically wrap around his waist.

"Are you ready," he asks, his voice raspy.

I nod.

"That's not good enough. You know what to call me."

"Yes, Daddy. I'm ready for you."

He grins. "Good girl." With my ass firmly in his grasp, he presses himself into me, stretching me wide to accommodate his thickness. His hiss mixes with my groan.

There's no warning before he pulls back and thrusts swiftly and deeply back inside me. My head tilts back, bumping against the wall, but the pain is nothing compared to the way he feels inside me, to the way he handles me masterfully, controlling both of our bodies.

And yet, I want to look into his eyes. I want to memorize every expression, even in the darkness of the hallway.

"Please," I beg him.

"Please what, little bird? Fuck you harder? Faster? Tell me what you need, and I'll give it to you as long as your pussy keeps squeezing my cock."

My hands grip his shoulders, holding on to him as our bodies rock together in a collision of ecstasy.

"Please." The word falls from my lips and this time I don't know what I'm asking him for—to see his face, to know the man behind the mask, or for release from this tortuous ache inside me.

"Tell me what you want, Sparrow. I'll give you anything," he says through gritted teeth, his head bent to watch his cock surging in and out of my pussy.

My head snaps and my eyes widen. I didn't tell him my name. My hands slide up his neck and when they reach the edge of his mask, he doesn't admonish me. He murmurs incoherently, entranced by the way our bodies connect. I want to watch too, but I'm overcome with a desire to finally know my familiar, mysterious stranger.

My hands push the mask up and I gasp. "Carter," I exclaim just as he groans, his cock pulsing inside me with his orgasm.

His head jerks up when he finally realizes what I've done and he drops me, his cock sliding out, the last of his cum dripping down my bare legs.

He's angry. No, not angry; he's furious. His jaw is set, tension ticking in his muscles, and he looks away.

I reach for him, but he slaps my hands away. "Carter—"

"Hey!" Both of our heads turn and watch my brother storm down the darkened hallway. "What do you two think you're doing?"

My hands work quickly to cover myself but it's too late. Thatcher comes to a skidding halt in front of us.

"Thatcher," I say on an exhale of breath. "It's not what you think."

My brother blinks. "It looks like you two were fucking in my club."

Carter steps forward, buttoning his pants, and places himself in the middle. "Let's just step outside and talk about this."

Thatcher's head snaps toward Carter. "You want to talk about fucking my little sister?" His hands clench into fists and even though I know what's about to happen, I'm powerless to stop it. My brother lifts his arm, draws it back, and then lets his fist fly toward Carter's gut before catching him along the jaw with his other fist. Carter stumbles back as Thatcher charges toward him.

"Stop!" I yell, lunging toward Thatcher. "Leave him alone."

"Go home, Sparrow," Thatcher growls through clenched teeth.

"No! I'm not a child. I don't have to listen to you."

His gaze lands on me, his eyes blazing. "You're not a child? Didn't I just catch you fucking my best friend in my club, where anyone could see you?" He huffs. "Maybe you're not a child. Maybe you're just a stupid whore."

"Watch your mouth!" Carter snarls as he staggers to his feet. I glance toward him and see him cradling his jaw.

"It's the truth, Carter." Thatcher steps closer, his much larger frame invading my space. "You know I'm right, Sparrow. Didn't you get yourself knocked up last year

in Vegas because you opened your legs for a stranger? And now you're doing it again for Carter."

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Tears sting my eyes. "Why are you being so cruel?"

There's no point in sticking around for the answer. I turn on my heel and run down the hallway to the emergency exit, pushing it open. I stumble into the alley behind the club and drop to my knees, crying from my brother's humiliation.

4

Carter

"What the fuck is wrong with you," I yell, once Sparrow is out of sight. Thatcher might have caught me off guard with his punch to the gut and then the blow to my jaw but my head is perfectly clear now.

"Me? What's wrong with you? How could you fuck my sister? In my club?"

"Because I'm in love with her!"

He laughs but the sound is humorless. "You're in love with her? Do you always treat women you love like they belong at The Opal House?"

I roll my eyes. "So that's what this is about?"

Six months ago, I decided to become a member at one of Los Angeles's most exclusive clubs, The Opal House. The membership fees are exorbitant, but it pays for something I value more than anything: privacy. I want the freedom to explore the darker side of my desires without having to worry about judgement.

The minute I confided in Thatcher, he started to distance himself from me.

"If you want to live out your perverted fantasies, do it somewhere else and with someone else. My sister is not some fuck toy you can chain to your bed and abuse."

"If you think I'd abuse your sister or any other woman, then you don't know me at all." I wiggle my jaw one more time. It hurts, and tomorrow there's going to be a bruise, but I'm not concerned about it. "I need to go check on Sparrow."

I turn and head down the hallway toward the emergency exit. The door is still slightly ajar and when I push it open, I see her and my heart breaks. One of the street lights illuminates her, like a sad spotlight. Her ruffled skirt is fanned out around her, and her dark brown ringlets shake as she sobs.

I approach her slowly but the sound of my footsteps crunching in the gravel echoes in silence of the night.

Sparrow's hands drop and her back stiffens.

"It's just me," I call out. "I came to check on you."

"I'm fine," she says harshly. "You can go."

My head shakes and I place my hands on my hips. "I'm not going anywhere without you."

She stands quickly and spins to face me. "Didn't you hear my brother? I'm a whore."

"I heard what he said, and I choose to believe differently." I take a few steps toward her. She looks up at me with a defiant, angry scowl I want to kiss. "Let me make myself clear, little bird, you're coming home with me. Do you understand?"

The leftover anger inside of me simmers and transforms me into the dominant man who knows what he wants and takes it.

She closes her eyes and sighs. Her body sags and I'm quick to slip an arm around her waist. "Yes," she says at last.

"I didn't hear you. Do you understand?"

Her eyelids flutter open and there's a flash of recognition in her gaze. "Yes, Daddy, I understand."

"Good girl," I purr, running my fingers along her chin and lifting her face so she can see how much her acquiescence pleases me. I want to test her, push her limits to see how far she's willing to go for me but she deserves a reward for her answer. "Let's go."

I call the car service to come and pick us up. We wait for them on the corner and we're both quiet. We should talk about what happened with Thatcher, about what he said, and what he revealed. However, if Sparrow is feeling like I am, which is a bit disjointed, then we both could use a distraction.

"Before the car arrives, we need to discuss something," I tell her.

She rolls her eyes. "I don't want to talk about Thatcher, or what happened."

I chuckle and place a finger under her chin, pressing it up until our gazes meet. "We will talk about that . . . tomorrow. But we have unfinished business, little bird, and you don't get to have Daddy's cock inside you again until we talk about rules."

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"What rules?"

"I told you not to take off the mask and you disobeyed me. Don't do things unless you can handle the consequences."

"Can you blame me for breaking your rules, Carter? I wanted to see your face, to see the face of the man who was making me explode." She runs a hand through her hair, loosening the tight ringlets. "No one has ever turned me on the way you did tonight."

I pace in front of her, my hands on my hips. "You're the first person to see that side of me. I was worried you would reject me."

Her face softens. "You thought I would reject you?

"Believe it or not, not every woman finds this dominant side of me attractive."

She laughs. "I don't believe that. Every woman wants a dominant man in the bedroom."

"You don't understand, Sparrow. This is more than just me taking charge. It's about complete trust and faith in your partner."

"Well, I trusted you enough to fuck me, even before I knew who you were."

"That's not the kind of trust I'm talking about."

"I've known you for years, Carter. If I'm going to let anyone treat me that way, it's

going to be someone I trust implicitly."

My gaze focuses only on her, on the way she looks with her freshly fucked flushed cheeks, her messy curls, and her bee-stung lips. My cock hardens. I have wanted this woman for so long but I'm fearful of screwing up my chance.

"Treat you how, Sparrow? Tell me what I did."

"You owned me. You took control and gave me what I wanted, even when I didn't know it myself."

"And what do you want?" One hand slips around her waist and the other tugs on the corseted bodice, pressing the material barely covering her tits down until they spring free. She's not wearing a bra and her dusky pink nipples stiffen in the cool night air. I bend my head and suck a nipple into my mouth. She hisses and her hands grab on to my shoulders. I draw the other nipple into my mouth until it hardens before letting it pop free. "Tell Daddy what you want, little bird, and maybe you'll get it."

"I want what you denied me."

I chuckle, placing gentle kisses along the top of her chest. "And what did I deny you?"

"My orgasm."

I straighten myself and tug her against my body. "You defied me. Should I really let you have an orgasm?"

She blinks and when her gaze flicks up, I see acknowledgment in her eyes. She knows who is in charge.

"You have to tell me how this works, Carter," she murmurs. "You have to teach me how to please you, how to obey."

"Such an eager student, little bird. Everything about you pleases me, and I will enjoy being your teacher." I lean forward and press a soft, chaste kiss against her lips. "But you didn't answer my question. Should I let you have your missing orgasm?"

She looks down, her teeth sinking in her bottom lip. "No, Daddy," she finally answers.

I resist the urge to have her on her knees to suck my cock. I took my pleasure from her once already, and I know it was cruel to leave her unsatisfied. It was torture pulling out of her, knowing how perfectly my cock felt inside her pussy. I palm my dick at the memory.

"If the car doesn't get here soon, I'm going to eat your pussy in the middle of the street and then come all over your perfect tits."

"So do it," she says with a challenging tone.

I chuckle and lean in close. "Exhibitionism isn't one of my kinks, little bird. I fucked you against the wall in your brother's club because we both wore masks. Those are gone now and all the things I want to do to you will not be done in public. No one else gets to see your pussy or your tits. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, Daddy."

Minutes later, the car arrives and when we're safely tucked in the back seat, I start to relax. It won't be long until we're safely back in my home and I can do all the dirty things I've only imagined until now. I glance at Sparrow sitting beside me and laugh.

"What's so funny," she asks.

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"I never imagined you'd look quite so sexy wearing a Little Bo Peep costume. Paying to have your costume switched was money well spent."

Her eyes widen and she gasps. "You did this to me? I was so angry when I opened the box, and I didn't have time to get another costume."

"I have no regrets for what I did," I tell her with a smirk. "What was your original costume?"

"Marie Antoinette."

"By the end of the night, you're not going to be eating cake, but I'll gladly feed you my cock."

5

#### Sparrow

During the ride back to Carter's house, I think about what happened at The Monarch. Tonight was Thatcher's night, the opening of a club he put tremendous effort into opening. Did I ruin it by fucking his friend in a dark, empty hallway? Is that why he reacted so cruelly toward me?

Beside me, Carter's expression is passive as he scrolls through his phone with one hand firmly on my thigh. A clear sign of possession.

"How's your jaw," I ask quietly when I see him rubbing at it.

"It hurts but I know the perfect remedy." The hand on my thigh shifts until he brushes the center of my body. "I'll bury my face in your pussy and the pain will go away."

"I'm being serious," I murmur. "You're going to have a pretty nasty bruise."

"It's not the first time I've been hit, and it won't be the last."

The car pulls up the driveway to Carter's house, and when it stops, I follow him out.

"Wait here," he instructs me before walking back toward the idling car.

Something niggles at my brain, working its way into my thoughts. I'm nervous to tell him though. He seems to sense my unease and stops just in front of me. "What is it, little bird?"

"Before we walk in the house, I need to ask you something. Is this just about sex? Is that all you want from me?"

"No, Sparrow." He reaches up and runs his fingers along my cheek, the lust in his eyes softening. "I've been in love with you for so long, but I couldn't do anything about it because you're my best friend's little sister. I didn't want to hurt Thatcher."

"Thatcher," I murmur. I don't want to talk about how he humiliated me in front of Carter, but the sting of his brutality burns my chest. We're close for siblings and since our parents are too engrossed with their own lives to care what we do, I'm forced to depend on Thatcher more than I want to admit.

"Ready to talk about what happened earlier?"

I shake my head. "No. I can barely even process what's happening between us. Why haven't you said anything to me?"

His lips tip up in a lopsided grin. "There's no easy way to confess something like that. It's not something you can easily blurt out over pizza."

My cheeks heat and I look down at my feet. "But what made you change your mind? Why now?"

He shrugs, which seems so out of character for the strong, confident man who marched up to me on the dance floor of a crowded nightclub earlier. But his vulnerability is just as desirable as his dominance.

"There was never going to be a perfect opportunity to take what belongs to me," he says at last.

"I belong to you, Carter?"

"Yes, Sparrow," he growls, exposing more and more of his dominance. "Every inch of your skin, every kiss, every orgasm, it's all mine."

He steps closer, thrusting his hand under my dress and brushing his fingers along my pussy. "This is mine." His other hand tugs down the material covering my breasts. "These are mine too." The hand under my dress slides to my backside where his fingers spread both cheeks. "Your ass will be mine too. And so will your mouth. I will fill you with my cum and mark every inch of your skin."

"What about my heart?" I challenge him.

"I want that most of all," he says, his voice dropping low. "I want that more than anything."

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He steps back and extends his hand toward me, a silent command to follow him inside. Like an obedient little girl, I trail after him through the front door and into the expansive foyer of the house.

"Before we go any further, it's time to set some things straight between you and me." He draws me close, hugging me tightly against his body. "My dark, dominant desire for you exists primarily in the bedroom. I don't like sharing what's mine with the world but sometimes, when Daddy wants something, he's going to take it no matter what, no matter where. When those moments happen, you will be protected. I will never do anything to risk your safety. Do you understand me?"

I nod my head, which earns me a devilish smile. "Good girl. Being dominant doesn't mean I want to control your life, only your pleasure. I've only given you a taste of what turns me on, Sparrow. The things I want to do to you, the way I want to use your body . . . it might send you running for the hills."

"Then you'll have to show me," I tell him.

He chuckles. "Only if you promise to tell me when it becomes too much. I want to push you. I want to see how far you're willing to go but only if you tell me when you've reached your limits. I don't want to hurt you."

"That's a promise I'm happy to make as long as you let me take off this awful costume."

He smirks. "I'm happy to undress you anytime you ask. Turn around."

My dress rustles as I spin. Carter's hands are slow as they slide up my back, tugging at the laces keeping my corset in place. It starts to loosen and instinctively, I reach up to keep it in place until he finishes.

"No, little bird. Let it fall. I want to see your beautiful body."

I drop my hands as he frees the remaining laces and the corset falls forward, leaving my breasts exposed.

"Just the zipper now," he says with a shuddering breath.

The rest of the house is quiet and only the sound of the tab sliding down the zipper fills the air. When he's done, he releases a heavy sigh. These little signs of nervousness are comforting because Carter makes me feel out of my element. Knowing he's anxious though puts me at ease. It tells me this is more than dirty, kinky fucking.

The rest of the dress falls away, landing on the floor with a whoosh.

Behind me, Carter groans and then his hands are on my skin, hot and heavy. "I've dreamed of this moment, Sparrow. I've dreamed of your skin beneath my hands, of seeing all of you completely bare." He sucks in his breath and exhales loudly. "This moment is nothing like I imagined."

"Better or worse?" I ask, glancing back at him over the curve of my shoulder.

His smile is predatory and mischievous. "It's indescribable." His large hand settles on my waist and then slides across my belly. He tugs me backward against his chest and his erection presses against the small of my back. "Follow me, little bird. I'm done waiting."

#### Carter

I'm nervous. Despite my dominant demeanor, I can't help the anxiousness fluttering inside me. I've been in love with Sparrow for so long and I don't want to fuck anything up. I have to be careful with her, even though she seems more than capable of handling the dark daddy lurking in the shadows of my heart.

"Don't you think you're overdressed," she asks as I lead her down the hall toward my bedroom.

"No, I do not," I answer with a grin.

I have plans for her and they're going to happen whether or not I'm fully dressed. I promised to give her what she was denied at the club, and I will, after she's been on her knees with her mouth full of my cock.

I push the bedroom door open, and I watch her take in the surroundings. She stops just beyond the threshold as if she's waiting for a command.

I sit down on the bench in front of my California king-sized bed and unbuckle my pants. "Come here," I instruct her as I pull my cock free. She walks toward me, her full hips swaying sensuously. I take hold my shaft and stroke it deliberately.

When she's in front of me, I sit up and cup her tits in my hands. They're perfect handfuls. Her nipples stiffen the moment my mouth covers them, licking and sucking them to hard peaks. I groan, feasting on them, savoring the taste of her skin. I pull back and order her to kneel between my legs. "Open your mouth wide, little bird. Let Daddy feed you his cock."

Her red lips part for me as I guide myself into her mouth. One hand slips around the back of her head as I thrust hard, the tip of my cock hitting the back of her throat. "Breathe through your nose," I tell her when she gags. Soon, she relaxes, and I pull back, smiling with satisfaction. "I'm going to smear the rest of your lipstick across your face. When I'm done with you, you're going to be the most beautiful mess."

An image of her with my cum dripping down her chin and red stains around her lips appears in my mind. I groan.

"Get ready, little bird. I'm not going to hold back," I warn before thrusting my cock between her lips again.

Over and over, I plunge in and out, fucking her mouth relentlessly, waiting for her to ask for mercy. But she doesn't. She takes it all, and I delight in the way her saliva dribbles from the corner of her lips.

With my hand still firm on her head, I guide her forward. She braces her hands on the bench as I lift my hips and push my cock deep into her mouth. My eyes roll back as she hollows her cheeks and sucks hard.

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My balls tighten and any minute, I'm going to explode into her mouth. "Where do you want my cum, little bird? Down your throat, across your gorgeous tits, or filling your pussy?"

As soon as I release my grip on her head, she sits back, my cock still firm in her hand. "I want you to mark me, Daddy," she says with a husky voice.

"Fuck," I groan as she strokes my length firmly in her hand, her speed quickening until I can't hold back any longer and give into the impending orgasm. I watch my milky cum explode all over her, enthralled by the way it covers her chest and trickles down her tits.

My breaths are heavy pants and my heart pounds in my chest.

"Carter," she says softly.

"You know what to call me, little bird. Now climb on top of me so I can fuck you," I rasp out.

She's quick, scrambling into my lap and I waste no time thrusting into her pussy. There's no need to prepare her because she's soaked, her juices coating my thighs as we rock together. I won't be able to last very long this time, so my focus is on her and her pleasure.

Her arms wrap around my neck, holding tight as she grinds herself hard on my dick. I encourage her with the filthiest of words and snake my hand between our bodies.

"That's it," I purr, as my fingers brush against her clit, teasing it with strokes and flicks. "Fuck me, little bird. Show Daddy what a little slut you are."

There's a high-pitched whine coming from her throat as I lift my hips and pump into her pussy hard and fast.

"I'm so close," she pants, her eyes screwed shut. "Please, Daddy. Please make me cum."

My fingers work faster against her clit and soon she's screaming, begging for mercy from the torture of her pent-up desire. Her pussy clenches my cock and her body tenses. She's so close. Her cries quiet and her mouth hangs open until at last she explodes. Her entire body trembles and she screams through her release. I continue thrusting deep into her until my cock erupts with another orgasm and for the second time tonight, my cum fills her pussy.

She sags against me and trembles through the aftershocks of her orgasm. My hands slide along her sweat-soaked skin until she stops shaking.

"Jesus Christ," she murmurs against my neck.

I chuckle softly. "How are you feeling, little bird?"

"Like I've been fucked within an inch of my life."

My arms hold her tight against my body. "That good, huh?"

She sighs and nuzzles her face against me. "Can I ask you something?"

"Yes."

"Do you really love me, Carter?"

I sigh. "More than you know."

My hold on her is firm as I stand and carry her into the bathroom, depositing her gently onto the marble counter of the vanity. "Stay put," I command her softly, kissing the tip of her nose before heading into the walk-in shower and turning on the water.

"I still can't believe you never said anything," she says with a sleepy voice.

"And if I had? Would you have even given me the time of day?"

Her half-closed eyes pop open. "Yes, Carter. If you told me how you felt, I would have listened because you see me for who I am. I'm sorry it's taken me so long to realize. I've missed you, and without your constant presence, I've felt adrift. You've silently been my anchor since the moment I first met you."

"I'm sorry," I murmur, walking toward her. "I've been selfish and fixated on my feelings. I never considered the extent of our relationship when I decided to pull back."

When our gazes meet, I notice the glassiness of her eyes. "You disappeared when I needed you," she says with a sniffle. "Why did you just disappear?"

My hands slip around her, tugging her closer until her legs wrap around my waist and her arms slide around my neck. There is so much Sparrow isn't telling me, so much I want to ask, but I don't want to push her into sharing secrets, not when this seems like a hard limit for her.

"I was tired of wanting you and not having you. I needed to reconcile my feelings for

you with the darkness inside of me."

"You think the dominant side of you is dark?"

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I carry her into the shower, setting her on her feet. She wobbles, but I'm there to hold her steady.

"How else would you describe it?"

Her eyes blink as a spray of warm water trickles over her face. She smiles and shrugs. "I wouldn't. It's just who you are."

The beat of my heart is thunderous inside my chest knowing Sparrow accepts me, kinks and all. The tension of hiding my true self from my friends starts to melt away.

"Thank you," I tell her with a slight bow of my head. "Now, let's get you cleaned up so I can properly defile you."

7

### Sparrow

My entire body is sore when I wake up the next morning in Carter's massive bed. His dried cum coats my inner thighs and my chest, and the smell of sex lingers in the bedroom. There was no more cleaning up last night. Carter refused.

"No," he said firmly. "I want to see you covered in my mark."

His eyes glistened with dark desire as he said that, and his cock seemed to harden instantly, but he made no move to initiate another round. Instead, he covered me with the duvet before placing a soft kiss on my forehead.

I turn, hoping to find him next to me but that side of the bed is empty. In fact, it doesn't appear is if he slept in the bed at all. I frown.

The bedroom door opens a moment later and Carter appears, his chest bare. I drink in the sight of his tight abs and his broad chest. He's wearing a pair of black sweatpants that hang low on his hips.

"I wondered when you'd wake up," he says with a half-smile.

"What time is it?"

"Eleven," he answers as he advances toward me.

"Shit," I mumble. "Thatcher is probably wondering what happened to me."

He shakes his head. "Do you really think he cares?"

A frown tugs at the corners of my lips and tears start to sting my eyes as I'm reminded of his harsh words from last night. "He's never acted that way before," I mumble. "Maybe we shouldn't have . . ."

My thoughts trail away but Carter scrambles up the bed and settles beside me. "Don't be ashamed of what happened in the club, Sparrow. You didn't do anything wrong."

"I'm not ashamed, but last night was his night. I hate the idea I ruined it somehow."

He shakes his head firmly. "You ruined nothing. I'm the one who got carried away. I should have protected you better."

He covers me with his body, dotting my skin with soft, teasing kisses. My body comes alive under his touch, and it doesn't take much effort for him to coax my legs

apart. He slides effortlessly inside of me, his cock stretching the walls of my pussy. We sigh in unison once he's firmly rooted inside me.

The way he fills me, so perfect, so right, distracts me, and any lingering thoughts about returning home to talk with Thatcher soon disappear.

My head tips back against the pillow and my back arches off the bed, thrusting my breasts upward. He groans as he swirls his tongue around each of my nipples, teasing them with his teeth.

The feel of him against me, the way he moves purposefully and leisurely, takes command of me. His hand glides down my side and over my hip until he reaches my knee and pushes it up against my chest. I groan as the connection between us deepens. He does the same thing with the other leg until both knees are in similar positions. He props himself up, his arms taking his weight as he starts a series of quick, shallow thrusts before plunging all the way inside, nearly hitting my womb.

We let out simultaneous groans.

He pulls back before surging into me and stays that way for a moment, lifting his head to kiss me hard. His kiss is as fierce as the way he fucks, soul-deep and unrelenting. Every time he seems ready to pull back, he doesn't. His kiss only intensifies until he groans against my mouth as his pace quickens.

"Sparrow," he mumbles over and over, seemingly lost in the rhythm of our bodies moving against each other and his impending orgasm.

My nails dig into his biceps as I cling to him. My body tenses, a signal I'm almost to the edge. I just need a little push.

"Daddy," I moan.

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Carter stops and looks down at me. I meet his gaze and silently demand what I want from him. I love hearing my name from his lips, but I need his dominance now.

"Little bird, do you want to play?" His smile is devious and only widens as I nod. He pulls out and climbs off the bed, padding naked into the closet before returning with what appears to be black satin rope.

"Hands above your head," he commands me.

I lift them up, obeying him, and he smiles. My heart soars at his approval. He moves to the head of the bed, leans over me and wraps the rope methodically around my wrists, tying them to the headboard.

"Now you're helpless," he murmurs with a wicked glint in his eye. He settles himself back over me and looks down at my nakedness. His tongue darts out, licking his lips while he studies me. "How should I use you, little bird?"

His fingers tease their way between the slick folds of my pussy, stroking me until he pushes them inside. A whimper escapes my lips.

"You want to come don't you," he asks, his attention completely focused on his fingers as they fuck me.

"Yes, Daddy," I breathe out.

"Do you want my cum in your pussy? Or all over your belly?"

The pace of his fingers quickens and his thumb brushes against my swollen clit. I want his cock back inside me, but I know what will please him. "I want to taste you," I moan. "Come in my mouth, Daddy."

He chuckles. "You surprise me, little bird, but you're right. I want to feed you every drop but first, you need to come. I want to see you come undone."

He replaces his fingers with his cock, plunging hard and deep inside of me. Instantly, I scream out. He does it again and again until the tension inside of me builds. I can't stand it; I give in to the delicious pressure and explode, surrendering myself to him with a cry.

"Open your mouth wide," he commands with a growl before he pulls out and stalks his way up my body to push his cock between my lips. He strokes his shaft furiously as the first hot spurt of his cum lands on my tongue. I swallow every drop of his seed, enjoying the taste of him. He groans through his orgasm, placing steadying hands next to mine on the headboard.

He shudders, the last drops of his cum dribbling onto my tongue before pulling back and collapsing on the bed beside me. My arms are still stretched above my head. How long will he keep me tied up like this?

Probably forever.

8

Carter

"Your brother doesn't approve of . . . my sexual proclivities," I tell Sparrow as I drive her back home. One hand rests firmly on her thigh, my pinky finger inches from her pussy.

She insisted on showering before we left my house and then I insisted on marking her one more time. I don't give a fuck if we reek of sex and Thatcher knows; Sparrow is mine now and when I want her, I'm going to take her.

"He's not the one fucking you," she tells me with a chuckle.

"I'd say having Thatcher's approval is important, but I have what I want now."

It should bother me that our friendship might be ruined for good, but it doesn't. I spent years playing the part of the quiet friend, the unassuming friend, watching Thatcher and our other friend, Hunter, rage at college parties. Thatcher's hypocrisy hasn't gone unnoticed. I watched him fuck anything with a pussy during our undergrad years. He had no problems bedding a different woman every night, and now he's judging me for my sexual preference.

"There is something we need to talk about," I tell Sparrow.

"We do?"

"Yes. Thatcher mentioned you were pregnant last year . . ." I swallow the rest of my words because I want her to take the lead. I want her to tell me the story. From the corner of my eye, I see her squirm in her seat. "Sparrow, you can tell me anything. I hope you know that."

"I do, but it's not easy to talk about it. I'm not proud of being careless."

I swerve into the nearest driveway. I have no idea whose house this is but I have to look at Sparrow when we have this conversation. I need her to see the love and trust in my eyes.

"What are you doing?"

I turn to face her and lean over the console. "I'm not going to have this conversation while we're driving."

Her tongue darts out and swipes along her bottom lip. "I told you, it's not easy to talk about, and I'm not sure I'm comfortable telling you."

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My eyes narrow. "Have you forgotten to whom you belong?"

"No."

"Then trust me," I demand. "Trust me to keep your secrets and to protect you."

"Carter, it's not a big—"

My hands reach across the car's console and grasp her cheeks, squeezing them firmly between my fingers. Her face is steady in my hand as our gazes meet. "Anything concerning you is a big fucking deal, Sparrow. Do you understand me? Your body isn't the only thing I claimed last night. Everything about you, including your deepest, darkest secrets, belong to me."

Her eyes water and a single tear slips down her cheek and onto my hand. I loosen my grip and let my hand fall away. Her bottom lip trembles. "I was going to keep her. I was going to raise her on my own, but I had a miscarriage."

I don't know what kind of secrets I was expecting, but a miscarriage? I'm stunned. "I'm sorry," I tell her. "But that doesn't make me love you any less, and I'm sorry you had to go through something like a miscarriage alone."

"I wasn't alone. Thatcher was with me."

"But he acted like a dick last night."

She nods. "Yeah, I know. I don't really understand why he reacted so harshly."

I have a theory, but I don't say a word. Instead, I shift the car into drive and slowly back out into the street. When we arrive at her house, I navigate up the driveway and stop.

"Are you sure you want to go in there? I'll gladly take you back to my house. I can think of a million ways to keep you occupied."

"I have to face him sooner or later."

"I choose later then, like after we're married, and you've popped out one of my babies."

She laughs at my sudden nervous energy. Facing Thatcher should be easy because we've been best friends for years, but the stakes are high. Going all in with Sparrow means risking important relationships, and while I'll fight with everything I have to keep her, I'm not going to make Sparrow choose between me and her brother.

"You're kind of cute when you're worried," she tells me with a wink before pushing her door open.

"Wait," I call after her but it's too late. She disappears into the house just as I manage to unbuckle my seat belt.

The moment I enter the side door and head into the kitchen, I feel the tension. Sparrow and Thatcher seem to be at a stalemate, each one standing on opposite sides of a large kitchen island. I notice the sheen of tears on her cheeks.

"What did you do to her," I growl, rushing forward. But Sparrow intercepts me, placing herself directly in my path.

"Nothing," he says.

"Then why the fuck is she crying?"

"Because I told her to choose."

My nervous energy is quickly replaced with boiling anger.

"Please," Sparrow whispers so quietly it's barely audible. "Let's just leave. This was a mistake."

I reach out, pull her forward and slip my arms around her. "Don't make her choose, Thatcher. It's cruel."

He barks out a laugh. "Cruel? That's rich coming from a member of The Opal House. How many women have you whipped and tortured there?"

"You have no idea what you're talking about. I've never hurt a woman in my life, and if you think I'm capable of hurting Sparrow, then you don't know me at all." Sparrow is wrapped around me, her head buried in my chest to avoid the ugliness of this confrontation. "It's time for us to go," I tell her, loud enough for Thatcher to hear.

"You're not going anywhere with her," he tells me, his tone forceful. "I will not allow my sister to be abused."

"Sparrow is an adult. You don't have a choice."

"The hell I don't," Thatcher barks as he lunges toward us, latching on to his sister's arm and tugging her out of my grip. It's like tug o' war as we pull Sparrow between us, jerking her in every direction. There is pain and anguish written all over her face, and tears flow freely down her cheeks. I hate this and what it's doing to her. I promised never to make her choose between me and her brother, so I let go. Thatcher doesn't realize he's won and when he yanks her hard toward him, his grip suddenly

lighter since I released her, Sparrow flies, colliding with the island. Her head smacks the edge, sending her tumbling to the hardwood floor below and knocking her unconscious.

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I fall to my knees and gather her in my arms, noting the trickle of blood from a cut on her forehead. "What the fuck did you do," I snarl, glancing up at Thatcher, whose eyes are wide. His mouth hangs open and he steps away. "You better hope she's okay; otherwise, we're done."

9

Sparrow

"What is your fucking problem?" Carter's voice sounds far away and muffled.

"You know what my problem is," Thatcher answers. His voice is stifled and distant.

"The Opal House? You're seriously angry about that? Grow the fuck up, man."

My eyes start to flutter and the moment I dare to crack one open, light blinds me and pain shoots through my head.

"She might be trying to wake up." Carter's voice is clearer and his hand brushes along my forehead. "Sparrow? Can you hear me?"

His voice is louder now, and I groan from the throbbing in my temple. Carter's hand smooths away the hair from my forehead and I feel the soft brush of his lips against my cheek.

"Take your time," he whispers.

His voice makes me relax. "What happened," I murmur.

"You hit your head on the island."

"Where am I?"

Carter's hand brushes across my forehead, down my cheek, and along my jaw. "On the couch. You haven't been out long, just a few minutes." The cushions under my body shift as Carter moves. "Don't come any closer," he growls.

"She's my sister," Thatcher tells him, his voice harsh and rough.

"You should have thought about that earlier, before you started treating her like a child."

"Please stop," I moan, the throbbing in my head increasing.

"Just let me explain," Thatcher begs.

"No." Through my narrowed gaze, I watch Carter stand. His height and broadness make quite the intimidating figure. He turns and slips his hands under my body, lifting me from the couch and into his arms. "If you want to talk to her, you can do it at my house in a few days, when you find a way to get your head out of your ass."

Carter brushes past my brother, his hold on me firm and steadying. He's careful not to jostle me as we head outside and toward his car.

"I'm taking you to the doctor," he informs me.

"You don't need to do that."

Even with my eyes half closed, I can sense the heat of his glare. "Don't argue. My job is to take care of you."

It's not worth fighting with him so I nod and let him drive me to the closest emergency room.

"How long is this going to take," Carter grumbles, shifting in the uncomfortable vinyl chair next to me.

"This was your idea," I remind him.

"Don't get smart with me, little bird. You could have a concussion or a brain bleed or something."

It's another hour before I'm finally called to be examined. Carter insists on staying with me and doesn't let the scowling nurses scare him away. When the doctor comes in the exam room to discuss the results of my tests, he asks me about my injury. I hesitate to tell him because I don't want him, or anyone else, assuming my injury is related to abuse.

"I hit my head on the kitchen island," I finally tell him.

He glances at me and then his eyes shift toward Carter. "Do you feel safe at home?"

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Carter throws up his hands and rolls his eyes but says nothing.

"Yes," I answer honestly, though I'm positive the doctor doesn't agree.

"Well, you don't seem to have a concussion, but you should still take it easy. No television or screen time. Get plenty of rest, and if you start having symptoms like nausea or dizziness, then you need to come back to the ER right away."

I agree to all his terms, hoping it will get me discharged quicker. When he leaves the room, Carter exhales loudly. "This was torture," he exclaims. "You were right. We shouldn't have come."

I try my best to hide my smirk but it's nearly impossible. Carter scowls in my direction before tossing a wink my way. "I'm glad it's not a concussion," he says softly. "When you wouldn't wake up right away, I was terrified."

I hold my hand out, beckoning him. He's slow to get out of the chair but in only a few steps, he's beside me, clutching my hand and kissing the tips of my fingers.

"Thank you for taking care of me."

"It's my job." His eyes close and his shoulders sag. "Your brother doesn't understand the dynamic of our relationship."

"I don't think I quite understand it."

His eyebrows pop up and a devilish smile slides across his lips. "You will, little bird.

#### You'll learn."

A nurse interrupts our conversation but with good reason. She hands me my discharge paperwork, setting me free. Carter manages to commandeer a wheelchair and insists I sit in it. Being wheeled through the emergency room makes me feel silly but I know he won't take "no" for an answer.

"I'm sorry this ruined your Halloween," he tells me once we're settled in his car. "I know how much you like passing out candy to the kids in your neighborhood."

"You do?" A detail like that surprises me. I never thought Carter paid much attention to me, but I guess I was wrong.

His chuckle is soft as he places a hand firmly on my thigh. "I've had my eye on you, Sparrow Hart. I know everything about you."

"We'll put that theory to the test later but for now, I just want to lay down and sleep."

"Your wish is my command but once you're cleared for physical activity, there won't be any sleep for the wicked."

10

#### Carter

Today, I'm meeting Thatcher. Sparrow has no idea, and she won't if her brother and I can't find a way to make amends. It's hard to believe he'd throw away years of friendship simply because of my membership to The Opal House. In fact, I'm positive it's not the reason. While I wait, I sip a beer and send a text to Sparrow, checking on her.

"When are you going to let me see my sister?"

I set my phone down and look up at Thatcher. "When I'm confident you're not going to act like an asshole," I reply.

"I just want to protect her."

"From whom, Thatcher? Me? What's wrong with me dating your sister?" I use the term "dating" loosely because I don't plan on dating Sparrow. I plan on getting her down the aisle and putting my ring on her finger as soon as possible.

"Aside from not asking my permission? I don't want you tying her up and whipping her, or whatever fucking kinky shit you do to women. She's not into that."

"Are you sure about that?" I know I'm poking the bear, but Sparrow isn't in high school anymore. She's not an innocent virgin.

The muscles in Thatcher's jaw tense and he crumples a napkin in his fist. "You better watch what you say about her."

My eyes roll as I lift my glass and chug the rest of my beer. "Why don't you tell me what your problem really is?"

"I already told you. I don't want my sister to be abused just because it makes your dick twitch."

I shake my head. "No, that's not it. Try being honest with me."

"I am being honest," he insists.

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"Okay, if that's the answer you're going with, fine." I spread my hands out in front of me, as if to lay all my cards on the table. "I'm never going to hurt Sparrow. I'll concede I should have talked to you first, but I'm never going to apologize for claiming what's mine. I have wanted your sister for years and I was done waiting for my turn, for the right moment to make my move. Honestly, that's not how I live my life, but I kept my distance out of respect for you."

"Gee, thanks," Thatcher says with a roll of his eyes.

I slap my hand down on the table, frustrated by his attitude. The sound causes him to jump and for several other patrons to turn and look at us. "Goddammit, you're not listening to a word I'm saying! You have some stupid stereotype stuck in your head. You think I get off on pain? I don't. I get off on Sparrow's control over me. I get off on her trust. I make sure her needs are met before my own because my job is to take care of her. What is so hard to understand about that?"

His eyes close and when they open back up, I see a man ready to listen to his friend. "Can you blame me for wanting to protect her, Carter? We practically raised ourselves in a city that will eat you up and spit you out. Something bad already happened to her and while I was there to help her through it, I wasn't there to protect her, to prevent her from making mistakes like I did."

"So now you're finally honest with me, but you hurt her when you called her a whore."

"I know, and I'm sorry about that."

"Don't apologize to me. You have to say it to her."

"Well, I haven't been able to see her in a few days."

"When she's ready, she'll call." I finish the last of my beer because it's time to go. I stand and lean over the table. "And just so we're clear, I'm going to marry Sparrow, and I'm not going to ask your permission."

I turn on my heel, leave the bar, and quickly check my phone to see if Sparrow responded to my text.

She didn't.

Hmm. I decide to call her, but it goes to voicemail.

My hands shake with nervous energy as I start heading toward my car, hoping nothing happened to her. Other than a lingering headache, she's seemed fine since we left the emergency room. My pace starts to quicken and once I'm inside my car, I race out of the parking lot toward home.

A thousand different scenarios play in my thoughts as I drive through the city toward my house, and every one of them makes me physically ill.

My foot keeps the gas pedal pressed to the floorboard the entire way home and when I catch a glimpse of my house, it appears dark.

What the fuck is happening?

Speeding up the driveway, I quickly put the car into park and hurry out of it.

"Sparrow," I shout as I push open the front door. "Sparrow!"

I skid to a stop when I see the candles and the trail of . . . rose petals? I follow them, stopping just outside my bedroom. The door is closed but there's a soft flickering of light coming from under it. My hand grasps the doorknob, twisting it until it swings open.

The sight of Sparrow, wearing a black lace body suit, her hair curled in glossy waves, and her lips painted red, takes my breath away. She sits on the floor, her legs tucked under her, and her palms flat on her thighs. A smile spreads across my lips as I step forward.

"You scared me, little bird," I tell her, running my fingers along her jaw and chin, which I tilt up. "What do you have to say for yourself?"

"I'm sorry, Daddy," she murmurs, the white of her teeth flashing against the red of her lips.

"Stand up." I step away, giving her space, and watch, enthralled by the way her body looks wrapped in black lace. "This is not necessary." I sweep my hand around the room, gesturing to the candles and the rose petals. Her mouth immediately turns down into a frown. "I appreciate the gesture, but you are more than enough for me. And I never, ever want to see you down on your knees, waiting for me like this. That's not the kind of dynamic I want for us."

"But I thought—"

"I know what you thought. Am I dominant? Yes. Will you be submissive? Yes. But you are my equal in every way and I only want you on your knees when you're begging for my cock. Are we clear?"

"Yes."

"I didn't hear you."

"Yes, Daddy."

I breathe in deeply because there's one more thing we need to address. "How are you feeling, little bird? You must be getting better if you went to all this trouble for me, but I want to hear you say it."

"I'm feeling much better today."

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"No more headache?"

"None."

"And you're not too tired?"

"No."

"And you promise to tell me if you don't feel well?"

"Yes."

"Then let's play."

11

Sparrow
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When he says those words, "let's play," a surge of excitement runs through my body. For the last few days, he's insisted on keeping me at arm's length, no matter how much I tried to tempt him. But when I woke up this morning, I was done waiting.

"I'm going to take it easy on you," he says, circling me like a hawk, his voice nothing more than a purr. He stops behind me and slides one hand over my shoulder, over my breasts and brushes it over the center of my body before bringing it back to my chest. He grips the flimsy fabric covering me and pulls it tight. I gasp from the friction of the lace between my legs. "Do you think I can rip this, little bird?"

"You can do anything you want," I moan, closing my eyes.

He chuckles in my ear. "Do you want to make a bet?"

"What do you want?"

"Your body, your soul."

"You already have those."

He keeps tugging the bodysuit, increasing the contact of the fabric against my skin.

"Then how about your hand in marriage?"

My eyes pop open and my gaze lands on a velvet ring box in front of my face. Carter loosens his grip on my body suit, letting the lace fall out of his hand. I miss the feeling of it brushing against my body but the sight of him on his knees in front of me is worth it.

"What are you doing?"

"Isn't it obvious? I'm asking you to marry me."

"But we've only been together for a matter of days."

Carter stands, grabs my left hand, and slides the ring down my finger. "And now I'm telling you to marry me. I was being nice by making it seem you had a choice."

I laugh because even though the situation seems bizarre, it makes sense. The ring on my finger is gorgeous, a simple round solitaire on a gold band. It fits perfectly.

"Carter." I have no other words to say because I'm still stunned. One minute he's ripping off my lingerie and in the blink of an eye, he's proposing.

He steps toward me, one or two shuffles of his feet, before his hands settle on my hips. "I love you, Sparrow. I've been in love with you since I first set eyes on you. I don't need to ask you to marry me because being your husband is inevitable. But I still need to hear you say the word."

"Yes." The word falls from my lips without the slightest bit of hesitation or second thought. When he smiles, my chest warms and butterflies spring to life in my belly.

His head dips and lowers until he brushes his lips against mine in a soft, fleeting kiss. He backs away, but my hands reach for him, fingers tangling in the fabric of his shirt, and pull him back. I pop onto my tiptoes and kiss him hard, teasing his lips apart so I can slip my tongue into his mouth. So I can claim him as mine. He responds hungrily, devouring my lips with his own searing kiss, making my knees tremble. The warmth inside of me transforms into a blazing fire. My hands reach for the buckle of his belt, eager to touch him but he slaps my hands away.

I can't help my pout when he breaks our kiss and backs away.

"Not yet, little bird," he chastises me. "You might have gotten this evening started but I'm in charge now."

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He brushes by me and picks up my phone from the bedside table. "Call Thatcher."

I narrow my eyes. "Why do I have to call him?"

"No questions. Just do it." He places the phone in my hand and then leaves the room.

Still in the lingerie I bought for tonight, I sit on the bed and call Thatcher.

"Everything okay, Sparrow," he answers.

"Yeah. Why wouldn't it be?" I ask.

"I was with Carter a little while ago and wasn't expecting you to call so soon."

I'm so confused by Carter's demand for me to call my brother and by the conversation I'm having with Thatcher. "Well, he told me to call you."

On the other end, Thatcher hums. "I told him I wanted to talk to you."

The diamond in my ring catches the last of the sunlight and distracts me. "About what?"

"I need to apologize for a lot of things that have happened recently, but I know I really hurt you when I called you a whore. I was angry and surprised when I caught the both of you having sex in my club and I let my emotions take control. It's not an excuse, just an explanation. I'm sorry, and I hope you forgive me."

"You said there was more?"

He sighs. "I'm just trying to protect you, Sparrow. It's been pretty much the two of us for so long and sometimes, I feel like I've failed in keeping you safe."

Any anger toward Thatcher melts. "You've done a good job keeping me out of trouble and you've done a good job helping me through every rough moment I've endured. It's time for you to back off though. Carter is more than capable."

He groans slightly. "Just . . . be safe with him, okay? Don't make any sudden decisions."

"Too late," I tell him, holding up my hand to admire the ring.

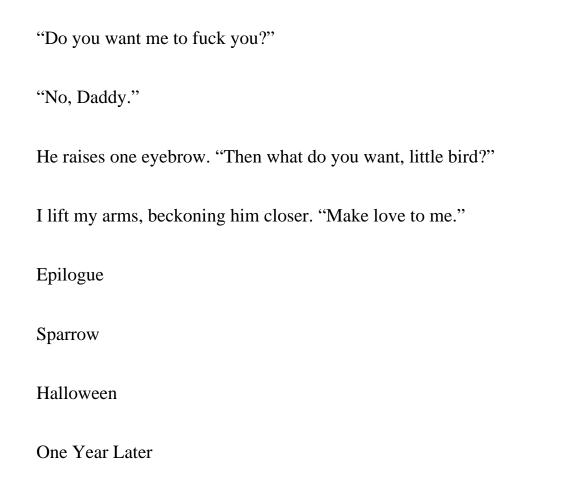
"What does that mean?" he asks as the bedroom door opens and Carter strides in, a hungry look on his face. My answer to Thatcher's question is caught in the back of my throat because Carter's shirt is gone, revealing a solid, muscled chest. He drops to his knees, places his hands on my legs and spreads them open. He winks as he buries his face between my thighs.

"Sparrow?" Thatcher says. "Did I lose you?"

Yes, you did big brother. "It means Carter and I are getting married. Talk to you later." I disconnect the phone call, toss the phone on the bed, and fall backward.

Carter slips a finger underneath the lace covering me and tugs until it rips. "You were taking too long, and I was getting impatient," he tells me, lifting his head. "Do you want me to stop?"

"No, Daddy," I tell him in a hoarse voice.



"There's something for you on the bed," Carter murmurs as he passes by me in the bathroom while I carefully apply my makeup for tonight. Before he leaves the bathroom, his gaze slides over toward me and his lips tip up in one corner.

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He's up to something.

I place my tube of mascara down on the sink and walk into the bedroom. There's a large black box sitting on the bed. Carter stands in one corner of the bedroom, watching me as I approach the box.

"What's this," I ask, placing two fingers under the lid and lifting slowly.

"A gift," he answers as he pushes off the wall and makes his way toward me. "I want you to wear it tonight."

"Well, the box is too big for vibrating panties," I joke.

"Like I'd even buy you a pair. I've got something else in mind for tonight." A firm, stinging slap lands across my bare ass. "You have ten minutes to get dressed or I'm leaving without you."

He disappears before I can inspect the contents of his gift. Once he's gone, I push the lid off the box and gasp. No fucking way. It's the Bo Peep costume, only it's been modified. I pull the garment out of the box, and something clatters to the bottom, a lace choker with a silver O-ring attached. That certainly wasn't a part of the accessories last year.

As I pull the dress up over my hips, I notice a few other changes to the costume. First, the ruffled skirt is obscenely short. Second, the corseted bodice has been modified to push up and bare my breasts. The outfit is indecent but considering Carter is finally taking me to The Opal House tonight, it's the perfect choice for a Halloween party at

Los Angeles's premiere sex club.

Downstairs, Carter is waiting in the foyer, with one hand shoved in the pocket of his dark brown trousers and the other hand holding another box. When he catches sight of me, his eyes start to bulge and his jaw tenses.

"Christ," he mutters. "I can't believe we're doing this."

"How do I look?" Once I reach him, I twirl, hoping he gets an eyeful of my bare ass.

"Like the sweetest fucking sin I've ever seen." His gaze travels the length of my body, and he licks his lips. "You better be Daddy's good girl tonight."

He holds out the box in his hand to me. "What's this?" I ask, taking it from him.

"An insurance policy." He removes the lid and takes out a length of thin, silver chain. "Chin up, little bird."

He hooks one end of the chain to the O-ring attached to the choker around my neck before giving it a slight tug.

"Now you won't be able to run away," he tells me with a purr to his voice. "Are you ready?"

"Yes, Daddy."

"There are a few rules we need to review before we leave. You will not talk to any other patron tonight. You will not allow another patron to touch you. If you need something, you ask me. Are we good so far?"

"Yes, Daddy."

His fingers glide along my jaw and he kisses me. "Good. What's your safe word tonight?"

"Pumpkin." He kisses me again, praising me for remembering his rules. Since we've been married, Carter has tested my sexual boundaries but tonight, he fulfills one of my greatest desires, a trip to The Opal House. For months, he refused to take me, insisting he didn't want others to see what belonged to him. I didn't fight him because I wasn't too keen on sharing him either. Still, my curiosity persisted until one day, a few weeks ago, he gave in and consented to taking me to their annual Halloween party.

"And if Dorian Hardwin approaches you?"

"Don't look him in the eye."

"I'd say we're ready to go, but you seem to be missing something," he says, giving me the once-over.

"What am I missing?"

"My mark. Sit down on the steps, and spread your legs, little bird. Daddy wants to come all over you."

He starts to unbuckle his belt and I'm tempted to let him continue but I've been keeping a secret, one that will affect tonight's outcome. "Why don't you just get me pregnant? Then there's no denying I'm yours."

His fingers stop and his mouth drops. "Pregnant? Is that what you want?"

I shrug. "I don't know but it's a little too late now."

"You're pregnant?"

I nod. "I'm not sure how far along but I took a test this morning."

He sits down on the steps beside me and takes my hand. "You know what this means, don't you?"

"You're not taking me to The Opal House Halloween party?"

He smiles. "I'm definitely not taking you there tonight, or any other night. But it also means I'm going to take you upstairs to our bedroom, memorize all the new changes to your body, and then make love to you all night."

"Sounds perfect," I tell him with a satisfied hum.

"Just like you, little bird. You've made me the happiest man on Earth. I love you."