



Dangerous Obsession (Men of Valor Springs #4)

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Category: Action&Adventure

Description: Arya

Being a Bratva princess isn't easy, and with an older brother as protective as mine calling the shots, I'm lucky he let me return home to Rosewood at all. I've spent most of my life attending boarding schools in Belgium, but now that I'm an adult, I want the freedom to decide where I live. I've barely spent any time in Rosewood over the years, so it isn't the town calling me back, it's the man I know I'll find there. Jax is my brother's best friend and his second in command. From the time I was a little girl, I adored Jax and the way he always made sure I was protected. For some reason, his overbearing nature doesn't annoy me the way my brother's does. But Jax still sees me as the little girl who went off to boarding school. He hasn't noticed that I'm all grown up. But he's going to. I might not be experienced or worldly, but I am determined. When a threat to my life has my big brother assigning Jax to be my personal bodyguard, I realize this is my chance. But can I convince Jax to open his eyes and see what's always been waiting for him? Or will his loyalty to my brother overshadow everything else?

Jax

Working for the Andreyev family has always been my destiny. Even joining the Marines didn't change that. Vlad might be the one to issue the orders, but it's me who ensures those orders are carried out. And I'm good at my job. It's been my sole focus for years, after all. I'm loyal to my core, and there is nothing I won't do for my best friend and boss...except maybe keep my hands off his baby sister. Arya is back after years abroad, and she is no longer the pint-sized princess I remember. No, now she's a fully grown woman and absolutely gorgeous. She has the body of siren, but she can't hide her inexperience. She's the worst kind of temptation, and I have no choice to but keep my distance or risk everything I've worked so hard to achieve. But staying away becomes impossible when someone tries to hurt her and Vlad appoints me as her personal bodyguard. What better way to ensure Arya's safety than to keep her in my bed? But once I have her there, I can't let her go. Arya might be Bratva royalty, but she's mine, and I'm going to make sure everyone knows it.

Page 1

Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 4:31 am

Jax

Here we go again.

The intense arguing, slamming of doors, and the stomping feet have become somewhat routine in the Andreyev household. I don't even blink at the noise anymore. It was worrying at first, but now it's more of frequent annoyance at most.

"I'm not leaving!" The younger of the two Andreyev siblings insists as she follows her older brother into the hall outside his office.

"You'll do what I tell you, Arya. It's for your own good. You know I wouldn't insist on it if there was any other option," the elder Andreyev replies, exasperation clear in his voice.

The sound of feet stomping up the stairs follows before a door slams with such force it echoes through the house. A familiar sigh reaches my ears from the doorway, and I look up to watch my best friend and boss Vlad Andreyev make his way toward me.

"For fuck's sake," he curses as he drops onto the chair across from me and worries his hair with his fingers before turning to look at me. "Do you think it would be easier to just slip her something to knock her out and let her wake up the next morning in Belgium?"

I take the question for what it is, hyperbole. He and I know that it would be nearly impossible to get his sister out of the country without her consent—and that she'd never forgive him if he betrayed her that way—but I understand his frustration. I have

known Vlad since we were young boys and my father was his father's enforcer. I was raised knowing what my position in the Andreyev family would be, and when Vlad assumed his role as the Bratva boss right after his father's death, I left the military to work for him as his right-hand man. Despite spending most of my life in this household, I rarely interacted with the youngest of the Andreyevs, who spent most of her life abroad with only occasional visits home.

And for good reason.

Since Arya moved back to Valor Springs, there have been two attempts on her life. She's been home for only five months, and there is no shortage of people looking to get to Vlad through her. The first attempt on her life happened only a few weeks after moving back to Valor Springs. Someone messed with her brakes, and the accident that followed could have easily turned fatal. The second incident happened a month ago with an attempted kidnapping when a white van pulled up just as she was leaving the mansion grounds to go for a run, but the men guarding the gate saw what was happening, and shot at the van, scaring the kidnappers away. It was a dramatic scene all things considered, but it left the normally stoic Vlad very shaken. The fact that we haven't been able to determine who was behind the attempt hasn't helped.

The first attempt on her life sent Vlad into a near panic, but it was the second attempt that solidified his stance about moving his sister abroad. Arya, however, disagrees. As a result, she and Vlad have reached a stalemate with Arya forced to stay indoors, essentially on house arrest.

There are very few people who matter to Vlad, and aside from his fiancée, his nineteen-year-old sister is at the very top of that list. It's only natural that he would want to hide away his baby sister in a different country for her safety. Vlad is, after all, a crime boss, and there are quite a few people who would love to wipe out his bloodline, and his sister is one of his weakest links. Sending her back to Belgium where she's spent her school years would be a safe option, but it's not the only one.

And without the security that the school provided, it might not be the best option either.

“Why don’t you assign a bodyguard to her?” I suggest, and Vlad’s head whips to me.

“A bodyguard?”

“She’s been locked in here for weeks already.” I know I would go crazy in her place. “It’s only a matter of time before she’s had enough. You can have one or two of your trusted men shadow her. I have a few guys in mind.”

Vlad nods, and then he stands and starts pacing, making a humming noise as he does so. I lean back and watch him mull over the idea. I imagine his mind was set on sending his sister away, and he never even entertained the thought of assigning protection for his sister or letting her stay in Valor Springs. But Valor Springs is a small town where outsiders would be easily recognized. With Vlad’s influence, the entire town is controlled environment.

“My own cousin tried to kill Arya. If I cannot trust family with her life, then how can I do that with other men, even those on my payroll?” He’s talking mostly to himself, so I don’t bother responding. “Fuck, I even if I did trust one of my own men to not harm her, Arya is sneaky strong-willed. She’d get sick of being shadowed and slip away from them. The only option is to send her away or...”

He stops suddenly and turns his head back to me. It’s almost as if a light blinks on in his mind as his eyes light up. I raise a brow at the contemplative look he’s giving me, and I can tell I am not going to like what comes from his mouth next.

“What?”

“You were in the Marines for six years.”

This is something everyone knows. I only came back to assume my position as his right-hand man and carry on where my father left off. Why the fuck would he bring up my military days now? That life is in the past. “Where is this going?”

“You have military training and have been working for this family for years. You are familiar with everyone in Valor Springs, and you better than anyone else knows who can and cannot be trusted. Not to mention how you feel about Arya.”

My heart stutters at his words. I don’t like where this is going. But before I can utter a response, Vlad continues.

“You love her like she’s your own sister. Arya has known you almost her whole life; she’s comfortable around you. And there’s no one I trust with her safety more than you.”

“No.” Fuck, no . Of course, I care about Arya, but my feelings are far from familial. I won’t be telling her overprotective big brother that, though.

“Arya trusts you,” Vlad reiterates, and I can see he has already made up his mind about it, but this cannot happen. Five months ago, when Arya got into that accident, I stayed with her at the hospital—guarded her—until she was released, but that was a temporary solution because there was no one else to do it. Vlad has more than enough time now to vet other people and bring them in to protect his sister. Heck, I am offering to give him a list of names.

“No,” I say again, firmer this time. “I’m not a babysitter.”

Especially not for girls with golden hazel eyes who stare at you like the moon and the sky hangs over your head. Girls that have no right looking at you like that.

Arya Andreyev is forbidden, especially to a hardened man such as myself. She is so

fragile and innocent, I would break the little bird. No, I cannot think of the girl as anything but my boss's sister. I shake my head for good measure, but Vlad simply shrugs it off.

“You are the perfect person to protect her. The only person.”

“I have enough to do as it is. We have an important shipment arriving tomorrow, and someone needs to be there in case there is trouble. I cannot babysit your sister and deal with business.”

“Someone else will handle the shipment.”

My brows arch at his words. There is a reason why I am the one who deals with the less-than-legal aspects of the family business. Vlad might be the boss and the face that people associate with the family, but I do all the work behind the scenes. The fear that everyone carries for this man exists because I am the one who inspires it in his name. I command respect for the Andreyev name and break bones when it is not afforded. Mine is not a job that can easily be passed on to someone else. It just doesn't work that way.

I have enough to do without worrying about a pretty girl with eyes a mesmerizing blend of earthy browns, greens, and mesmerizing golds. Eyes that shimmer with a mysterious allure that tries to draw me in every time she looks at me. Not to mention that pouty mouth that makes my heart burn with the need to kiss it. A need I swore to ignore.

“No.”

“You work for me, Jax,” Vlad says, and my brows furrow at his words. He's not wrong. As pakhan, Vlad's word is law, but isn't often he feels the need to remind me of my place. I damn well know my job, and babysitting his sister is not one of them. I

may have been raised with the knowledge that I would work for him, but I am no one's lap dog.

"I know what my role is, sir ." I emphasize the last word, pouring every bit of derision I feel into my tone. If Vlad were his father, this level of disrespect would be enough to have me killed. But Vlad isn't just my boss, he is my best friend, and it's my job to call him on his bullshit.

Vlad's eyes turn flinty and he keeps them fixed on mine for a solid minute before he deflates, his sigh heavy and tired. "Help me out here, Jax. What else can I do? If I could, I would ship my sister out of the country where she would be safe, but the girl won't leave. And truth be told, I don't want her to. I just got her home. But I can't keep her locked up here forever without one of us going insane."

"I have a list of men that would do a good job of protecting your sister."

Vlad shakes his head. "'Good' isn't good enough. I want the best. You are the best. You'd protect Arya with your life without a second thought," he says, and my eyes cross to the top of the stairs, visible through the open office door, where I catch a glimpse of midnight black hair through the staircase balusters. Her dark hair is the only feature Arya seems to have in common with the rest of her family. Well, that and her stubbornness. "Arya is the only person from this messed up family that matters. I want her safe, and you are the only person I can trust to protect her."

My eyes lock with the girl eavesdropping on our conversation, and for a couple of seconds, I find myself drawn in by her beauty. In a family of wolves and power-thirsty men, Arya shines as bright as a diamond and just as pretty. She glows the brightest with her innocence and naivety, making even men like me yearn for her.

Fuck, I cannot agree to this, but...

What if the man hired to protect Arya crosses the line? One look at her beauty, and they would be as bewitched as I am. There is no guarantee that they won't act on their desires despite her status as a pakhan's sister. This is a line I am unwilling to cross, but someone else might not be so scrupulous.

The thought of another man getting close enough to touch her...

"I'll do it," I say, shifting my gaze from the girl hiding on the staircase to her pacing brother, who suddenly stops when I speak.

"You will protect Arya?"

"Yes," I assure my best friend. "I will be her bodyguard. Only until the immediate threat to her life is dealt with and you've had time to vet a team to guard her. In the meantime, I will protect your sister with my life." From the threat to her safety and from other men.

Vlad nods, and I notice the relief in his eyes, but I bet if he knew my reasons for agreeing to do this, he would not be so pleased. I am doing this for completely selfish reasons. My eyes shift back to the staircase and the girl still watching me, her face pressed against the railing.

She bites into her lip and quickly averts her eyes and I realize that I am well and truly fucked. How the fuck am I going to keep my hands to myself and off the girl when she looks at me the way she does?

"Great, it's decided then. I will go and talk to Arya about it."

I nod and watch as the girl hurries away from the stairs in the direction of her room right as Vlad starts to make his toward the door. I watch him disappear from sight, and unlike all the other times the siblings have spoken recently, there is no yelling or

crying or slamming of doors. When he comes back down, Arya is in tow.

Don't look.

Do not fucking look, and yet...I do.

My eyes trail the petite girl from her shorts that expose her porcelain legs to her crop top, which emphasizes the outline of her tits, and my gaze lingers. All my blood rushes south, and I know I should not look at her body, especially in the presence of her overprotective brother, but I can't make myself look away.

Her midnight black hair is mussed, and her lips are held in a slight pout. I have to force myself to stay grounded to my seat and not go to her.

Jesus Christ, is this how it's going to be from now on? Fighting my desire for this girl while trying to hide my body's reaction from everyone around us.

"Arya," Vlad speaks, snapping my focus from his sister to him. "If you are set on staying in Valor Springs, then Jax will be accompanying you anytime you leave the house. It will be his job to keep you safe."

"Okay," she says, and her soft voice starkly contrasts with her stubborn, fiery tone from earlier.

Vlad grabs the girl's shoulders and squeezes her lightly. "I am serious, Arya. You need to stay by his side at all times. There are people out there looking to hurt you, but Jax will protect you. I don't want you pulling pranks or trying to hide from him like you did to Father's men when you were little. Promise you'll listen to him and do everything he says."

Arya turns to look at me, worrying her bottom lip as she does. Fuck, she's a

dream...a walking temptation. Her eyes draw me in like no one ever has before, and I realize that protecting this girl and keeping my hands off her is going to be the biggest challenge of my life.

“I will listen to Jax and do everything he says,” she whispers, her cheeks flushing a deep, rosy hue. “I promise.”

Page 2

Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 4:31 am

Arya

It's eleven in the morning when I am finally able to leave the house I have spent weeks locked inside. Eight thousand square feet has always felt like a lot of room for a handful of people, but these last couple of weeks, it's felt suffocating.

I am not much of an outdoor person, but being forced into house arrest for weeks on end would make anyone go crazy, and if not for my brother's fiancée Rue keeping me company almost every afternoon, I would have been on the brink of it. This is the first time Vlad is letting me leave the house, and I am practically vibrating with excitement. But that's not the only reason my heart is racing.

No, that has to do with the man in the driver's seat next to me. Jax H. Abbot. I've never quite figured out what the H in his name stands for, but I am pretty sure it's hot. It has to be. The man is a piece of art with his tastefully messy blond hair and a body crafted to perfection. My heart hasn't stopped hammering since I learned that Jax was going to be my bodyguard.

Am I dreaming?

I have to be dreaming!

Being this close to Jax is something I have only experienced in occasional too-brief moments over the years. Having his moonlight gray eyes focused on me is not something I ever thought would happen to me, and now I want it to last forever.

Oh, I plan to draw this out for as long as I can. This is just day one, and I have a list

of places I want to go—with him. All the places I've imagined him taking me, and I don't care if we're not there as an official couple. As long as I get to spend time with him. Alone. Just the two of us. He doesn't have to know we're on a date.

God, just thinking about it has my body heating over, and I have to fan my face with my hands.

“Are you hot?” Jax asks in a deep voice that sends a shudder racking my body. Christ, his voice is just as intense as the rest of him, and I want him to keep talking to me, but Jax is a man of few words. Frustratingly so.

“A little hot,” I confess, my hand reaching blindly to roll down the window, but his hand shoots out and grabs mine before I can.

“Don't,” he says, pulling my hand back to my lap. “Okay, we need to establish rules.”

He's talking.

I can see his mouth moving, so I know he's saying something important, but...his hand is on mine! His large veiny hand is still holding mine, and I imagine if my heart beats any harder than it already is, it's going to beat itself into a heart attack.

I follow the hand loosely clasped on mine up the sleeve of his blue shirt which is rolled up to reveal a collage of dark tattoos. I discreetly trace my gaze over his strong, defined muscles that ripple beneath his fitted shirt and up to his chiseled jaw, framed by a hint of stubble that gives the man a rugged but charming look.

Jax Hot Abbott is a living and breathing wall of muscle and...I long to climb him. God, I want to have this man's babies.

“The first rule is you listen to everything I tell you.”

My eyes drop to that firm mouth, and I question what it would feel like to have it pressed against mine. Would he be turned off by my inexperience or would he jump at the opportunity to teach me how to kiss? I want him to teach me how to kiss.

“The second rule is you don’t leave my side.”

I bet he’s a great kisser. Would he cradle my neck and kiss me slowly or dominate me with his mouth and take me hard and fast like in those romantic movies I used to watch? I don’t think it matters as long as he kisses me. As long it’s him taking control, I’ll accept anything.

“The third and the most important rule is to prioritize your safety above everything else. This is the only time you are allowed to leave my side. If I tell you to run, I want you to do just that without hesitation for any reason. I don’t care if I am bleeding, I need you to get away from the threat.”

His words snap me out of my stupor, and I blink at the man. “Jax, you can’t expect me to just run away if you are hurt,” I say, quickly looking away when he briefly turns those cold gray eyes to me.

“That is exactly what I am telling you to do.”

I shake my head and chew on my bottom lip. “What if I don’t?”

“Arya!”

No, it’s not fair of him to ask this of me. Not when I love the man more than life itself. Jax is the only man I have ever thought of in any romantic sense for as long as I can remember.

My feelings started as admiration before blossoming into an innocent schoolgirl

crush. I was a shy girl who would hide around the mansion, tracking the huge man around the house whenever he was around. To him, I was his best friend's little sister. He barely ever noticed, but to me, Jax was everything.

When Jax joined the Marines, I was devastated and sick with worry. I sent him care packages and letters at every opportunity, but I'm not sure he ever got them. He never said anything about them. Then when Vlad sent me abroad, I cried my little heart out at the thought of leaving Jax behind. Despite being a man who rarely even acknowledged my existence, he was all I could think about. All my trips back home were to see him, and every time I returned to Belgium, I was afraid that on my next trip to Valor Springs, I would find him settled with a wife and kids.

No, this was no longer an innocent schoolgirl crush. By now, I am obsessed with the man. He is all I see when he is around.

He is the reason I fought Vlad about going back to Belgium. Well, most of the reason. I do love my brother, and I miss him when I'm gone. Now that he has Rue and we are becoming close, I have even more incentive to stay. But my love for Jax is like a tether tying me to Valor Springs.

I can't leave.

Jax is way older than me, and every man has to settle down eventually, right? At thirty-five, I'm pretty sure he'll be looking to do just that, and I want it to be with me. No, I can't leave without trying to get this man to notice me....to see me the way I see him.

I can't risk moving away only for him to settle down with someone else. That would kill me. All those years of dreaming about being with Jax, loving him, needing and wanting him...

Jax is mine.

“Are you listening to me?” he growls, grabbing my chin and forcing my eyes to his.

Christ, I’ve never seen his eyes so close, and they are beautiful, like silver moons, shimmering and veiling his intimate thoughts. I stay locked in his gaze, captured in the essence of the moment and hoping it lasts forever.

Snap out of it, Arya.

I know I look like a fool staring at the man with my heart shining in my eyes, but I can’t help myself. Jax is here. He’s close.

So close to me in fact that I catch his woodsy masculine scent that carries hints of earth and spice. I imagine my nose pressed against his collar, burying myself in his scent as he holds me close in his strong arms.

“Arya!”

“Hmm?”

“I need to know that you will run when I tell you to.” Run away? From him? How can he ask this of me? “I can only do so much to protect you if you get in the way.”

The hold on my chin is firm, but he tightens it to keep my focus on him. “I don’t... I mean, I would feel bad if you were hurt protecting me.”

“In the best-case scenario, it won’t get that far, but I need to not worry about you if there’s trouble.”

I shuffle nervously in my seat as his gaze bores down on me, and I find myself slowly

caving like I knew I would, so I nod, if only to put his mind at ease.

“I won’t get in the way.”

“Good girl,” he says, and I can tell that last bit just slipped out with the way he suddenly releases my chin and draws his hand back, but it’s too late. The damage has already been done. There is a slick heat building between my legs, and it’s growing fast.

Good girl?

Christ, I want to hear him say it once again in that deep, sexy voice of his. Closer this time, preferably against my ear, his warm breath fanning my neck. I want to be his good girl.

Get a grip, Arya!

A horn honks behind us, and I realize we’ve been parked at a stoplight. Jax quickly puts the car in gear and drives on, gaze locked firmly on the road. As we fall into an awkward silence, I absentmindedly gaze out the window. Before long, we pull into a parking space and come to a stop again. Through the window, a quaint bakery catches my eye, its warm lights inviting. We are parked outside Valor Spring’s famous bakery that also functions as the town’s only coffee shop. This is the first of the spots I asked Jax to bring me.

I press my nose against the window and watch as the few customers inside chat over steaming cups of coffee, a cozy scene against the fading morning backdrop. I frequented this bakery when I visited Valor Springs over school vacations, and I always pictured Jax and I seated at one of those tables, sharing a slice of cake and talking about everything and nothing.

“I want to go inside,” I tell Jax, my mouth watering at the thought freshly baked pastries. “Rue brought me one of her aunt’s famous lemon-drop cupcakes, but I am in the mood for classic chocolate today.”

Rue Carter is my brother’s fiancée and my first friend in Valor Springs. She is the reason I was able to make more friends in this little town before my brother forced me into house arrest. But I don’t have to worry about that anymore, not with Jax around.

The thought alone is enough to bring a smile to my face.

“Wait here,” Jax says, and I watch him climb out of the car before walking to my side to open the door for me. Heat climbs up my cheeks, and I have to remind myself that it’s not a date. At least, Jax doesn’t think it is.

He is here only to protect me, but...my heart doesn’t care about that detail as it starts beating so fast as he guides us into the bakery, holding that door for me as well.

The sweet aroma of freshly baked goods envelops us when we walk in, a comforting scent that makes my mouth water with anticipation. The lady at the counter greets us warmly, and I recognize her as Rue’s aunt, Annie. Soon, she and I will be family once her niece marries my brother. Her eyes shift from mine to the imposing figure behind me, a small smile playing at her lips.

“Hi,” I call out cheerfully. Even before I met Rue, I always enjoyed seeing Annie at the bakery. “Remember me? I’m Arya.”

“Of course I remember you, dear. How could I forget one of my most devoted customers?” she teases. “What can I get you today? No, let me guess. Something chocolate?”

I push back to browse the display of delectable treats, my smile widening when I see there is only one chocolate cupcake left despite the early hour. “This one,” I tell her, pointing at it. “And two coffees. I’ll take a Mocha, and Jax...” I turn around to find the man watching me like I’m the treat he wants to devour, and my cheeks flush. Unable to hold his gaze, I quickly look away. I’ve never seen that look aimed at me, and I’m instantly flustered. “B-black. He’ll h-have a black c-coffee.”

Annie’s eyes shift from me to the giant behind me before giving me a knowing smile. I pat my heated cheeks and avoid her humored expression. “Chocolate cupcake and coffee coming right up.”

Jax waits until Annie’s back is turned before he leans in, his warm breath fanning my ear and sending goosebumps all over my skin. “Go sit down where I can see you.”

A shudder racks my body at the whispered order so close to my skin. Close enough that it almost feels like a soft caress that has my body heating up, and I melt on the spot.

We’re in public, I have to remind myself. There are many eyes on me, and I cannot afford to have my knees give out in front of so many witnesses, so I simply nod, walking to a lone table in a corner but in direct view of my bodyguard.

My eyes stay on him as he pays for our drinks. Even without his eyes on me, I can tell I have all of his attention. Well, he and everyone else in the bakery, but only his matters. Being born into a Bratva family will get you attention everywhere you go, but for the first time in a long time, I find it doesn’t bother me. Heck, I barely notice anyone but the man in black jeans that cling to his powerful thighs and a deep blue shirt that hugs his broad chest, the fabric straining slightly when he moves, hinting at the sculpted muscles beneath.

As he stands there, a silent sentinel bathed in the glow of the warm bakery lights, the

most delicious looking of the desserts, I realize that it is possible to fall deeper for this man.

Page 3

Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 4:31 am

Jax

I don't know whether to be surprised or disappointed.

All that arguing and demanding to be let out of the house, and so far, we've been to three places. The bakery, an antique shop, and now, we're in a goddamned library of all places. I had no fucking idea Valor Springs even had a library, and yet, here we are.

My muscles are honed through years of training, my skills finely tuned from my time in the Marines and from working the field for the Andreyevs. Yet, what am I doing? Guarding a girl whose idea of fun is browsing through an antique shop. Disappointment mixes with equal amounts of surprise and frustration. The latter is from sitting still and pretending I don't want to slam the girl against the bookshelves and rut her like a dog.

Fucking hell!

Just thinking about fucking this little bookworm has my hard cock throbbing behind my fly, and I settle back against a bookshelf, praying she doesn't look down, or she'll spot my erection. Up until a few months ago, I barely noticed Arya. She spent most of her life abroad, and during her visits, I was too busy to pay attention to the shy teen who often hid in her room. It wasn't until she showed up here several months ago with all her luggage that I really saw her.

At first, I wasn't sure who she was. Beautiful hazel eyes drew me in like nothing I had ever experienced, and I questioned if she was a friend of Rue's in town for a

visit. Aside from her hair, Arya looks nothing like the rest of her family, and she doesn't behave like any of them either.

The innocence I read in her eyes, I want to guard and ruin it in equal measures.

I wonder how she looks with that sexy little mouth swollen from my kiss or parted around my cock, those pretty eyes leaking tears as I thrust my shaft into her mouth, burying all my swollen inches into her throat before painting her face with my seed.

“Jax?”

My eyes shoot to hers, and I curse myself for dazing off. Some bodyguard I am. There is just something tedious about libraries. Never liked them as a kid, sure as fuck don't like them now.

“Do you need something?” A club to knock me out with? Jesus Christ, we've only been here for half an hour, and I am already bored out of my fucking mind.

“Can you pass me that book?” she whispers, pointing at a shelf of books closest to me. Her voice is low and barely audible even though we're practically alone in the library.

I grab a stack from the shelf and hold them out to her, and she picks two from the top, flipping through the pages before settling on one. “Is this what you do for fun?” I finally ask, unable to help myself. Does Vlad know this about her? I answer my own question when I recall his unusual insistence that his home library be updated and reorganized shortly before Arya's return. Vlad is nothing if not indulgent of his baby sister. It's a wonder she didn't grow up to be a spoiled brat with how much Vlad overcompensated for their father's lack of attention.

Arya looks up, and her cheeks turn rosy when our gazes connect before quickly

looking away. “What do you mean?”

“Read books.”

“Well, it’s one of the things I like to do.”

“Tell me, princess, what other things do you enjoy doing?” The “princess” is meant to be mocking, but it comes off as affectionate, and I curse under my breath for even saying it in the first place.

“I...I like going to antique shops and flea markets. It’s like going on a treasure hunt. I like to imagine where the things I find came from and who owned them before me. Oh, there was also this animal shelter near my school in Belgium, and I used to volunteer there on weekends. Vlad donates every year to the shelter, so they let me spend time helping the animals, and sometimes I read books to them.”

Jesus Christ.

I stare at her and realize two things simultaneously: I don’t really know her at all and she is far more wholesome and innocent than I’d imagined. To be fair, I never spent much time around the girl until her accident when I had to guard her hospital room, but even then, we didn’t talk much.

I’m not convinced there is anything to even talk about. This girl, with her sexy little body and those tempting lips, is a nerd. If I didn’t know she is related to a pakhan , I would never have guessed she is part of a crime family.

“You have a library at home. Why are we here?”

She blinks at me as if I just asked a dumb question. “It’s different,” she whispers, closing the book, and I watch as she gets up to browse the shelves once more. My

eyes drop to her pert ass when she reaches up to grab a book from the top shelf and...I should definitely help her with it, but then I would miss out on this magnificent view. "Reading at home can get lonely sometimes. The books here have a little more life because they've been read by others. Do you know what I mean?"

No, I do not, and I don't know anyone that would.

Her skirt rides up even more, and my eyes stay locked on her porcelain legs, my cock twitching in response to my desire to touch her. It's taking everything in me not to crowd the girl against the shelves and fuck her into oblivion.

Has she even been touched before? A girl who spends time in libraries and antique shops, reading or talking to animals... I wonder if she's ever felt the touch of a real man. Felt his mouth trail those perfect legs to her inner thighs, parting them to reveal her hot little core.

What kind of sounds would this little temptation make as I bathed her pussy with my tongue?

Fuck! I can't think about this now.

Arya is my boss's sister, and she is more than a decade younger than me. I know better than to entertain these thoughts, let alone touch her, but she's not making it easy for me to fight my desire for her.

"Jax," she calls out, getting on her tiptoes and reaching up. "A little help here."

My eyes coast her body, and when I step behind her to grab the book she's trying to reach, I barely resist the urge to rock my erection against her ass. I manage to grab her book without so much as touching her, but the little tease pushes back against me as she drops back to her heels, rubbing that perfect ass against my erection, and I

almost shoot in my jeans, something I haven't done since I was fourteen and swamped by adolescent hormones.

"Fuck!" I growl, clenching my teeth as an ache shoots to my balls.

"S-sorry," she whispers, her voice shaky despite doing it intentionally. At least I think it was intentional, but with the way her innocent eyes shift to mine, there is no way of knowing for sure.

"Be careful," I tell her, stepping back from temptation and passing the book to her. She grabs it and whispers another apology before rushing back to her seat where she starts flipping through the pages, but this time, even I can tell that she isn't taking anything in.

Did I scare her?

She seems flustered at the very least. Her attention seems shot now, and she's actively avoiding looking my way. Even with her head bowed, I can tell she's blushing, and I can't help but wonder what she's thinking.

I expect the rest of the time to pass in an awkward silence, but I am surprised once more when Arya lifts her gaze from the book she's clearly not reading to me. "You asked me what other things I enjoy doing, but you have to know I am not exactly free to do anything I please."

"Why not?"

She smooths her hands over her lap before fully shifting to face me. "A lot of activities...involve other parties, and most people are scared to approach me because of Vlad. Having a crime boss for a brother doesn't exactly earn you friends, even in a foreign country."

Don't ask.

Do not fucking ask her.

“And what kind of activities do you need other parties for?”

“Dancing, traveling, trying new restaurants. They aren't as fun to do alone, not that Vlad would ever let me.” Thank fuck . “And dating, kissing; you kind of need someone else for those.”

Fuck!

I should not have asked her, but a part of me couldn't resist. It wouldn't be totally unexpected to learn she dated while she was in Belgium. Vlad, of course, would have tried to put a stop to it had he known, but Belgium is half a world away from Valor Springs. There are limits to what even Vlad can manage. While something inside me warms at the knowledge Arya has never dated anyone, it's still better for everyone if I quickly wrap up this conversation and move on to something else. At this point, awkward silence is better than the direction this conversation is headed.

“I don't think this is an appropriate conversation to be having with your bodyguard.”

Arya bites her lip, and I expect her to drop it, but she gets up on her feet. I read the nerves in her eyes as she closes the distance between us. Her eyes drop when she stops in front of me, and the blatant submissiveness in the gesture has my cock throbbing hard and moisture pooling at the tip. I have to clench my hands to stop myself from reaching out to her and grazing a finger over those flushed cheeks. Christ, she is a fucking dream, so breathtaking standing there, fighting her own shyness.

“Who should I talk to about it?” she asks, reaching out and lightly fingering the

buttons of my shirt.

“Your friends,” I manage hoarsely.

Arya looks up at me through her long eyelashes. “They are not here,” she whispers, trailing her fingertips up my chest and toying with the buttons, making it hard for me to focus on what she’s saying. “I just... I have some questions I don’t think my friends would know the answers to.”

“Arya.”

My tone is a harsh warning, but she doesn’t heed it as her eyes drop to the massive bulge in my pants. Arya’s eyes widen in fascination, and her hands drop from my shirt to my belt, then lower, sucking in a sharp breath when her delicate fingers graze my hard cock.

“Jax,” she breathes, and I snare her wrist before she can do any more, pulling her hand away from my cock. Fucking hell, how can someone shift from a blushing maiden too scared to meet my eyes to bold vixen in a matter of seconds?

I should not have let her touch me, but a part of me thought it might frighten some sense into her, but it seems to have had the opposite effect. The bright-eyed girl now has a curious determination in her eyes that I know is going to cause trouble.

I squeeze her wrist and force her focus back to my face. This is insane, and there is no fucking way in hell I am going to entertain touching this girl. Not in a library—albeit an empty one—where anyone could walk in on us. She’s forbidden to me. Vlad would kill me if I touched his sister, and I bet he wouldn’t take into account how much she’s chipping away at my control.

This girl is smaller, younger, and Christ above, so fucking delicate, and yet, she holds

so much power over me with a simple caress. I should... I need to stop this before it gets too far.

Her eyes dart from mine to my erection then back to my face. "I have questions."

"Arya," I groan at the impossible girl. "You are killing me." I know she is stubborn, which is quite frankly the one certain thing I do know about her, but I did not expect to experience it firsthand, not like this at least.

"I just... Will you let me try?" she asks, trying to shake off my iron grip. "I just want to know what it feels like to, uhm, touch you."

"Princess..." Fuck!

"If I can't touch you then, will you kiss me?" she pleads, stepping closer, and my eyes drop to her low-cut top that reveals her exquisite neckline and cleavage. Fuck, she doesn't have a fucking bra on. When we left the house earlier, she was in a soft pink sweater that is now draped over her chair. I tried not to look earlier when she shrugged it off, but now, there is no avoiding it.

"Jax?"

Her eyes are glassy, needy, pleading with me to break my own rules and touch her. I cave like I knew I would. With her wrists firmly clasped in one hand, I brush the back of my knuckles over her soft cheeks, watching those sexy lips puff open as I do so, that perfect mouth practically begging me for a kiss.

I should resist. Deny us what I know we both want. She's a forbidden fruit, but aren't those the sweetest, juiciest kind? Fuck, she looks the tastiest of all, and I am a weak man. One whose control is in shreds, but the fact is, I want her.

And I have no fucking idea how to stop.

“Jax...”

Fuck it!

I lean down and press my lips to hers, and her mouth opens underneath mine. She sighs against my lips, almost as if she’s been waiting for this moment forever rather than a few minutes. The kiss is slow, her inexperience evident, but she’s eager and quick to learn. I grab her chin and tilt my head to the side, dragging my tongue hotly over hers, the friction sending a storm of heat to my aching balls. Arya tries to pull her hands from my grasp, but I tighten my grip, unwilling to let her curious fingers send me over the edge.

Her lips are smooth and sweet, like the rest of her. I taste coffee and chocolate icing on her lips, and it’s a hundred times more addictive than the real thing. Everything about this girl is so fucking addictive. From the smooth texture of her mouth, to the taste of her lips, down to the little whimpers she makes at the back of her throat.

I drop my hand from her chin to trail it over the sexy swell of her tits, fondling them with my free hand as I sweep my mouth over her soft skin. She moans into the kiss when I tease her nipples with my thumb then squeeze the pebbled buds between my knuckles. Her breathing grows ragged as she presses into my hand, pushing against my greedy palm.

We—I need to stop. I have gone much further than I intended. Reluctantly, I break the kiss and drop my forehead against hers, fighting to rein in my need. But she shatters my resolve by pressing the length of her body against mine.

“Princess...”

“Need you,” she whispers, her glazed eyes locked on mine, pleading with me to take things further, to give her more. Her voice drops a little. “Jax, please...”

Say no.

I have to tell her no.

“What do you want?”

Arya keeps her gaze on mine and doesn't look away once. She doesn't seem uncertain about anything. My judgment may be impaired right now, but I am well aware of our environment.

“You,” she breathes. “I want you , Jax.”

Page 4

Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 4:31 am

Arya

“ Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. ”

I never once thought that I would find the need to apply my favorite quote in real life. The famous words of playwright Johann Wolfgang von Goethe are what a former teacher used to start all his lessons with. I bet Mr. Grunewald would be mortified to learn how I’ve chosen to apply those words.

No, he probably expected us to go forth into the world and apply boldness in our professions, not in getting the attention of the man we’re in love with.

But it’s working.

Jax is in front of me, my wrists clasped in his hand and lips tingling from the kiss. My first kiss and...it was perfect.

The first time I read about kissing, I couldn’t take my eyes off the page. I was in a library then too, and I remember kicking my feet excitedly as I read the scene over and over again. I replaced the names on the page and imagined I was kissing a man who was thousands of miles away from me. There was a whole ocean between Jax and I, but that didn’t stop me from constantly thinking about the man.

Thinking about sharing my first kiss with him.

I never actually thought it would happen, but it has. Jax just kissed me. Jax is turned on...because of me.

I caused that.

I made him hard.

Now I am afraid to blink and lose this moment in case it's a dream. I can't look away from his perfect face when it is so close to mine. My body aches for his touch. His hand is still on my aching tit, fondling it in his massive palm and causing my panties to grow wet with arousal. I have felt this achy feeling before, but I never dared do anything about it. No, only Jax is allowed to bring me relief. Only he gets to touch me there.

"We should stop," he rasps, his voice rich and deep, it causes the feeling between my thighs to intensify. I squirm against him, trying to get him to release my wrists so I can touch him too, but his grip is ironclad. Unyielding.

"Jax..."

His jaw hardens, and he drops his lips to mine but doesn't kiss me. His warm breath fans my lips, and my eyes flutter closed at the intimate moment. "Tell me to stop, princess. We need to stop before I do something reckless."

"No." I shake my head, my pulse racing at the sound of him calling me "princess." I've been called it before by others, but it always carried malicious undertones. With Jax, it's different.

I like the word on his lips.

"I should stop," he says again, his voice desperate. "It's taking everything in me not to press you against the shelves, tear off your little panties, and shove my cock into your tight little hole without any foreplay. To rut you so fast and hard, we'll send books flying off the shelves."

Oh God.

My eyes shoot to his dark ones, and I question if that was meant to be a threat. Is this what he's using to try and scare me away? If so, then he'll need to try harder because all he's doing is make me want to try push him further until he goes blind with desire. I want him to do all that and so much more.

Take me.

Use me for his pleasure.

Everything. I want everything from this man, and I want him to take everything from me. I want to lose myself in his taste and scent, for him to lock me in his massive arms and have me however he pleases. Only him .

“Do it. Jax, please. I need you.”

The grip on my wrists relaxes, and he rubs his thumb over my skin, his eyes locked on mine when he does so before finally letting go. I barely have time to make sense of what's happening before he spins me around to face the shelf, positioning himself behind me. My heart hammers in my chest when he crowds me against the books, rocking forward and pressing his hardness against my ass.

I should be nervous. Jax is about to do what he threatened he would, but all I feel is excitement. Is it going to hurt? All the books I've read mentioned that it hurts the first few times, and I must be out of my mind to even crave that.

I am not completely convinced that this isn't a dream. My head is foggy with the scent of Jax's cologne, and my back is blanketed by the very muscles I have craved to feel pressed against me.

“Are you sure about this, princess?” he asks into my ear, reminding me yet again that this is real. “I am about to use this tight little body for my pleasure. If you don’t want—”

“I want it,” I whisper, perhaps a little too eagerly. I bite my lips as I consider my next words, but Johann Wolfgang von Goethe did say that boldness has power and magic in it, and I could use a little of both right now. “Y-you can do anything you want to me.”

A harsh grunt leaves his mouth at my words. “Fuck, princess, you shouldn’t give such control to anyone. Not even to me.” A whimper slips out when he draws his right hand up my thigh and under my skirt. “You don’t want someone thinking they can use this tight little body any way they please, do you?”

“Only you.”

“Fuuuck!” He tightens the grip on my thigh, squeezing me and causing wetness to spread through my sex. Jax pins me to the shelf as his hand continues to slide higher, and I am trembling with the need to feel his hand on my sensitive places. I’ve never had anyone touch me there, but I’ve read enough about it to know it’ll feel good. I’ve felt enough of Jax to know that I’ll only ever want his hands on me. “You smell so good, princess,” Jax says raggedly into my hair, hooking his index finger under the waistband of my panties and slowly tugging them down my thighs. I gasp when he tears them off me completely in one sharp move. “Feel so fucking soft and...forbidden.”

“I’m not.” Not to him at least.

“A corrupted man like me does not deserve to touch something so precious. So innocent and pure,” he rasps deeply, and I want to see his face. I try to turn so I can get a better look at those stormy gray eyes, but he keeps me pressed to the bookshelf,

his presence heavy behind me. Jax grabs my right knee and guides me to prop my foot up on the lower shelf, sending a few books falling to the floor. I wince at the noise it makes, afraid to attract attention to our little corner, but it doesn't seem to concern my bodyguard. "I want to corrupt you, see those pretty eyes burn with the furthest thing from innocence as I paint your sexy little mouth with my seed."

He brings his hand back between my legs, and I cry out when his middle finger grazes my sensitive nub, causing it to throb. "Jax!"

"Fuck, baby, you are practically dripping," he breathes, rubbing his thick digit over my clit in rough circles that send pleasure shooting through my tummy. I lean into his touch, but he pulls away, making me whine at the loss. "You gave me permission to do anything I want with you."

I nod frantically, dropping my head against the books. "Yes. Anything."

My breath catches in my throat when I hear him tug down his zipper, my body taut with the anticipation of feeling him inside me. It will hurt, I know that much, but I don't care. I have safeguarded this part of myself for him. Blocked out the peer pressure to experiment with guys my own age...for him. My virginity, my body...they all belong to Jax, have only ever belonged to him.

I close my eyes and wait to feel the hard press of his erection, for him to take what rightfully belongs to him, except...it never comes.

Instead, Jax falls to his knees, and there is little warning before I feel the wet press of his tongue against my sex. I cry out, slapping my palm to my mouth to stop the scream that tries to climb out my throat.

I...I can't make a sound that will alert someone to come and check on us. If someone does, then Jax will stop, and I don't want him to stop.

Oh God!

I bite hard into my hand when he flicks my swollen bud with his tongue, once, twice before dragging his tongue over my sex, parting my feminine lips. I've read about this too, the soft, slow caress of lips against intimate parts, except there is none of that.

Jax devours me.

Like a hungry beast, he buries his face between my legs, growling deeply as he laps at my sex like he is starved. It's my first time feeling anything like this, and my body can't withstand the feeling much longer. I feel myself draw closer and closer to a fall; I am unsure of its depth, but I don't have time to wonder as Jax suction his mouth over my clit and bathes it in fast strokes, sending me right over the edge.

I swallow back a sob as my sex clenches and releases wildly around his greedy tongue. Pleasure spears through me as tremors rack my body, and my hand shoots out blindly as I reach out for something to hold onto, sending more books flying off the shelf.

Jax gives my pulsing sex a final kiss when the intense trembling eases before climbing back to his feet. My head is still reeling from what just happened when I feel the hard press of his cock against my folds.

"You are a fucking drug, princess," he says gruffly, dropping his head to my neck and nuzzling my skin as he presses the thick head of his shaft against my entrance. "Your scent and taste, hell, your pussy is a fucking drug, and you just got me hooked on it. How do you expect me to move on from this now?"

"Jax," I whimper as he bumps the tip of his cock against my entrance, stretching me just a little bit, but doesn't push inside. His thrusts are shallow, never penetrating my

opening, and he grips my hips to still them when I try to push back against him. “Do it. It’s okay.”

“Damn, princess, you shouldn’t offer yourself so recklessly to me,” he growls against my skin. “Not when I am this close to tearing through that little barrier keeping me from claiming you.”

Then what is he waiting for? Is he scared of hurting me? “Jax...”

“No,” he grits out before I can say what I want. His breathing grows harsh, and I catch the sound of flesh on flesh coming from behind me. I feel his shoulders flex against my back as he jerks his cock, and I push him back just enough to turn around and look at him. My eyes drop to his large hand working his erection. His shaft is thick and heavy, the cockhead flushed an angry red, and precum drips over his fingers to coat his balls.

“Jax...” I lick my lips as his hand picks up speed. With each upstroke, I catch a glimpse of his full, heavy balls, and the desire to taste him is nearly overwhelming.

His precum eases the slide of his hand around his cock; the sound is obscene and causes my cheeks to flush. I want to see him let go, to lock in the memory of the look on his face when he falls apart in front me. Because of me.

“Fuck, princess,” he grunts roughly, his breathing growing unsteady as he moves faster, his muscles flexing. Without another thought, I drop to my knees in the tight space between his body and the bookshelf. I look up and meet his stormy eyes, and without breaking his gaze, I open my mouth and stick out my tongue. There’s no mistaking what I want him to do. He buries his free hand in my hair, holding me still, as he continues to work his thick shaft. I put my hands on his thighs to steady myself, and I can feel how tense his muscles are. “Arya,” he moans just before he erupts, coating my lips and tongue with his release. I lean forward before he can pull away

and wrap my lips around the tip, suckling lightly. He lets out a broken groan above me as more of his seed fills my mouth. I try to swallow, but some escapes and drips down my chin.

After a few moments, his muscles relax, and he pulls me to my feet, his breathing still ragged. I feel the warm, sticky dampness of arousal between my inner thighs, and I press them tightly together to ease the ache that still lingers from watching Jax come undone. He quickly tucks himself away and zips up his pants, then helps me right my skirt.

“How long have you waited, princess?” he asks, as I use the sleeve of my discarded sweater to wipe my chin. It’s not my first choice, but it’ll have to do for now.

I consider his question. How long have I waited for what? For him to want me? To love me? Then I realize what he is referring to. How long have I saved myself for him to be the one to take my virginity. “Too long,” I answer.

“You can wait a little longer, can’t you?” he asks into my ear, pulling me close and wrapping me in his arms. “You deserve more than a quick fuck in a public library.”

He is perfect.

I would wait a lifetime for him, however long it takes to have him. I would do anything, but I don’t want to sound desperate, so I nod. “I’ll wait.”

“Good girl,” he says, slapping my bottom before pushing back. Jax starts picking up the books we dropped, and I know I should at least help put them in order, but my brain is fried.

I just had my first kiss, my first orgasm. My first taste of Jax.

Right now, all I can do is watch as the man who is giving me all of my firsts tidies up after us.

I giggle as a thought occurs to me. Jax is my bodyguard turned lover. It's one of my favorite romance novel tropes.

When we left the house this morning, I'd pretended this was our first date. What a date it's turned out to be.

"Jax?" His eyes shoot to mine, and for a brief second, I am struck mute. God, those eyes. They could kill and save me. "After this, can you show me something you enjoy?"

His gaze slowly trails my body, like a caress leaving a storm of heat in its wake, and by the time he makes it back to my eyes, I am burning for him. Yearning to feel him against me once more. "I thought I just did."

"I—" I look away to gather my composure. Christ, I can barely think straight when the man is looking at me. "I meant something other than that."

"I think you've had enough fun for the day, princess."

I bite my lip at the nickname. "Tomorrow, then?"

"Tomorrow."

Page 5

Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 4:31 am

Jax

Tomorrow comes sooner than I'm prepared for.

I had every intention of dropping off Arya at her home and driving away to take care of business, but the second we step into her home, something changes. The brightness I witnessed in her during the day is suddenly replaced by shadows.

Arya turns to me in the foyer and pastes on a smile she clearly doesn't feel. "Thanks to you, I got to spend the day outside for a change," Arya whispers, fingering the hem of her sweater and smiling at me, but it's difficult, nearly impossible to ignore the disappointment in her expression. "I'm convinced Vlad would have locked me in here for eternity if you hadn't agreed to be my bodyguard."

This is my cue to leave.

I should nod and walk away, but I don't. Something on her face has me stepping forward and cupping her cheek. I know better than to initiate any physical contact in Vlad's home. The man would come at me guns blazing, and that's the last thing I need to deal with.

Even so, I can't exactly ignore the sad look on Arya's face.

"What's wrong?"

Arya shakes her head. "It's nothing."

“Tell me.” She shakes her head again, trying to evade my touch, and that is a first. Since picking her up this morning, the girl has leaned into my touch every chance she’s had, and this is the first time she has tried to avoid it. “Arya.”

“It’s Friday,” she finally says.

My brows furrow in confusion at her words. “What happens on Fridays?”

“Well, there is typically no one at home on Fridays. Vlad and Rue are out of town. They like to use the weekends to explore new places and have some time alone together. Without them here, the staff left for the weekend and will not be back until Sunday afternoon.”

I see.

“You are alone in the house.”

Fuck, I did notice the quiet stillness the moment we walked in, but I never expected there to be no one at all in this massive house. Why the fuck didn’t Vlad tell me this when he asked me to guard his sister? Sure, there are the guards outside that patrol the property, but they never come into the house unless called. I can protect Arya when I’m with her, but what would happen if someone snuck past the guards with everyone gone? If this is a normal thing, then someone could have picked up the fact that no one is home on the weekends. Sure, this home is a fortress with state-of-the-art security features everywhere, but nothing is totally fail-proof.

“It’s fine, really,” Arya lies. “I don’t mind spending time alone in this huge mansion. I spend most of the weekend in my room reading a book or something. I barely notice it. I don’t mind it, really.”

I can’t tell if she is trying to convince me or herself when clearly that is not the case.

And to think that she's been spending months locked alone in this massive place every weekend. I know Vlad did it for her safety, but it doesn't mean I have to like it. If I know my best friend, he allowed himself to be convinced that Arya was happy to be left behind. I know he would never intentionally hurt her feelings, but I also know he's been distracted by Rue and their pre-marital bliss. Why the fuck would Arya even choose to stay in Valor Springs? She would have more freedom if she agreed to move away. Why stay?

"It's not safe for you to be alone here," I state, and she shakes her head.

"I'm not a child, Jax. I'm nineteen. I can stay home alone and be just fine."

"Age is not the issue here, Arya. There have been several attempts on your life—"

"Two," she interrupts. My eyes narrow on hers. She is not taking this as seriously as she should be, or she would have agreed to move away when her brother told her to.

"There were two that you know of, princess," I grind out, my voice hard. "Either one of those could have claimed your life if you weren't so lucky. I need you to take this seriously."

"I am."

"It doesn't look like it."

Arya shrugs and shifts her gaze from mine. "What do you want me to do, Jax? Listen to my brother and let him ship me off to another country?"

"You would be safe."

"I would be lonely," she counters. "Vlad sent me away when I was seven years old."

He shipped me off to a foreign country and to a boarding school where I knew no one. I was this awkward American kid who couldn't speak any of the country's three official languages. I put all my focus into learning at least one so I could make friends, and even then, it wasn't the easiest thing for me to do."

"He sent you there to protect you because you matter to him."

"I know that, and that's why I don't resent him for it, but I was lonely a lot. I missed being around people who knew me. I craved the familiarity of the home I was raised in."

"Arya..."

"I know that you and Vlad don't think I'm taking the threats seriously, but I am. I would rather stay locked in here where I get to see you and Vlad and Rue than go back to a place where I have no one," she says, her voice pained. "So yeah, I don't mind spending the weekend in this mansion by myself if it means I get five days of the week with the people I love. I... I can take it. Besides, who's to say that someone wouldn't follow me back to Belgium? If I did move, I wouldn't be living at a gated boarding school with security staff anymore. I'd be on my own."

Jesus Christ!

This is not what I expected to hear from the youngest Andreyev. I wonder if Vlad knows this is how his sister feels. Maybe he does, but I suppose her safety will always be a priority to him. Not that she doesn't have a point. I'd already had the same thought about danger following her abroad.

Fuck, I can't leave her alone after hearing all that. But Fridays are my busiest nights. The Andreyev family operates several shady businesses that I help manage, but they also own legitimate businesses in Valor Springs. One of which is the Shadow

Lounge, an exclusive club that caters to the needs of the wealthier members of Valor Springs. Every weekend, I have to check in to the club to make sure things are running smoothly, but for the most part, my threatening presence and the Andreyev name are enough to keep the patrons in line. Money tends to give people the illusion of power, and my presence ensures they all behave.

I can't stay here with Arya, not when I have my other obligations to the family waiting on me, but I can't leave her here. I would never forgive myself if anything happened to her, but more than that, I would be distracted all evening thinking about the lonely girl I left behind. I can't—won't—be another person who leaves Arya all alone.

Arya is watching me mull over the options, and I can tell in those pretty eyes that she will accept whatever decision I come to. The thought of leaving Arya alone in this house even for a few hours isn't an option. Unlike Vlad, I don't trust someone to not get to her while she's home alone. Fuck!

"Have you been to the Lounge before?" I ask, coming to peace with the fact that this girl matters to me more than she should. More than I should have allowed her to.

"Vlad has never let me, but the drinking age in Belgium is sixteen," she responds, her lips twisting in a smile—genuine this time—when she notices the look on my face. "I went to a club on my eighteenth birthday with some classmates. I only had one drink. I just wanted to try it out."

"You are coming with me, and you won't be drinking tonight."

Her eyes light up, and she steps into my space, fluttering her lashes at me with excitement. "Really? You are taking me to the Lounge?"

"No," I say, grabbing her shoulders, but she's practically vibrating with excitement.

“Let’s get one thing clear. I am not taking you to the club. You are accompanying me on a work errand to the club for a few hours at most to check on things, and then I am driving you back here. Sober.”

She nods at my words, but her smile remains. “Great! I need to go freshen up. Oh my God, I don’t even think I have the right clothes to wear to the club.”

She’s already gone before I can remind her that it doesn’t matter what she wears since she won’t get a chance to enjoy the club floor. I watch as the girl runs upstairs, her long dark hair swinging prettily as she skips up the steps. I shake my head, disappointed in my inability to resist Arya. I have dated before, but nothing that lasted more than a few weeks. The women who went out with me called me the coldest man they’d ever been with and claimed I never made time for anything but my work. They were not wrong.

From a young age, it was imprinted on me on what my role would be, and I never strayed from it. Perhaps I could have become something different, but I never quite developed any interests as a kid or an adult, so I poured everything into becoming an effective enforcer, and it paid off. It didn’t do any favors for my love life, though.

My Bratva family hardened me before the military had a chance to do any major damage to my personality. The thought that some five-foot-nothing girl with eyes that shine brighter than gold can influence me so easily is laughable in itself. No one has ever had this kind of hold over me. Everything I have done up to this moment has been with a sober mind, but around Arya, I can’t seem to think straight.

She makes me forget how dangerous it is to touch her.

With her beautiful hazel eyes that carry a unique and perfect blend of earthy colors, she’s managed to wrap me around her little finger. So much so that I know I would do anything for her.

Anything.

My phone buzzes in my pocket, and I imagine it's the Shadow Lounge's manager asking if I'm coming in tonight. I take it out, and sure enough, it's him. I check the time before firing back a message to let him know that I'll be showing up a little late tonight.

I look up the staircase where Arya disappeared, but there's no sign of her. She mentioned freshening up, but I didn't think it would take this long.

Fuck it, I might as well go check what's taking her so long.

I take the stairs up to the first floor where I know her room is located. I've heard the slamming of her door after an argument with Vlad enough times to find her bedroom without issue. I walk to the door and rap firmly on it. "Arya?"

"I'm almost done," she calls out, her voice muted. "On second thought, come in. I need your help with something."

I turn the knob, and it doesn't occur to me for a second that I might be walking into a room with a half-naked girl standing in the center. Arya is wearing a short dress that clings to her curves, and as I enter, she turns away from me, and I see that the dress is open at the back, revealing the milky smooth expanse of her back from her shoulders to just above the curve of her ass. All the blood in my body rushes south, and my cock fills in record time.

Fucking hell!

I have touched that body, felt it pressed against me, but nothing beats seeing her bare skin. Her ass is just as perfect as the rest of her, and realize that I can't look away. Fuck, I want to bury my cock inside of her, tear through her barrier, and claim this

temptress for myself. Everything in me screams to touch that perfect body, but my feet are frozen to the floor.

“Princess...” I croak out, my throat closing up when I try to speak.

“Can you help me?” she asks, gesturing over her shoulder to her back, but I barely glance at her face. I don’t see anything but her bare skin.

“You called me in here, and... you are nearly naked.”

She looks down at her body as if she’s just realizing her own state of undress. “Oh,” she whispers, her cheeks and neck flushing as she attempts to pull the neckline of the dress up with her hands but is unsuccessful. “I’m sorry.”

“It’s too late for that, princess.”

I don’t know how I make it to her, only that I do. I wrap my arms around her waist, spin her to face me, and yank her flush against my hard body. Her lips part on a gasp, and I take advantage of that, slamming my mouth hard against hers. She whimpers, seemingly surprised by the kiss, but it only lasts a few minutes as she finally wraps her arms around my shoulders and pushes up against me.

I wrap her hair around my fist and tug lightly, dragging my tongue hotly over hers. The kiss is feral and hungry and... I need more.

I crave this girl more than air itself. Her intoxicating scent, the needy way in which she responds to my touch. The breathy little sighs she makes as if she’s been waiting for this moment for a lifetime.

“You know how to bring a man to his knees, don’t you, princess?” I ask, tightening my grip around her waist as I brush my lips over her whimpering ones. “Calling me

into the privacy of your room while practically naked. Were you testing me to see if I would pounce, lick your wet little pussy again like I did back at the library?"

"Y-yes," she whimpers, curling her delicate fingers around the collar of my shirt. "I mean no. I didn't do it on purpose. I wasn't trying to tease you." Her tits rise and fall, her back arching and pushing those full tits up against my shirt as she speaks. "I'm sorry, I wasn't thinking..."

She gasps when I push my erection hard against her belly. "Do you make mistakes like that often, invite other men to see you half-dressed?"

She whimpers, shaking her head frantically. "Only you." She trails her hand down to my chest and tugs open a button. "You are the only man that's ever seen me like this, I swear it."

"Damn right," I growl, my voice unfamiliar even to my own ears.

She wets her lips and nods, those beautiful golden eyes watching me with so much trust it floors me. "Only you."

With a rough groan, I slam my mouth down on hers, licking our tongues together in the most erotic of moves. The kiss is wet and downright obscene. It's sinful...forbidden. Every graze of my tongue reminds me of her flavor, and I cannot get enough. She whimpers, her fingers tugging hard at my buttons, seeking out skin.

I let go of her hair to cup her nape as I twist my lips hungrily over hers until we're both out of breath. I rock my hard cock against her pussy while I devour her sexy little mouth, and she responds in kind, mewling and writhing against me just as needily.

The kiss goes on for God knows how long. There is no way of telling with how

addictive her lips are, but when I resurface, it's to the sound of my buzzing phone. I grab it from my pocket and toss it onto the bed without so much as glancing to see the caller ID.

I don't care who is calling.

The whole world could be coming to a fucking end, and they couldn't pry me away from this perfect little body. Whoever it is on the other end of the line will just have to wait until I have worshipped every inch of this perfect girl, and I am about to do just that when Arya suddenly pulls back.

"Jax," she whispers, her tongue sneaking out to wet her swollen lips. Lips swollen and chapped from my kisses. "Wait. The p-phone—"

"Can wait," I rasp, dropping my lips to her neck and licking the smooth column of her throat while trailing my hand down tits, pushing her dress down until it's pooling at her feet, then fondling the perfect globes with my hungry palms, pinching her pebbled nipples in turns before trailing my hand down her stomach.

"What if it's important? I know you are busy man... Oh!" Her head falls back with a cry when I drop my hand between her legs, holding back a groan at the realization she was fully bare beneath her tiny dress. I drag my knuckle over her wet sex and part her feminine lips. I keep a firm hand on her waist as I drag my middle finger over the valley of her wet pussy, spreading her arousal over her sex. "Jax... Oh my God!"

"You are so fucking gorgeous, princess," I grind out, kissing a path down her neck before leaning down to close my mouth around a taut nipple, rolling my tongue around the peak, and losing myself in her smooth skin. Her pleased cries mingle with the loud ringing of my phone, but I choose to filter out the latter. I release her nipple with a pop to shift my attention to the other, all the while teasing the swollen bud between her legs with fast strokes.

“Jax!” she sobs, grasping onto my hair when I start kissing a path down her body. Her breath is racing, but I want to see this beautiful flower come apart in my arms. I want to show her the beast she’s turned me into.

“Open up for me, princess,” I rasp, raking my hands down her thighs and nudging them open, exposing more of her sodden sex. There is little strength keeping me on my feet, and when I go down on my knees, it feels like a reprieve. This time, I don’t have to worry about someone attacking us at the library. No, I can lose myself in her scent and flavor.

My eyes are closed when I lean in and inhale her sweet peachy scent...intoxicating like the rest of her. I can’t wait. I know what she tastes like, have felt her warm arousal on my tongue, and I crave those sensations like my next breath.

With a deep growl, I grab her left knee and bring it over my shoulder, clasping her ass in my hand before leaning in for a taste. Her pleased sob rings in my ear when I drag my tongue over her drenched pussy, lapping at her sex and tasting her smooth arousal on my tongue. I moan roughly, digging my fingers into her ass as I lick at her sex like a starved animal, bathing her clit in fast strokes that send her thrashing about, but I keep my grip on her firm.

“J-Jax... Oh!”

It’s not enough, I realize. Loving her body once, twice...it will never be enough. There isn’t a definite number I can give myself or a limit of how many times I will have her body until I am done. I will always crave her broken moans and the feeling when she combs her fingers through my hair, grabbing a fistful and tugging me closer to her sex. It’s almost as if she can’t get enough as she rides my face eagerly, coating my jaw with her slick arousal.

And my favorite moment...when she comes apart.

I drag my tongue over her swollen clit, sucking the bud between my lips with slow suction, and that's when it begins. Her leg stiffens around my shoulder, and her pussy starts to pulse wildly around my tongue, letting me how close she is. I apply firm suction to her clit as she rides her hips faster against my face, and that is when the dam breaks.

She orgasms with a scream that would no doubt alert everyone on the property if the house wasn't empty. Her sex clenches and releases around my tongue rapidly as tremors rock her body. Her back arches and tits shake from the intensity of it, and I keep my mouth on her, dragging on the orgasm until she's sobbing from the intensity of it.

Christ, she's perfect. Every flushed inch of the girl is perfect, and I need to be inside of her.

My phone starts buzzing once more as I lower her knee from my shoulder and rise to my feet, ignoring the annoying device on the bed. My eyes focus on Arya and her dazed eyes and flushed tits. Perfect. Every last inch of this girl is perfect.

"I want to do it too," she whispers dazedly but before I can make sense of what she's talking about, Arya drops down on her knees, her hands going for my zipper.

"Fuck, princess, do you even know what the fuck you are doing?"

She nods. "I've read about it. I know a little," she says, her blush deepening. "Y-you can show me what you like. I want to make you feel half as good as you made me feel. Please show me how?"

Fuuuck!

How can I say no when she says and does things like this? Her lips are swollen from

the kisses we shared and her eyes are drowsy with need. She looks like a fucking dream. I don't think I will last long enough to teach her anything, but I am too fucking turned on to even think about it. I quickly pop open the button and tug down the zipper to my pants along with my boxer briefs. I can't get my dick out fast enough. "Eyes on me," I instruct, grabbing a fistful of her hair and forcing her gaze on mine. "Keep them on me."

My voice is hard, and my body is drawn taut with need. I run my eyes over her face and down to her puckered nipples before shifting back to her face as I stroke my dick feverishly. She watches me for a moment, then brings her hand up to replace mine. I slide my free hand into her hair and draw her lips close to the tip of my leaking cock.

"I am going to coat your pretty throat and that sexy mouth with my seed," I say, feeling myself teeter closer to the edge. I tighten my grip on her hair when I feel pressure build in my balls and the tell-tale tingling at the base of my spine.

"Do it," she whispers, her eyes firmly on mine. "Make me yours."

And so, I do. Arya parts her lips, and I slowly guide my erection into the hot, wet heat of her mouth. I give her plenty of time to pull away, but she surprises me by grasping my hips and pulling me in further, until I hit the back of her throat. Her teary eyes meet mine and she takes a deep breath through her nose before swallowing around the head of my cock, and that's all it takes.

I come with a roar, one that punches its way out of my throat. My eyes stay on that pretty face as I stroke the length of my cock that wouldn't fit in her mouth, shooting my cum into her mouth and down her throat. Her eyes flutter closed as I pull out, and she sticks out her tongue to catch the few drops that escaped.

"Fuck, princess," I pant, swiping my thumb over her cheeks and sliding it into her mouth, my breathing labored when she closes her mouth around my digit, it's

downright erotic. If I didn't know any better, I would have thought she's done this before, but...I do know better.

Mine was her first kiss, her first touch. I gave Arya her first orgasm too, and I will be sure to be the only one who will ever make her feel this way.

I take her hand to help her to her feet, and she immediately falls into my arms, wrapping her hands around my waist and burying her face into my shoulder. "I knew it would be like this with you," she whispers. "All those pages I read, alone in my room, wondering if I would ever feel as good as the girls in those stories, and all I could think about was you."

"Princess..."

"I'm yours now. You are not allowed to leave."

I don't know what to say to that, so I wrap my arms around her shoulders and hug her tight. When she sighs against my shoulder, I figure that is the appropriate response to her words.

Mine.

Page 6

Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 4:31 am

Arya

Jax helps me close the zipper on my favorite red dress, the feel of his fingers tracing up my back sends a shiver through me.

The dress is a little tight around the hips, but Jax hasn't taken his eyes off me since I slid into it, so I figure it was a good choice. Even so, I can't ignore the eyes I feel on me when we walk into the Shadow Lounge. It's one of my family's legitimate businesses, but I have never been allowed to visit, and now, I see why.

This is no typical club. There is no dance floor or crowd of people moving to pulsing music. No rowdy drunk college kids or barely legal girls wearing tiny dresses that leave little to the imagination. Well, that is if you don't count the waitresses ferrying drinks dressed in tight black cocktail dresses and catering to middle-aged men in plush leather armchairs softly illuminated by the warm glow of antique lamps.

The room is filled with the soft melodies of smooth jazz, and the air is thick with the scent of aged cigars and the faint aroma of polished wood.

This is private gentleman's club for the elite men of Valor Springs.

In a sea of impeccably dressed gentlemen, I stand out like a sore thumb in my little red dress. A knot of nerves tightens my stomach, my initial excitement giving way to a creeping fear, more so when I sense at least half a dozen patrons trailing our movements.

"Jax," I whisper, twining my hand around my bodyguard's arm and pressing close

against him as we walk deeper into the establishment. Yes, establishment sounds right; calling the Shadow Lounge a club is too pedestrian.

“I’m here,” he says as if sensing my discomfort, and when he turns those gray eyes to me, I forget about all the other people watching us. I’m here with Jax, the only man whose attention matters.

Just like that, my nerves calm down, and I’m focused on Jax, keeping my eyes on him as we walk across the room to the bar where a man dressed in plain black suit is pacing restlessly. He doesn’t immediately spot us, and I watch as he rakes his hands through his hair in agitation.

“Easton,” Jax says calmly. “You’ve been blowing my phone all evening. I don’t see a fire.”

The man whirls around, and I notice that his nose is swollen. There are tampons stuffed into both nostrils, and his eyes are swollen and bruised. My eyes widen in alarm at the sight, and I question what could have possibly happened in an upscale place like this and why there are no bouncers anywhere to be seen if such violence is possible here.

“Good, you are here!” he rages, tugging a tampon from his nose with a wince. “Where the hell have you been all night?” His eyes cross to me and down to the hand I have wrapped around Jax’s arm, then back to my face. I flush when I read the judgment in his expression, feeling guilty for making Jax late. “Surely you didn’t ignore my calls because you were wrapped up in some girl.”

“Watch how you speak,” Jax growls dangerously. “This is Arya Andreyev. I’ll give you a broken jaw to match your nose, but we both know what Vlad won’t let you live so see tomorrow if he hears you’ve been talking shit about his sister.”

At the mention of my last name, Easton's face turns sheet white, which is almost comical considering how red his nose is. "I'm sorry, I didn't mean—"

"What happened here?" Jax cuts him off.

"I..." The man's eyes shift back to me, and in place of the judgment, there is undiluted fear, which I don't exactly prefer. "There was an issue with one of our newer members. He slipped something into the drink of the young woman who accompanied him. One of our waitresses saw it and let me know. When I stepped in, he became irate and punched me in the face."

"He tried to drug his date. Did the cameras catch it? How did a scumbag like that get membership in the first place?" Jax demands, his voice dangerously low. I don't know much about the illegal part of my family's business, but one thing I know for sure is they don't deal drugs. Whether it's something of a moral choice or just because it doesn't bring in as much money, it is something they've sworn off.

"He is the mayor's nephew, hence the reason he was granted a trial membership. And yes, the camera above the bar caught him spiking the young woman's drink."

"Where is he now?"

"Security was able to grab him and hold him in the back office, but it would spell trouble for us if the mayor hears about this."

"Get your nose fixed; I'll take care of him," Jax says, takes a step toward the door behind the bar when he suddenly remembers that he's not alone. It doesn't take a genius to figure out what 'I'll take care of him' is supposed to mean. Despite spending most of my life abroad, I'm not totally naive about what happens to people who cross my family.

Despite my unwillingness to do so, I release my hold on Jax and take a step away from his reassuring presence. “Go,” I tell him. “I’ll stay here and wait for you.”

“That wouldn’t make me a good bodyguard, would it?”

“I doubt anyone will bother me now that they know I’m Vlad’s sister.” I try for a smile that doesn’t budge him. “Please, Jax. I am the reason you got here late. I feel guilty for keeping you back at the house...”

Something heated flashes in his eyes, I imagine it’s the memory of what happened back in my bedroom. Heat climbs up my neck and cheeks as I recall the feeling of his mouth kissing my most intimate places, those perfect lips nuzzling my feminine folds before dragging that devilish tongue over the valley of my sex.

God.

I can still taste him on my lips. I never imagined a day would come when I would know what it feels like to have Jax’s cock in my mouth, and just thinking about it makes me want to drop to my knees where we stand. I want him to paint my face and chest with his warm seed with all these suited gentlemen watching. With his scent clinging to my skin, I want him to finally do the one thing he hasn’t done yet. I need to feel him inside of me. I crave that last connection that will merge our bodies and souls into one.

“Arya.”

“Huh?” I whisper, dazed.

Jax shakes his head and steps forward, leaning down so his words are only for my ears. “Jesus Christ, princess. Stop looking at me like that if you don’t want me to bend you over this bar and fill your virgin pussy with my cock.”

My mouth parts on a gasp, and I sway on my feet, which forces Jax to grab my waist to steady me. I force in a deep breath to slow my racing heart, but that proves to be a bad idea when I inhale his hot, masculine scent. Christ, I could spend a lifetime buried in this man, living off his scent alone. I want to bottle it so I can keep a part of him with me whenever he's gone.

Snap out of it, Arya!

"You should go," I breathe, grabbing his arms and pushing back from him. "I'll be here when you get back."

I read the hesitation in his eyes, so I flash him a smile, walking over to an empty seat and settling down to show him that I don't mind being alone for a few minutes. At least I hope it'll be only a few minutes.

"Don't go anywhere," Jax says after a moment. "And don't even think of ordering any alcohol."

"Yes, Daddy," I say with an eye roll, but I don't miss the way his eyes darken at my words. He likes that... Oh !

I file away that little information for later and wait until he's disappeared behind the door to drop the smile from my lips. I fall back on the chair and close my eyes, missing the man already when it hasn't even been a minute. It's always been like this with Jax.

The first time I saw Jax was the same day I learned that my mother had abandoned me with the Andreyev family. It's the same day I learned I am Vlad's half-sister. I was six at the time and sobbing because everyone at school had a mother to celebrate Mother's Day with except me. It was then that my father blurted out how my mother—his mistress—had left me on his doorstep when I was barely two. He went

on a tirade about how she'd abandoned me and I should be thankful he'd taken me in instead of crying about what I didn't have. At six, that was a lot for my tiny brain to process, but I will never forget how Vlad had jumped in to defend me or the way Jax had whisked me away from the yelling adults. I remember my brother's tall friend scooping me up into his arms and taking me to my room, closing the door softly behind us and distracting me with toys and books.

Jax barely said a word to me back then and even less in the years that followed, but he was there when I'd needed him, and after that, all I saw was him. Even during my teenage years when cute Belgian boys were flirting with me, none of them could live up to the man I had cherished in my heart.

"You look like you could use some company," says a voice behind me, and just like that, my thoughts are snapped back to the present.

I look up to see a well-dressed man in a bespoke suit that hugs his body, a glass of whiskey held loosely in long fingers. "I..."

The man flashes me what I assume is his best smile but doesn't get much reaction from me. That doesn't seem to discourage him much as he sets up camp on the seat next to mine. "You are Arya, Vladimir's sister? You've had everyone's attention from the moment you walked in. I have to say, you are one beautiful little diamond."

"Um, thanks?" I say, sitting up straight and hoping the man will go away. There is something about him that feels familiar, and the fact that I cannot place him unsettles me. My eyes move to the door Jax disappeared through, and I know darn well that it hasn't even been ten minutes, but I find myself wishing he would hurry.

"Vlad doesn't know you are here, does he?"

My head whips to the man at my side, and I notice his smirk even as he brings the

glass to his lips.

“I’m not a child, I can go where I please without my brother’s permission,” I say defensively.

“Is that so?” he chuckles. “Then I don’t suppose you need his permission to join me at my table for the night, and maybe later, you’ll let me take you home.”

“I...” My eyes cross back to the door and the man mistakes the reason for my hesitation. He tries to convince me by placing his hand on my knee.

“Don’t worry about Vlad’s lackey. Just come with me.”

I move my leg from his grip, my eyes narrowing at the way this nameless stranger dismisses the man who holds my heart. “Jax is no one’s lackey,” I hiss.

Something akin to annoyance crosses his face before he quickly softens his expression with a smile. “You don’t need to sound so defensive. I was only kidding,” he lies. “I think you and I have a lot in common. Why don’t we move this to my table?”

I shake my head. I wasn’t planning on going with him in the first place, but I sure as hell am not going anywhere now. Not after he just insulted Jax. “I’m fine here,” I tell him.

“If you’re worried about Vlad finding out, we could go elsewhere. I promise you’ll have a good time. What happened to going where you please?”

I ignore his attempt to bait me and his smarmy smile. “No, thanks.”

His hand lands on my leg once more, and this time, his grip is firm, making it

impossible for me to shake it off. “Come with me while I am asking you nicely.”

My eyes shift back to the door, but it’s still closed. I shift my gaze to the people around us, but barely anyone is paying attention. That, or they are pretending not to notice the man with his face so uncomfortably close to mine. Even the bartender is distracted serving customers at the far end of the bar, his back to us.

My heart starts racing, but I refuse to show this man how scared I feel. So, I shake my head emphatically. “I’m not going anywhere, and if you don’t let me go and leave, I’ll scream for Jax, then it’ll be him you’ll have to deal with.”

I watch with fear and fascination as the man’s expression morphs into anger. Such rage, it shakes me to the core. I wince when the hand on my thigh tightens further, no doubt bruising the skin, and I get ready to scream when he suddenly releases me.

“You can’t always hide behind your brother and his guard dog,” he spits, settling back in his seat. His face shifts into a dangerous smile. “If I were you, I would leave Valor Springs for good and crawl back into whatever hole you came out of. Next time we come for you, we’ll make sure you end up with more than just a few scratches and a concussion. I can’t promise your beloved Jax won’t also end up in the line of fire. Or your brother’s pretty little fiancé. What’s her name? That’s right, Rue.”

With that, he shoves away from the chair and stalks off, leaving me in shock.

At first, I thought he was reacting to his bruised ego, angry over the rejection, but...he said mentioned my accident. And he said “we,” as in multiple people coming after me and my family. I sit still for a second, mulling over his words.

Why would anyone want to hurt me? To get to Vlad? But to what end? Hurting me or anyone else he cares about would only make my brother furious...and more dangerous.

And why is this happening now when I am so close to finally getting the one thing I have dreamed about for years? Should I leave like my brother wants me to? I blink away the tears that cloud my eyes and question if Jax would consider leaving Valor Springs with me.

We could go to Belgium together, or anywhere else in the world. He is the only thing keeping me here in Valor Springs. Vlad has Rue, and she's the most important person in his life now, and I...

I can keep Jax, right?

With me gone, these people will have no reason to keep coming after me, but would Jax drop everything and come with me? Everything he knows is here in Valor Springs.

I brush the back of my hand over my wet cheeks as mull over the stranger's words. I should probably have gotten his name or something, but all things considered, I doubt he would have given me a name anyway.

It feels like I am running out of time, and I haven't even had Jax the way I need to. This has to happen soon. Tonight. Then I'll leave...and pray Jax follows. If he stays behind, at least I'll have the memories of tonight to hold onto.

Page 7

Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 4:31 am

Jax

My brows knit in confusion as I stare at the whimpering man in the middle of the room. For someone so confident that I wouldn't dare touch him because of his relation to the mayor, he sure doesn't seem so cocky now. He stopped mouthing off the second my fist connected with his jaw. For all his whining and whimpering, one would think I did more than punch the truth out of him.

The Andreyev family runs Valor Springs, and everyone knows you don't bring drugs into this fucking town. If the local crime family doesn't deal drugs, then no one is allowed to. It's one of the reasons Valor Springs as a whole doesn't really mind our presence. I needed to be sure that there isn't someone secretly dealing drugs under our noses that I need to take care of, but this fucker confirmed that he bought them a couple towns over and decided the Shadow Lounge was the perfect place to have a little "fun" with his date.

If his idea of fun is attempting to drug an innocent woman or punching the manager when he gets caught, then he will be spending a whole lot of time talking to my fists. The only fun he will be having tonight is in the hospital when they fix his broken jaw.

I shake my head, running a rag over my wet knuckles. The fucker got his blood and tears all over my hands, and I don't want Arya seeing the red coating them.

"If the mayor hears about this..."

"He won't," the fucker sobs. "I'm sorry. I won't do anything so stupid again. Please don't kill me."

“It wouldn’t matter if you told the mayor or not. We own him and everyone else in this town. You are banned from coming to the Shadow Lounge, and if I hear you’ve done something this to another woman ever again, I don’t care how far you run. I will find you, and I won’t be nearly so merciful.”

“I won’t,” he sobs.

That’s all I need to hear. I toss the rag to the floor and exit the room, straightening my jacket as I walk to the door that leads back to the club. I pull the door open to walk out, my eyes seeking Arya immediately, and I breathe a relieved sigh when I spot her seated where at the bar.

She’s leaning over the bar top, her head buried in her arms with her long dark hair splayed around her, curtaining her face. My eyes trail the outline of her dress and her exposed thighs, all my blood rushing south at the sight.

Fuck, she is goddamned sexy.

The beast in me growls to take her. To get inside of her tight little pussy, claim her, and get her pregnant. Now that I have welcomed the image of this perfect angel swollen with my child, I can’t shake it off.

There is one hurdle that comes in the form of her big brother, but he doesn’t scare me, not really. I might have used him as an excuse in the beginning, but I want Arya and I will make her mine. Forever.

I walk over to her and claim the seat beside hers, leaning in when she doesn’t immediately notice me. “Having fun, princess?”

She sits up, turning those golden eyes to me, and with a single glance, she sucks the air from my lungs. “Jax,” she breathes, wetting her lips, and my eyes drop to that

sexy little mouth. “I-I didn’t notice you.”

“I just got here,” I say, my gaze dropping to her cleavage. My dick is hard as nails from being so close to her, and it’s taking everything in me to not claim this girl in front of these snobby assholes. I settle for grabbing her seat and pulling it closer to mine. “You look bored. Maybe I shouldn’t have brought you here.”

Something akin to sadness crosses her face, but it’s gone before I can get a clear read on it. “This isn’t exactly what I had in mind when you mentioned coming to the club. I get why Vlad spends so much time here. And why he’s never let me tag along.”

“Oh, I thought you knew what kind of a club the Shadow Lounge is.”

“No, I mean, I knew it was a club with exclusive membership. They have those in Belgium too, but they are meant to cater to spoiled rich kids who want to party. I thought this was more or less the same thing. I had no idea it is a gentleman’s club.” She shakes her head as if to shrug off a thought before changing the subject. “Are you done? Do you need to stay a while?”

There is something off about her, I realize for the first time. Earlier tonight, she was eager to come here, but now, she seems almost...shaken. As if something or someone is bothering her. “Did someone approach you or say something to you?” My voice is low, dangerously so.

“Jax...”

“Who?” I growl, my eyes sweeping the room, but all the people watching us quickly drop their gazes. These men might be the top of the food chain in Valor Springs in terms of wealth, but they all know me well enough to know that money doesn’t mean shit to me. If someone did in fact say something to her, I will ruin them.

“Jax,” she whispers again, grabbing my arm and forcing my attention back to her. “Someone did approach me, but I handled it. I will tell you all about it later.”

“Who was it? Is he still here?”

“I...I don't think so.”

“If someone said something to you, then I need to know. You are Vlad's sister, a Bratva princess, and you'll be treated with the respect you deserve.”

Her eyes drop to the bar, and she gnaws her lower lip before lifting her eyes back to mine. “Is that how you see me too?”

“What do you mean?”

“As Vlad's little sister?” she asks, toying with the zipper of my jacket. “To everyone in this town, I am an extension of Vlad and not my own person. Unless my name is mentioned in conjunction with Vlad's, then I don't exist. I want to be seen as my own person, by you especially.”

I grab the hand toying with my zipper and bring it to my mouth, uncaring about who the fuck is watching us. All I see is this precious girl as I kiss her fingers. “I see you for who you are, Arya,” I say hoarsely, running my gaze over her body. “Every perfect inch of you.”

She flutters her thick lashes at me before dropping her gaze to the floor. For a long torturous minute, she doesn't say a word, and it seems I am not the only one anticipating her reaction. It almost feels like everyone in the club is fixated on the dark-haired beauty with eyes of gold.

And she keeps us—me—waiting. Hungry and needy for scraps of her. This

desperation is unlike anything I have felt before. It claws at my skin, demanding that I please this girl. Protect her, take her, fuck her... love her .

I want to claim her for myself in front of these men and hope the news reaches everyone in Valor Springs. Everyone needs to know that I have laid claim over the Bratva princess. That she belongs to her very dangerous and possessive bodyguard.

Arya is mine!

Fuck, she became mine the second I brushed my lips against hers, but now more than ever, I stand firm in that conviction.

When she lifts those big golden eyes to me, I hold my breath in anticipation of her next words. "I don't know if I can believe you," she whispers, tugging her hand from mine, but I tighten my grip around her fingers, unwilling to break the connection. "Before you became my bodyguard, you never paid me any attention."

"I am now," I assure her, keeping a firm grasp on her fingers. "You are the only thing I see, princess. The only person I want."

She licks her lips, dragging that pretty tongue over her lower lip, and when she speaks next, I almost don't catch it, too lost in the movement, but then the words slowly filter in and my eyes shoot back to hers. And everything becomes white noise, her words ricocheting around my mind like a damn pinball.

"Then prove it."

My fingers tighten on hers, but I need to be sure that I heard her right. This time, I need to hear the words out loud and read them on her lips. "What did you just say to me?"

“You said I am the only thing you see. The only person you want. So...prove it.”

I have to remind myself not to break any traffic rules as I drive through the busy streets of Valor Springs. It isn't normally this busy in town, but it's a bloody Friday, and for some reason, everyone and their grandmothers decided to come out tonight.

Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!

I glare at the kids crossing the road. To be fair, they are walking at a normal pace while crossing, but goddamn it! Can they not see that I am in a hurry to get somewhere? Do they really have to drag their feet? And why is the fucking light stuck on red!

My cock is as hard as nails, digging into my fly with precum staining my boxer briefs, and...fuck! I know I will fucking lose control if I turn to look at the temptress seated in the passenger seat of my car, so I keep my eyes on the light that just won't fucking change.

Control. I need to fucking control myself before I am tempted to pull over to the side of the road and take her in plain view of the whole town.

You said I am the only thing you see. The only person you want, so prove it.

Oh, I'll prove it alright.

It's true that up until recently, I rarely paid attention Arya Andreyev, but once she slid into my focus, she stubbornly stayed there. I know there will be hell to pay when Vlad catches wind of the fact that my services have extended to more than protection, but I don't care. He pushed me into protecting his sister, and now I have decided to

make the role a permanent one.

Mine!

“Jax?” Arya says from my side, brushing her fingers over my arm. “The light’s changed.”

I look up, and sure enough, the light is green. About fucking time! “I’m taking you to my place,” I tell her. It’s much closer than Vlad’s mansion, but I also need her in my space, want to see this perfect angel in my bed, arching into my touch with every caress.

“Okay.”

Her response is whispered, a soft caress that only serves to electrify the air between us, filling it with so much sexual tension, I have to roll down the window to let in some air. My pulse is drumming rapidly when I pull up to my apartment building. I park the car in my spot, and Arya is already pushing open her door before I can exit the car.

There are few words exchanged between us as we make our way from the garage to the elevator and the top floor of the building. I can feel her eyes on me as she trails me down the hallway to my door.

I pull my key from my jacket and unlock the door, moving aside to let her into my home. “I’ve always wanted to see where the Andreyev’s fiercest enforcer lives,” Arya muses as she walks deeper into the apartment. I follow inside, shutting and locking the door behind me, and I expect to hear nerves in her voice when she speaks, but...I don’t. We both know what we came here to do, and it boggles my mind that she doesn’t seem one bit nervous about the whole thing.

“I’ve never done this before.” She brushes her hair behind her ear. “But I guess you already knew that,” she adds with a chuckle.

“Arya—”

“I heard that boys prefer girls with a little experience, so I want you to know that I know what I’m doing. I couldn’t make myself watch any adult film in its entirety, so I read about it instead. I know it’s supposed to hurt the first time—”

I close the distance between us, grabbing her chin and tilting her face so that her eyes are locked on mine. Those big, beautiful eyes blink trustingly at me and undo me. “Let me take care of you, princess,” I rasp, brushing my mouth over hers and tasting the sweetness of her lips with the caress. “Let me prove it to you that yours is the only body I want. Experienced or not, you are what I prefer.”

A rush of air escapes her parted lips. “Jax, I—”

I lean down and grab the back of her knees, lifting her off the ground. Her dress rides up her waist, leaving her bottom half exposed. The position places her pussy right above my erection, and the move to rub my cock against her is almost instinctual. She wraps her legs around my hips and winds her arms around my shoulders, whimpering with need when my mouth slams down on hers.

The kiss is feral, hungry, and desperate.

I can’t seem to get enough of her taste, and she is just as crazed as I am, sliding her hands down my chest and tearing at my shirt. Her desire matches mine when I drag my mouth feverishly over hers, rocking my erection into her bare pussy as I carry her to my bedroom. I draw her taste into my lips, kissing her so hard our breath becomes one, and I swear I feel our souls merge as well.

I don't break our lips apart until we're panting for breath.

"Mine!" growls the beast in my chest, growing insistent with the need to claim this girl. Christ, I can't wait much longer. Arya has been teasing me all fucking day, and now, I need to be inside of that hot pussy. Buried so fucking deep, she'll feel me for days.

She will only ever feel me!

Arya kisses my jaw when I reach behind her to open the bedroom door. Her lips are frantic as she tugs my collar to the side and licks a path down my throat like a feral little kitten. I grunt against the press of the needy girl, carrying her to my bed with quick strides.

"Need to be inside of you, princess," I growl, lowering her onto my bed and following her down. She parts her legs to accommodate me between her thighs. I trail my lips down her neck, and she arches back, giving me access to her beautiful porcelain skin. My hands are on the straps of her little dress, tugging them down to reveal her beautiful body.

Christ, I've been looking forward to the moment I would tear this tiny piece of clothing off her, but not yet. Right now, I settle for peeling it slowly down her body to reveal her perfect tits, pink nipples hardening against the cool air.

Her mouth parts on a whimper when I lean down and suck her left nipple into my mouth, drawing on it lovingly as I drink in her flushed expression. She looks like a dream with those perfect lips parted and her eyes half-dazed.

"Oh God, Jax!" She whimpers when I graze the rosy bead with my teeth before shifting my attention to the other nipple. I long to take all the time in the world to love on her, but my balls are drawn up tight, aching with the need to feel her tight

walls squeeze around my shaft.

“Fuck, princess, you taste like a fucking dream. Every inch of you is gorgeous,” I grind out, kissing the spot between her tits before tracing my lips down her body, tugging the dress down as I go. “I could spend a lifetime kissing your body, lapping at your wet little pussy until you’re creaming all over my tongue, but I need to be inside of you now!”

“Yes,” she cries, which turns into a moan when I slide my hand under her dress and yank the material down before tearing it completely off her body. I bring my middle finger to her sex, and her thighs part willingly for me. I curse under my breath when I find her dripping. I knew she would be aroused, but fuck, her arousal clings to my fingers, and with the way she thrusts her hips against me, I can tell she’s more than ready to finally take my cock.

I push back and unzip my pants, shoving them down right along with my boxer briefs before yanking them off and tossing them away. I don’t care to check where they land, my eyes on the girl lying on my bed, watching me through lust-drunk hazel eyes with her dark hair splayed on my pillow. My cock is so fucking hard, it hurts with need. I don’t remember ever wanting someone as much as I want Arya Andreyev, so much so that I’m nearly losing my mind.

“You are so fucking gorgeous, princess,” I say, settling back between her thighs. My eyes are on her as I run my middle finger over the valley of her pussy before teasing her tight entrance. I push slowly against the resistance, watching her face for any discomfort, but her eyes stay on mine, looking at me with trust. “I have been thinking about this all day. You have no idea how many times I came close to fucking you in public.” Her lips part with a cry as I rub my thumb over her clit and push my finger deeper into her sex. Moisture floods my finger with every stroke to her swelling bud until she’s writhing needily on my bed, her eyes dazed and body flushed so prettily. My cock twitches in response to her desperate reaction, throbbing painfully.

“Do it,” she whispers, her voice almost inaudible. “Want to feel you.”

I withdraw my fingers from her sex and guide my cock to her entrance, rubbing the shaft between her folds and gathering moisture on the tip. I’m panting as I work my shaft into her tight hole, and it takes sheer force of will to not thrust the rest of the way into her pussy.

I need to take it slow with her. The thought of hurting this girl in any way sets my teeth on edge, so I slowly push into her tightness, watching her expression for pain, but she keeps her eyes on me. My balls tighten, ready to burst, but I hold back, grasping hard onto my slipping control.

“Fuck, princess, you are so fucking tight, and I am not even halfway in!” I grunt, my voice pained.

Arya brings her hands to my waist and rolls her hips, urging me to move forward. “Do it,” she says, begging for my cock, but I remind myself that it’s her first time.

“I don’t want to hurt you, baby. Let me take care of you.”

“I can take it. I can take you. Please do it,” she pleads, her legs opening wider to accommodate me. “Please...Daddy.”

I go blind.

Something snaps in me at that word on her lips, and I slam forward, tearing through her barrier and burying all my thick inches into her tight little channel. Her back arches, and for a second, her expression morphs from pleasure to pain before it clears. Fuck, her pussy is wrapped tight around my cock, pulsing so hotly around me that it takes everything in me to not spill.

I wrap my hand around her thigh and yank her hard against me, eyes locked on hers as I roll my hips to help her adjust to my girth.

“Say it again,” I demand through gritted teeth. “I want to hear you say it again.”

“Daddy,” she whimpers, wrapping her arms around me. “Take me. Make me yours.”

I’m helpless to do anything else.

With a rough growl, I grip tight to her ass and start fucking her in hard pumps, thrusting fast into her tightness with such desperation it has her eyes rolling back. She likes it—the violence of it. My perfect princess likes it soft and gentle, but rough and unhinged.

I wrap my free hand around her throat, and her eyes flare at the move. Oh, she likes that too.

“Mine!” I grind out harshly, unable to keep the possessiveness from my voice. Not that I try. She needs to know who she belongs to. Christ, she looks so fucking beautiful lying on my bed, taking my cock like it was made for her. So fucking gorgeous. Her tits bounce with every drive of my cock, and her beautiful golden eyes are unfocused. I want to feel her climax around my cock. I want to see her pretty mouth part in a pleased scream.

Fuck, I will make her scream out my name when she comes apart.

“Daddy, oh!” She sobs as I slide in and out of her pussy, my balls tight with the need to spill, but I am determined to last more than a few minutes for her first time. Her breathing begins to change, coming in short pants when I angle my cock to graze her clit with every stroke. She grabs the sheets, sobbing as I thrust into her in fast strokes until she starts to tremble.

“Mine. You belong to me, princess.”

“Yes, yours,” she cries, her back arching with every thrust until her lips open on a scream, one that no doubt makes its way to the neighbors. Her pussy clenches hard around my shaft, and a violent shudder racks her entire body. She digs her nails into the sheets as she screams through her orgasm, her body trembling with the intensity of it.

I don’t allow her a moment of reprieve, furiously slapping my cock into her and bringing my finger between her legs to strum her clit. She cries out in pleasure as I punch my cock into her, fast and rough, until I feel the familiar tingle at the base of my spine seconds before I come with a growl. My muscles strain painfully as I spill my seed into her heat, rubbing at her clit until she’s coming again, her pussy clenching hard around my cock and milking me of my cum.

Our cries become one, like our bodies. Her pleased sobs mingle with my rough groans. Every thrust joins us as one until my muscles turn lax.

I drop down beside her, panting harshly as I struggle to get my breathing back to normal. What the fuck was that? Nothing could have prepared me for what just happened between Arya and me.

Nothing could have prepared me for the way my heart drums when I draw the girl into my arms and hug her tight. In all of my thirty-five years of living, I never allowed myself to care for anyone. I dated women, and I respected them as partners, but I never cared enough to entertain murderous thoughts at the thought of someone else touching them.

I turn my head and press my mouth over her temple, letting it linger a while, afraid of the man I am becoming because of this girl. The world is not ready to deal with me in this state.

Arya Andreyev is quickly turning me into a very dangerous man.

Page 8

Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 4:31 am

Arya

We lie in silence for hours with his arms wrapped tightly around me and my nose buried in his neck, letting myself get drunk off his scent. Jax smells heavenly, I've always thought so.

The spot between my legs is a little sore, and I can still feel the wetness between my thighs despite him cleaning us both earlier, but I don't mind that either. Any piece of this man that I get, I intend to keep. It almost feels like I am dreaming, joined at last with Jax, body and soul.

He is finally mine.

I nuzzle the spot under his ear and close my eyes, basking in his warmth. "Do you remember that summer when I'd just turned sixteen and came to Valor Springs for the holiday?" I whisper, tracing a finger over his sturdy chest. I feel his cock thicken against my hip as I tease his pec, grazing my finger over his nipple.

"Arya..."

"It's okay if you don't remember," I say, not particularly offended by it. I was too young back then, and it would have been weird if he'd noticed me the way my teenage brain had wanted him to. "Anyway, I came home that summer and begged Vlad to take meet my mother. All I knew about her was that she'd abandoned me, and I wanted to hear her side of the story. Vlad finally gave in, and you drove us there."

Jax is quiet for a moment before he finally speaks. "I remember."

“You drove us to meet up with her in the next town, and she had a whole other family. A husband and kid and a white picket fence. She refused to see me, said that I reminded her too much of my father and the danger loving him put her in.” Jax doesn’t say a word, simply wraps his arms tighter around me. “I remember Vlad yelling at her for being selfish and you pulling me away from the noise. You do that a lot.” Pull me away from chaos, both in the literal sense and figuratively .

“I’m sorry you had to go through that, princess.”

I hum, burrowing deeper into his arms. “I’ve always felt unwanted my entire life. By my own parents, and even by Vlad when he sent me abroad to live alone. I know he meant well, but for a while, it almost felt like he was sending me away so he wouldn’t have to deal with me.”

“That’s not true, Arya. You are the most important person in Vlad’s life.”

“No, that would be Rue,” I say with a smile, tracing circles around his nipples. “Do you think he would send his fiancée to another country if there was a threat to her life? If he can keep her here by his side, why couldn’t I stay in Valor Springs too?”

“Arya...”

“And then there are people who want me dead, and I still have no clue why that’s the case. It seems no one wants me in Valor Springs, or at all.”

I don’t mean to sound pitiful or ruin the magical moment this man has given me, but there is a need in me to share this with someone. I’ve shared some bits of it with my brother’s fiancée, who is now also my best friend, but all she can do is feel sympathy for me. I don’t want or need sympathy; I need a steady hand to grab onto so I don’t slip.

For once in my life, I want to feel wanted by someone.

“I want you here, princess,” he says raggedly, leaning over and brushing his lips over mine. “I want you.”

I push up, folding my arms over his robust chest and looking down to meet his eyes in the light of the slow-rising sun. “Are you saying this because of the orgasm? I read once in a book that sometimes, when men ejaculate—”

Jax pushes up and locks his mouth with mine, effectively shutting me up. I figure that was his aim in the first place, but once his lips are pressed against mine, I find it hard to break the kiss. He wraps his hand around my nape and deepens the kiss, his mouth hungry and seeking, and mine just as desperate. “I want you,” he whispers against my lips. “I’m going to take care of you, princess. You belong to me now.”

“You promise?” I whisper, grasping onto his words like a last breath of air. I need this, perhaps more than actual air. I need his words and promise.

“It’ll take more than a hundred men to drag me away from you.”

And there it is, the promise I need. “Thank you.” I love you.

Jax trails his lips down my neck, and I can almost predict what my lovely giant is going to do, but for once I want to be the one taking the lead, making him feel as good as he makes me, so I push back from his embrace and press my lips over his firm chest.

“Arya, what are you doing?” he rasps, his eyes tracking me as I kiss a trail down his firm stomach and stop right above the thick outline of his erection pressed against his sweatpants.

“I want to please you. Will you show me?” I whisper, looking up at him from under my lashes. “Will you teach me how you like it, Daddy?”

His eyes darken to a dangerous stormy gray as he combs his fingers through my hair and grabs a fistful, tugging hard and pulling my head closer to his lap. “How bad do you want my cock in that sexy little mouth, princess?”

“Please,” I whimper, tugging down the waistband of his sweatpants to reveal his hard cock. I sit on my bent knees beside his thigh and grab his rigid manhood with my hand. His cock dwarfs my hand, and for a second, I experience a moment of doubt. I’ve had his cock in my mouth before, though never fully, but I am determined to do this for him. For me.

With his hand buried in my hair, Jax brings my head to his jutting cock, and my lips part around it. He releases a deep guttural noise from the back of his throat when my mouth closes around the massive girth of his cock, rolling my tongue experimentally over his head, and he hisses, his hips jump off the bed, pushing more of himself into me. I choke on his cock and push back, gasping for breath.

“It’s okay, princess, you can take more of Daddy.” I nod, bringing my mouth back to his rigid shaft and taking his thickness between my lips, going slow this time, but it’s a battle between trying to breathe and wanting to please this man. The latter wins as I try to take him deeper in my mouth, gagging on his cock, but I don’t pull back this time. “Fuuuck, princess!” he shouts roughly, digging his fingers into my hair, and I can tell he’s holding back from thrusting his erection into my throat.

My teary eyes seek his, and I realize that I love every moment of this. His veins strain against his temples with restrained power, and I love seeing this giant go weak at my touch. To see how much control he lets me have in this moment is such a turn-on, and I am not surprised by the wetness that spreads through my core. His stomach clenches as his breaths come in short pants, and he tugs me away from his length. “If you don’t

stop, I will come in your throat,” he warns.

I’m about to point out that I don’t mind when he releases my hair and grabs my arm, tugging me up the bed. Jax rolls us so he’s on top of me and his thickness is pressed between my damp folds. “You are perfect,” he says, his eyes meeting mine. “And you are mine.”

My eyes well up with affection as he enters my wet sex. Jax wraps his hand around my hip and pulls me flush against him as he starts to drive into me in slow, torturous thrusts, so unlike the desperate chaos we shared a couple of hours ago. It’s slow and maddening, and it has my toes curling in pleasure.

“Jax,” I whimper, locking my thighs around his hips. Every roll of hips pushes me closer and closer to an orgasm, but it’s the way that he looks at me as he makes love to my body that makes me fall impossibly deeper for this man. The sensations continue to build, and when he finds my clit with his middle finger, I am already on the cliff, and that is all it takes to push me off the edge. He comes apart soon after in my arms, and I drink in his expression as he does so.

I love this man, but I knew that already. Jax H. Abbott is the only man I have ever had feelings for, and if he wakes up one day and changes his mind, it would crush me.

He has the power to shatter me, and I’d never be whole again.

Page 9

Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 4:31 am

Jax

Her hand is wrapped around my arm as I walk her to the front door of her home after spending the weekend at my apartment. I am a very busy man, and yet I couldn't peel myself away from Arya long enough to get anything done.

Heck, I had to call in one of our men to take charge of the club on Saturday night, and it's a relief that went over without issue. Now it's Sunday, and I need to drop Arya home and finally have a talk with Vlad.

Valor Springs is a small town, and after the little show Arya and I put at the Lounge on Friday night, I have no doubt in my mind that Vlad knows about his sister and me. Even so, I have no intention of backing down.

I promised her that I would never let her go, and I have every intention of keeping that promise. In a short time, Arya Andreyev has become the most important person to me, and I will protect this relationship with my life. If Vlad and I have to fight it out, then that's what we'll do.

"What time is it?" Arya asks from my side, grabbing my wrist and bringing it to her face. "It's not even noon. I don't think there's anyone at home. The staff will probably start arriving sometime after three. Do you want to stay until then?"

As if I would leave her alone in this massive home. My role as her bodyguard might have shifted to that of boyfriend faster than either of us could have expected, but her safety comes first. I am her protector before anything else.

“I’ll stay.”

“Great!” She beams, those golden eyes twinkling in the afternoon light, and my God, she is magnificent. How the fuck has no one claimed this girl before me? Why the fuck was it so easy to keep her to myself without having to fight an army of men for her hand? “Maybe we can go to my room and watch a movie while we wait for them to come home. What’s your favorite movie? Do you even have one? Oh, what about books? There is this book they just turned into a movie, and I was waiting for the right moment to watch it. If the movie is anything like the book, it’ll be great—”

I quickly cup Arya’s mouth to silence her and yank her firmly against me, all my senses going on high alert. I slowly pull her away from the view of the front windows to a flower bush, making sure we’re not visible from the front of the house. My heart is thumping as I scan our surroundings, every muscle tense as I make sure there is no one hiding in the front yard. I feel Arya’s quickened breathing against my hand, her eyes wide with fear.

There wasn’t supposed to be anyone in the house, and yet I spotted the shadow that moved across the window, and until it’s determined that it’s not a threat, Arya is not going anywhere in that damn house.

It occurs to me belatedly that the perimeter guards are nowhere to be seen. Where the fuck are they? There should be two men patrolling each side of the house at all times and another four at the main gate. Yet, we saw no one as we drove up. I was too wrapped up in Arya and what I will say to Vlad to notice when I should have. Fuck!

“Do you remember the three rules I gave you, princess?” She nods, but I decide to remind her just in case. “The first rule is you listen to everything I tell you. The second rule is you don’t leave, and the third rule is that you prioritize your own safety above anything else. This is the only time you can break rule number two.”

She doesn't nod at my words, and I understand we've had this fight before. She was stubborn about agreeing to the third rule, but this is not the time or place to be stubborn. "Princess, you are the most important person to me, and I would go crazy if something ever happened to you. Whatever situation we get into, trust me to come out okay for you, but I can't protect both of us if I am worrying about you. Promise me you will get as far away from the threat as you can when I tell you to. I want you to run the second I tell you."

It takes her a moment, but she nods, albeit reluctantly.

I pull my hand from her mouth and carefully signal for her to stay behind me as I draw my weapon from my holster, and thank fuck I always have a gun on me. "Stay," I mouth to Arya, and she nods, shrinking deeper into the bushes. Good girl.

I look around once more to make sure no one will attack from the back before inching closer to the door. I consider creeping around the house, but there is no element of surprise. Whoever is in the house already spotted us, so the only other option is to burst in and take care of whoever was stupid enough to break into the Andreyev mansion.

I kick open the door but don't burst inside. A part of me is hoping that it's Vlad, but my gut says it isn't. It could be someone from the staff, but all my senses are telling me that it's not.

Fuck!

"Come in, Jax, and bring the bitch with you," calls out a familiar voice, and I curse under my breath. It's not the staff alright, but it's the last person I thought would ever try something like this.

Anton Andreyev is Vlad's first cousin and has been competing for Vlad's position.

This war has been going on long before the two were born with their fathers fighting for power, and their rivalry was inherited by their sons. Except Anton Andreyev is nothing like his father, who fought for the position to his last breath. Anton is a coward, using sneaky, indirect methods to undermine Vlad and get on his nerves instead of facing him like a man.

I've never paid much attention to him, because like Vlad, I believed him to be weak. Vlad was also content to ignore him until he attempted to hurt Arya months ago by messing with her brakes and causing the accident that could have been fatal.

He is probably the one behind the attempted kidnapping too. I'd thought we'd seen the last of Vlad when he confronted and nearly killed Anton after Arya's car accident. But unlike Vlad, Arya is an easy target.

Well, not anymore.

"Jax, I said bring that bitch in here. You work for the family, so that means you work for me!"

I try to locate his position by his voice, and it places him in the living room, which is on my right. I grip my gun tighter in my hands and creep into the house, making sure not to make a sound as I approach the living room.

Anton is seated in an armchair with his arms folded, and he is truly a discount version of Vlad Andreyev. He has all the family features and could easily pass as Vlad and Arya's brother.

"I thought Vlad took care of you," I say with irritation. After finding out that Anton caused the accident, Vlad set out to teach him a lesson, and Anton disappeared, which prompted me to think we had seen the last of him. I guess I was wrong.

“He let me go because I am family,” Anton scoffs, and I nod. I will not make the same mistake Vlad did. Anton will not leave this place in one piece if I have anything to do with it. “Now go call that little bitch inside. I know she’s with you.”

“What the fuck will killing Arya get you?”

“I’ll admit, my original plan was to kill her just to hurt Vlad and shorten the line of succession. But now I see the error of my ways. So, I’ve made a deal with the Italians. They’re going to help me take back what is rightfully mine from my bastard cousin. In exchange, they get Arya. What they want with her, I don’t know. I don’t really care either, so long as I get what’s mine.”

Anton’s words have me seeing red. Enough chatter. I raise my gun, ready to shoot the chatty motherfucker when I feel the press of metal behind me and I freeze. Fuck, I can’t believe I underestimated the little rat and thought he would come alone. No wonder he was so cocky and barely blinked when I pointed the gun at him.

Some bodyguard I am.

“Now drop the gun and get that little bitch in here. I promise to make your death as painless as possible.” Anton cackles, and I calculate how I can dislodge the person behind me without having bits of my brain blown out.

It seems like a hopeless situation, and my only hope is that Arya will make a run for it. If she moves fast enough, she can make it through the gate with these men none the wiser and call someone to get her. Preferably her brother or the police.

Please, princess.

As I contemplate my next move, a noise disrupts the stillness. I catch a loud angry yell followed by a pained one and a thud as someone drops to the floor. Everything

happens so fast and in such a dramatic way, but I don't waste time trying to make sense of what is going on and strike while the other two men are distracted.

I whirl around to find the gunman on his knees, clutching his head with his gun lying a few feet away from him, and looming above him, is the most gorgeous girl I have ever seen. She's glaring at the whimpering man with a bloodied rock clutched in both her hands. Her hair mussed up and curtaining her face, and Jesus Christ, she is a sight to behold.

If I wasn't already in love with this girl, this is the moment I would fall for the stubborn minx.

"You just broke all my rules," I scold gently, kicking the gun away from the gunman on the floor. Arya sidesteps the man and rushes to my side, dropping the rock as she does so, and as luck would have it, it falls right on the man's foot. He bellows in pain, but I don't pay him any mind, turning to Anton whose cocky grin has been replaced by a terrified expression.

"This is the man that approached me at the Shadow Lounge and called you a lackey," Arya says, pointing to the man on the floor and pressing her tiny body against me. "When you left me at the club, he approached me and tried to get me to leave with him. Then he threatened to hurt you, Vlad, and Rue if I didn't leave town like Vlad wanted, so I agreed. I'm sorry I didn't tell you, Jax, please don't be angry with me. I couldn't stay knowing he was going to hurt you."

Christ, how can I be mad at that? This girl just saved my life from my own stupid mistake. She cracked a rock over a man's head to save me. I'm supposed to be the one keeping her safe, and I will make sure this is the last time Anton puts Arya's life in danger. I will make an example out of him.

"Look," Anton says shakily, raising his hands in surrender, but I am not Vlad, and

Anton is not my family. Months ago, when Arya did not belong to me, she was Vlad's responsibility and it was up to him to take care of threats against her, but now...Arya is mine. I will take on every threat to her life and deal with them accordingly. With my gun aimed at Anton, I take out my phone and start rapidly texting, making sure to use code words to avoid detection.

"Are you calling the police?" my naive and innocent princess whispers from my side.

"No, just some guys that will take your cousin and his lackey to little room where they will wait for me to have a little chat with them." Whether they leave that room alive or in pieces will depend on the mood I am in when I get there.

"Will you be able to convince them to leave us alone?" Arya asks, and I lean down, pressing my lips against her temple and breathing in her soft scent.

"It will be physically impossible for them to come after you ever again," I say, sparing her the details. Anton visibly shudders at my words. He has been part of the family long enough to know what awaits him.

While we wait for help to arrive, I tie up Anton and his goon. Then I ask him what he did with Vlad's guards. I'm relieved to find out they're fine, but more than a little irritated they fell for Anton's ruse that Vlad called them away without confirming the order with me.

Soon, three of our men walk into the house. They don't blink when they see Anton Andreyev or question why I am holding the man hostage. Next to Vlad Andreyev, I hold the most senior position in the family, and my orders can only be challenged by the boss himself.

Unwilling to have Arya witness any of it, I turn to her and brush her hair behind her ear. "Princess, how about you go up and wait for me in your room? I will be there in

a few.”

“Are you sure everything is over?”

“I promise.”

“Okay,” she says uncertainly but complies. I wait until she’s disappeared upstairs and I’ve heard the sound of her door closing before turning to the men with instructions to take these two and lock them in one of the warehouses until I’m ready to deal with them.

“You can’t do this,” Anton yells at them as he’s hauled away. “I am the leader of this family. You work for me—”

I slug his jaw once, and the man crumples from that single punch. Fuck, I don’t even get the satisfaction of hurting the fucker, and he’s already down. Later. Once I am sure Arya is safe and surrounded by people, then I will break away to teach these fuckers a lesson. Only then.

I nod for the men to take them away and watch as they are led and tossed into the back of a van before it tears down the driveway. It’s only after they are gone that I go seek Arya. I don’t know what I expect to find, but it sure as hell is not for her to be seated on the bed in nothing but a bathrobe.

“Oh, I was about to take a bath. Have they left already?”

My heart is racing as I drop the gun on her dresser and stalk toward her like a predator would prey, and my God, what a perfect, tempting little prey she is. “You like teasing me, don’t you, Arya?”

She straightens, causing her robe to part and reveal her perfect milky breasts, her pink

nipples slowly pebbling in the cool air. “What do you mean?” She blinks up at me innocently, giving me the same look she gave me the last time I was in her room, which tells me that it was on purpose even then.

Her big, beautiful eyes track my movements as I approach until I am standing right in front of her. I reach down and tug the robe, exposing the rest of her body, which has my erection jutting against my fly and leaking a stream of precum.

Fuck, this girl is a dream.

“Lie back on the bed for me, princess,” I rasp, and my obedient girl does as I instruct, parting her legs for good measure. A rush of air slips from my mouth as I drink in the gorgeous girl, every perfect inch of her.

I know the staff will be back soon, followed by Vlad and Rue, but I don’t care about someone walking in on Arya sobbing with pleasure as she rides my tongue or my cock thrusts into her tight heat.

Groaning raggedly, I climb onto the bed and position myself between her thighs, her golden eyes fluttering closed when I lean in to brush my lips softly against hers. “I don’t want you to ever worry about feeling unwanted ever again. I want you. That will never change.” Her eyes snap open and lock with mine, and I can tell she wants to say something, so I kiss her mouth before she can. “You are mine, Arya. I will protect you to my last breath. Treasure and love you. I will be your bodyguard, your friend, your lover, your husband...whatever it is you need.”

She blinks rapidly, trying to hold back her tears. “I want all that and more. You have no idea how long I have loved you.”

“Well, now you have me. Always.”

She nods, wrapping her arms around my shoulders, and kisses my jaw before pushing back so our eyes are locked on each other. “Thank you.”

“Don’t thank me, I am the lucky one. I love you—want you,” I say gruffly, rocking my erection against her thigh. “I will always want you.”

She smiles, and her eyes light up with something akin to mischief. “Okay, then prove it.”

And I do. Over and over again.

Page 10

Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 4:31 am

Four Months Later

Arya

I rub my sweaty palms on my dress as I peek through the window, my breath catching in my throat when I notice the number of people that have shown up today. It seems like Vlad invited the entire town of Valor Springs, judging by the number of guests that are still filtering in.

Oh my God! I can't breathe.

Relax, Arya . Breathe...slow and deep.

I push away from the window and force in long, deep breaths, slowly easing myself back from a panic attack. Maybe I shouldn't have sent everyone out of the room, that way I would have at least one person to help me stay calm.

God, why did Vlad invite so many people? He knows how anxious I get around strangers, and for the most part, a large number of the residents are still strangers. A little less than they were months ago when I moved back here permanently, but still...

A knock on the door makes me jump in surprise, clutching my heart as I slowly walk toward the door.

"Rue?" I ask, to see if it's my sister-in-law on the other side of the door. Apart from being my maid of honor, Rue is also the florist and picked the flower arrangements

for today. “Rue, is that you?”

“It’s me, princess.”

My heart nearly stops, and I fumble with the lock, trying to get it open. Christ, I need to see him. It feels like I am dying in here. I unlock the door and yank it open, and there on the other side, dressed in a black tux that stretches over his broad shoulders, is the man I have loved for more than ten years. Jax is a very handsome man, but today he looks devastating with his well-groomed beard and, God, has he always been this tall? Those gray eyes... Have they always been so beautiful? His blond hair is slicked back, emphasizing his symmetrical and chiseled face.

“Jax...” The man steps into the room, forcing me to back up a step and give him space before shutting the door behind him. “You are not supposed to be here.”

“You look breathtaking, princess.”

I flush, because of course I do. All this man ever has to do is look at me to send heat climbing to my cheeks. My nerves slowly calm the longer I stare at my husband. Well, to everyone else, he is my fiancé. But Jax and I eloped a month into dating and got married at a courthouse, binding us together legally as husband and wife. Despite taking our relationship in stride, when Vlad found out about our courthouse wedding, he was livid, saying he would not acknowledge marriage done in secrecy. If Jax wanted me, then he would have to claim me in front of the entire family.

Hence this over-the-top wedding.

With the whole town in attendance. My eyes cross to the window, and I feel the panic begin to resurface. Christ, there are so many people here. As if sensing my panic, Jax steps in front of me and grabs my shoulders.

“Look at me, princess.”

“There are so many people out there.”

“Look at me.”

I shift my eyes to his. “Why did you invite so many people? Don’t you think you and Vlad went a little overboard with the invitations?”

“You only need to keep your eyes on me,” he says, his voice commanding. “I invited all those people so they could bear witness to the promise I’m going to make to you. To treasure and love you. To be your bodyguard and protect you to my last breath. I want everyone in this town to know that if they ever do anything to hurt you, I will be on them like cold on ice.”

“Cold on ice?” I chuckle even with my heart aching with love at his words. I waited all those years for this, and it’s better than I could have ever imagined.

“Like white on rice,” I laugh, feeling at ease. His lips twitch with a smile, matching my own.

“Feeling better?”

“Almost,” I whisper, wrapping my arms around his shoulders and leaning in for a kiss. It’s soft and more a brush of lips than anything, but it sends a low rumble of want rocking his chest, and I realize this is not going to end in a simple kiss. “My bridesmaids are going to kill me if I mess up my makeup or anything happens to my dress,” I warn my husband, pulling my arms from him and trying to get away, but it’s fruitless. It seems I have awakened the beast, and now he wants to play.

I back up a step, gasping when the back of my knees connect with the couch. I fall back, and it proves a chore to get up, the weight of my dress keeping me down. Oh, why did I choose a princess-style wedding gown?

“Don’t even bother trying to get up,” Jax growls, his eyes heating as he walks toward me. “You look perfect just like that, all ready for Daddy to lick that pussy.”

Oh God!

I should...

Shit, I know I should do something to stop him from doing what we both want, considering where we are. And I do want him. That has never been an issue between us. My sex is already sleek with arousal, and he hasn’t even touched me, but...

Any moment now, one of my bridesmaids could walk in to check on me, and what would they think if they found my husband buried beneath the layers of my dress?

“Jax...the wedding night...”

“Will be beautiful, I know,” he rasps, dropping to his knees and caging me against the couch. His hands push under my dress and snake up my thighs, sending a rush of heat pooling at my core. “I can’t wait to peel this dress off you tonight. Watch you bury your face into the pillow as I take this pussy so fucking hard, the entire town will hear you begging for my cock.”

“Yes,” I whimper, desperate for just that. I want him to take me hard and rough, tear off my wedding dress, and rut me like he does every time he gets that predatory look in his eyes. The same look that tells me by the time he’s done with me, my legs will be wet spaghetti and my body a heaving mess.

Christ, I want that.

I need it—crave him.

Jax shoves open my knees, and I whimper when he rubs his knuckles over my thong

before ripping it off me completely. He shoves up my dress, and I know Rue is going to give me hell for getting it wrinkled, but from my husband's expression at the sight of my wet sex, I figure the scolding will be worth it.

"I haven't been in here for five minutes, and you are already dripping, princess," he says reverently, rubbing his thumb over my sex to part my feminine lips. I jerk hard when his digit grazes my clit.

Oh God.

I'm burning with need for this man. "Please, Daddy," I whimper begging for him to move. To touch. Anything!

The cruel man brings my left knee to his shoulder, exposing me further. He leans in and brushes his lips over my inner thigh, his stormy gray eyes locked on me as he does so. "Please what, princess?"

"Touch me, Daddy."

Someone knocks on the door, and I jump, my panicked eyes ricocheting between my husband and the door. "Eyes on me," he says firmly.

"Arya, can I come in? I have your bouquet."

Jax leans in and licks me with a deep, satisfied groan, and I nearly cry out, slapping my palm over my mouth to cut off the sound. Oh God...this cruel man! How can he do this to me when there is someone at the door?

"Arya, are you okay in there?" Rue's voice barely registers, and it takes sheer will for me to not cry out when my husband drags the flat of his tongue over my clit, stroking it fast and rough. I sink into the cushions as Jax brings me to the brink of madness with that sinful mouth of his. "Okay, that's it. Arya, I am coming in!"

“No!” I yell, slapping the arm of the couch as Jax’s tongue licks me crudely. He’s making sounds at the base of his throat, pushing my thighs wider as he slides his middle finger into my pulsing entrance. I bite back another sob when he adds a second finger and starts thrusting them into my sex while stroking my swollen clit with his tongue.

“Arya, what’s happening?”

“I...I...stubbed my toe!” I gasp out loud enough for it to be heard on the other side of the door. “I’m sorry... G-give me a sec.”

The orgasm comes out of nowhere. Between trying not to make a sound from what my husband is doing to me and maintaining a conversation with my best friend, I lose focus, and when I climax, it racks my whole body. I bite into my arm as tremors roll through me, my pussy pulsing hotly around my husband’s thick digits. His tongue stays on my clit until the orgasm fades and I am left a trembling mess.

There is a smirk on Jax’s lips as he rises to his feet and starts tugging down his zipper, shoving away his pants and black boxer briefs to reveal his massive cock, angry and leaking precum. Jax grabs my hand and helps me up before spinning me around to face the couch. I sense more than see him position himself behind me. He lifts my dress and bunches it around my waist before I feel the hard press of his cock against my entrance seconds before he slams into me in one swift move.

“Oh!” I cry out, forgetting all about the need to stay quiet, but Jax doesn’t seem to care about that. It’s almost as if he is set on pushing me to my limit to see how long I can hold back before alerting the entire wedding party of what he is doing to me.

That limit is stretched thin.

“My dirty little princess, so fucking drenched, begging for my cock,” he rasps in my ear. “Wonder what the guests would think if they knew how hard and rough my

fragile little flower likes it.”

I bite back a whimper. “They can’t know, Daddy.”

“Want to test that?” Is that...a threat?

Jax wraps his arms around my chest as he begins an all-out assault on all of my five senses. His thrusts are brutal, forcing me to my tiptoes, and my sex grows slicker with arousal at the sound of skin on skin. He is rough and unforgiving with how he takes me, and I love every second of it.

“Oh, Daddy!” I sob when I feel myself draw close to yet another orgasm. “Faster! Harder! Please !”

He listens, pounding into me and sending me right off the edge. I come with a cry, and he mercifully claps his hand over my mouth to mute the sound. My sex clenches hard around his cock, pulling him right off the edge after me. He buries his face in my neck to mute his hoarse growl, but I feel it. Against my skin, I feel every bit of the man as he drives his thickness into me, drawing out my orgasm until I can barely stand.

Jax goes lax against me, his breath heavy on my skin, and it takes long moments to catch my breath. We stay locked in an embrace for a long time until the knock comes again, this time followed by an awkward cough.

“Uh, Arya...the ceremony is about to start.”

Right. I am getting married to this man today. For a second time. Even teenage me, who spent her days with her nose buried between the pages of all the romance novels she could find, would never have predicted this for herself.

Two weddings to the man I have loved as long as I can remember. Will love for as

long as I breathe.

Jax grabs my chin and fixes those gray eyes on me. “Eyes on me, princess. Okay? When you walk down that aisle, keep your eyes on me.”

I nod.

It is, after all, where my eyes have always been. On him .

~The End