



From the Edge (Always Yours #1)

Author: *N. Slater*

Category: Urban

Description: I'm not meant for a happy ending.

I wasn't even supposed to be an Omega but two years into college, I presented and my parents all but sold me to an abusive Alpha for a price tag that would set them up for life.

However, my heart is still with my lover from sophomore year, my heart and soul—Blake.

He was there for me when I was just a Beta, when I presented, and the terrifying days afterward. He's been there ever since, dragging his Alphas to the diner I work at, and sneaking texts whenever he can.

I'm in love with someone I can't have.

Someone who doesn't have what I need.

Because Blake isn't just mated.

He's also an Omega.

And when everything starts to fall apart, Blake is there to pick up the pieces, introducing me to a pack that I never thought I'd have for myself.

Luther. Grayson. Maceo. Blake.

Society says this isn't going to work. That a pack can't work with two Omegas.

Blake says fuck the system, that I've always been his.

I want to believe him.

Because they're the only ones that can pull me from the edge.

From the Edge is the first installment in the Always Yours series. It is an 18+ MFM fast-burn Mpreg Omegaverse with dark themes and ends on a cliffhanger. TW/CW in the Author's Note.

Page 1

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 5:22 pm

1

Luca

The pain is nearly unbearable and it's taking every last bit of concentration to stay upright, my gaze focused on the pitiful reflection in the mirror. The man I should be staring at has withered into someone I don't recognize, his eyes sunken in and chestnut curls plastered to a sweaty face. Even the bright blue of my irises has dimmed to an ugly gray, nothing precious about the Omega I used to be present in my reflection.

I let out a small pained breath as I reach up to the bandage on the left side of my neck covering my Alpha's bite. It takes me several moments to build up the courage to pull it back, grimacing as the wound oozes onto the gauze, a thin film stretching between the bite and where I'm pulling away. It looks infected, worse than it did yesterday. Gray and yellow splotches cover the sensitive skin, my Alpha's bite resembling the failing bond between us.

Hudson's always been rough but lately, his idea of pleasure is my nightmare, including his obsession with reclaiming me every time he strangles me into bed. The last few weeks, he's been especially mean with his touch. Bruises and bites litter my entire body from what he calls my duty. I'm just an Omega and I'm supposed to submit to my Alpha.

It doesn't matter that I didn't choose Hudson. It doesn't matter that this infected wound on my neck is the result of greedy parents needing support from an Alpha who only wanted an Omega to impregnate. It doesn't matter how many times I used to call

my mother and scream for her to take me back.

None of it matters.

The papers show that Hudson Carter is my legal guardian, my Alpha, and my husband although he's too cheap to afford a ring. Not that I would wear it. The less people who know who my Alpha is, the better.

I poke at the wound and hiss as pain shoots through my left side, all the way down to my toes. It needs to be looked at but that would only bring more trouble back home. Hudson doesn't like attention and he hates it when I don't follow the rules. The few freedoms I'm afforded are because I don't ask questions and I'm always home before him so that he can use me as he needs.

It's the only way I've gotten away with having a job at the diner a few streets over.

Needing something more than a bird bath to soothe my aching wounds, I draw up a bath and pour an obscene amount of descenter into the water. Hudson's scent is all over me, caked into cuts and bruises that I would love to forget are there. His scent has never been my favorite—a mixture of cigarettes and an unsettling darkness—that has only strengthened over time.

His scent strikes fear in my heart rather than love or adoration for the Alpha who is supposed to be my partner.

Tears gather in my eyes as I grab my phone to sit at the edge of the tub and then retrieve a small soap bottle from the cabinet. Hudson has never seen this and I don't plan on showing it to him. The strong scent of a sweet pear spreads through the room as I pour a healthy amount into the water, bubbles forming across the surface.

By the time I slip into the bath, my mind is focused on how to escape this life I've

been forced into. The minimum wage and tips from the diner are barely enough to cover my necessities as Hudson provides nothing other than the bed I sleep in. There's no way out of this life unless I turn myself into an Omega Center and accuse Hudson of abuse.

At 23, I'm far past the age they take in battered Omegas. I'd be thrust into a room with several scent cards, a nurse pleading with me to choose one before sending me on my way. The problem is that battered Omegas are rarely treated well within their new packs. There are a few that have found heaven after hell but those are far and few between. Most of us wither away without anyone else to take care of us, unmated Alphas preying on our insecurities and our need to be loved.

We succumb to the slightest invitation, only to find ourselves thrust back into the world without a pack. Without a family. Without love.

It happened to my older brother and I refuse to be another failed Omega.

Bubbles sift around me as I run my fingers through the warm water, my head slipping down just enough so that only the top half of my face can be seen. My body embraces the warmth, my shoulders sagging with a mixture of relief and agony as the water covers my neck. The heat from the water gives me something else to focus on but the infection burns with the added sensation. I'm torn between screaming and relishing in the pain that I think I deserve.

Thoughts of sinking a little lower to see how long it would take to end this pain run through my head.

It would be so easy to end it all.

To give into the temptation.

To let Hudson see what his aggression does to an Omega but it won't help.

He'd just grab someone else and fabricate some story for why I was no longer walking this earth.

I can't just leave, either. I don't have enough money but even if I did, no person in their right mind would give me the time of day. Omegas have very few rights out in the big world, especially ones who still have their Alpha's bite in their shoulder, regardless of how infected it is.

My phone vibrates beside me and I press the green button, expecting Hudson to start yelling at me for not being ready in the bedroom. He just fucked me but his urges take precedence over everything else. It's not him.

"Hey, Champ. Can you swing a shift tonight? Had a few callouts and could use the extra hand."

I shouldn't. I should tell Shelly, my boss, that I need the night off but my stubbornness has me agreeing and hanging up so that I can't change my mind. Hudson has a security shift this evening so he won't be looking for me. This is the perfect time to grab a few extra dollars to stock the fridge.

Settling farther into the bath again, I rest my head back against the edge, the tears I've been holding back finally falling down my cheeks. My grandmother used to talk about fate and how it would find me, how I would find my perfect Alpha and live my life the way I had planned.

None of that happened. My parents sold me out to the highest bidder and nothing I do is ever good enough. A small breath leaves my lips as my lids slide closed, the image of one man who I used to believe would be my everything flitting into my head. His warm brown eyes hidden behind large glasses would follow me everywhere I went.

His cheeky smile and horrid jokes kept me on my toes, the need to both please him and be beside him warring for my attention.

Another sigh leaves my lips as I dip a hand beneath the water's surface and grab my stiff cock, stroking it a few times to bring it to full mast. Slick gathers between my thighs, a moan tearing from my throat as I focus on the one man I've fantasized about for years. His sweetened pear scent is my favorite thing in the world, so much so that I surround myself with it whenever I get the chance.

Hudson has asked me more than once why I fill the kitchen with pears and other sweet fruits but I won't tell him. No one needs to know.

Just me.

My hips begin to move and I ignore the pain shooting through my limbs. I need this. I need to pretend that my life was different, that it is my beautiful Blake stroking me and telling me how I'm his perfect Omega. A few years ago, I might have been. Now? I'm no one's perfect anything.

Still, I give myself over to the fantasy, knowing that it'll never happen.

I can never have Blake.

For one thing, he's already mated to two other Alphas.

And the other? He's an Omega too.

Page 2

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 5:22 pm

2

Blake

My attention drifts to the clock, a fantasy moving the minute hand thirty minutes forward so I can walk out the front door. Owning a gaming company sucks ass and I should have never brought up my idea to my Alphas. I just wanted to play video games and veg out in my nest until the end of time but no , I had to use all my intelligence and drum up the newest game of the year—Starlight Falls. It's been a big hit, an entire company created to support it with spinoffs and even a sequel scheduled for early spring next year.

I'm ecstatic.

I'm also furious that I decided to work.

Sure, I'm not a big fan of taking care of the house either but both of my Alphas have more money than they know what to do with. Neither one of them needs this business either, registered under our pack Alpha's name: Keller Industries. It's not fancy but it's the only way anyone would accept me as CEO of the company. Had to have my damn Alpha as part of all decisions and he had to attend work with me.

It's not a hardship staring at him across the hall through a few panes of glass, his piercing hazel-green eyes always staring right through me. His entire face is chiseled to perfection, nearly black hair cupping his face and the briefest of beards adorning his chin. I fucking love running my fingers along the edge of his jaw or rubbing my cheek against it so that he's covered in my sweet scent.

Luther doesn't mind my antics, although he's told me off more than once. It's a good thing I find it hot rather than off-putting. Grayson, on the other hand, is an entirely different breed of Alpha. Where Luther is all intense and terrifying to most people, Grayson has this free aura that draws everyone to him. Long brown hair cascades around his shoulders, his ocean-gray eyes soft and light. Where Luther is tatted beneath those form-fitted suits, Grayson is pierced. His left ear, nose, and his gorgeous cock that's all for me.

I've mentioned piercings to Luther once or twice but he just fucked me unconscious to show me that he didn't need metal to complete the job. I still fantasize about it though.

Grayson is nearly as tall as Luther but thinner, both of them exuding power in their own way.

Sometimes I joke with myself that Luther is my devil and Grayson is my Greek god. It's not an entirely fair comparison but Grayson is soft where I'm concerned and Luther keeps me on the straight and narrow. For the most part.

"Babe." Someone snaps in front of my face and I snarl at him before realizing Grayson is standing a few inches from me, a scowl on his face. He's holding a folder to his chest, no doubt something from the design studio. He brings my ideas to life in a way that I was failing to do before the company was started. His employees are fantastic on that front as well, doing the things I'd rather stay away from. "Blake, look at me. Have you eaten today?"

My bored expression sours as I grant Grayson a timid smile before pushing my chair away from him. There are many things that make me a terrible Omega in the eyes of society. Not wanting to cook or clean. Not catering to my Alphas. Deciding to work instead of staying home and popping out kids.

Oh, and not taking care of myself.

“Fucking hell, Blake. We don’t ask for much but you’re working too hard these days. I know there’s a deadline but you can’t skip meals.” Grayson raises an eyebrow, gesturing across the hall to Luther who is currently arguing with someone on the phone. “Just imagine what our Alpha would have done if he found out you weren’t eating.”

My expression sours further. Luther would have my ass if he knew that I skipped lunch. It wasn’t on purpose. There were meetings and then I got caught up with Rachel who is coding a new avatar for Starlight Falls II. I might be turning 24 in two weeks but it doesn’t matter. I’m still their precious Omega and while Grayson might coddle me into taking care of myself, Luther won’t.

“It wasn’t on purpose, Gray.”

“It never is. Let’s get some food in you.”

“It’s almost time to leave. We can just-”

Grayson plants his ass on the edge of my desk and leans closer, his earthy scent filling my nose. He grabs the arm of my chair and drags me close until we’re shadowed by a curtain made of his own hair. “There is no just, Blake. I brought you a sandwich and some water before you pass out from over-exertion.” He bares his teeth at me when I open my mouth to argue, my entire body immediately needing to obey him. Grayson is rarely ever dominant with me. “You don’t need to prove yourself anymore, Blake. You’ve already done that. Now, it’s time to take care of your body because I’ve seen what happens when you don’t.”

I want to throw a little fit but that won’t get me anywhere. It might get me fucked but also humiliated when everyone in the entire building smells my goddamn scent

through the halls. I also know what happens when I don't take care of myself. Fainting in front of the board from over-exerting my body is still one of the most embarrassing moments of my life.

Omegas aren't built for hard labor or long days. It's a curse I have to live with.

I sigh and push up the round glasses that sit faithfully on my nose before scooting a little closer.

Grayson waits for me to reach for the little circle sandwiches served in the deli on the first floor attached to this building. We rent the 10 th floor and part of the 9 th but it was the cute little eateries that helped me decide where to land my business.

I unwrap it and stuff the cucumber sandwich into my mouth, smiling up at Grayson for his approval. He chuckles at my chipmunk cheeks as I start to chew, my Alpha bending down to kiss my forehead. "Good boy," he whispers against my skin, a delightful chill running down my spine and then making a beeline for my dick. "Swallow that and maybe we'll go out to that diner you like."

I start chewing faster, nearly choking on the sandwich before Grayson hands me the water bottle. The bastard knows that I would do anything to show up at that diner every fucking night if I could. After all, the love of my life is there. A love that I can't indulge. My Alphas let me ogle the poor guy to my heart's content but it's never enough. We all know he's mine.

That Luca has always been mine.

But this world isn't fair to Omegas.

Especially not two Omegas.

Someone clears their throat, a wonderfully delicious sound. I look up at the entrance to my office to see Luther prodding through it, stopping at the edge of my desk and taking in the empty sandwich wrapper and half-empty water bottle. “I assume that Grayson promised you dinner at the diner. Blake, I hate taking you there. You know that, right?”

Despite all of Luther’s gruffness, he’s wonderful. Absolutely perfect. And he despises not being able to give me what I want. Which is Luca.

My shoulders fall as I finally swallow and place the water bottle back onto the desk. “I know, Alpha but I can’t stop. I need him like I need you guys even though it’s not fair to say.” A tremble starts in my lower spine before my entire body is shaking lightly, the thought of being separated from Luca invading my mind. We spent most of our childhood together and a few college years before he dropped out to appease his parents.

In all that time, I just knew that Luca was going to be my Beta. He hadn’t presented at an early age like I did and we had plans. Plans that involved Grayson who wasn’t much older than us. Not that Grayson knew or even knows now. But months before we were set to graduate, everything changed. Luca was an Omega, a new Omega at the age of 20. It was rare but not unheard of and everything I struggled through during puberty, he was struggling through as an adult. Add on how everyone changed around him and it was nearly impossible to see our dream come to life.

Even more so now with that Alpha’s bite in his neck.

A bite I wish I could have given him.

Luther’s growl pulls me out of my thoughts and I grimace, finding myself curled up in my Alpha’s lap. He’s sitting in my chair with my head tucked beneath his chin, arms wrapped protectively around my back. No doubt my scent gave away my

thoughts.

“I fucking hate being an Omega, Alpha. It’s fucking ridiculous.”

“And I wouldn’t have it any other way, Blake. You’re meant to be an Omega, just the way you are. You’re perfect for us and I would never change that for the world. Whether that one day includes Luca or not, you’re still perfect the way you are. Finish up and let’s head over to the diner, alright?” Luther kisses my forehead, holding me a little tighter before setting my feet on the floor.

Then he leaves my office like I didn’t just have a mini breakdown over not having my Omega by my side. Grayson remains silent the entire time and I just brush him off. “I’m fine.”

“You’re not fine, babe and that’s okay. This is an impossible situation to be in.” He kisses my forehead too and follows Luther’s exit but not before I catch the hurt lingering in his eyes. For a moment, I want to believe that he needs Luca just as much as I do, that the connection between Luca and our pack is more than just me.

And then I realize, that’s just my selfish heart wanting more than I’m allowed to have.

I tell myself that this will be the last night at the diner, that I’ll finally say goodbye to my obsession and focus on the company.

I also know that I’m lying.

Page 3

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 5:22 pm

3

Luca

Everything hurts. The bath marginally helped and fucking my hand to the image of Blake's beautiful face got me to relax but every step across the diner brings back the terrible feeling of Hudson's touch. He digs his fingers in while he fucks me. He bites and nibbles and laughs when I bruise. I am his to mangle and if I fight against it, Hudson chooses violence over accepting that I don't like it.

I gather a few plates from the last table, weathering tears forcing their way onto my cheeks. The family of three left a \$50 tip that will feed me for a week. If I skimp on a few of the essentials, I can pack away \$25 for an apartment that may never come to fruition.

"I've never seen anyone work so hard through so much pain, Luca. You need to see a fucking doctor," Shelly whispers from behind the counter when I hand her the few dirty dishes. I manage a tight smile as my coworker, Alice—a Beta, pops up at my side. Her long ponytail swishes back and forth as she taps the table, waiting for her table's order.

"He'll never go, Shelly. He's as stubborn as a mule. However, stop dragging your feet. I just sat you a table."

I groan, wanting to take a break when that sweet pear scent hits my nose. My eyes widen and I whip around, catching the man I've been dreaming about for over a week. He's sitting at the edge of the booth, one of his Alphas beside him and the

other sitting across from them. I brush my hands down my apron nervously before rushing over there. My head swims with the fast movement but I ignore it, grinning down at Blake when he catches my eyes.

“Luca,” he breathes. It’s the most beautiful thing I’ve ever heard, my name on his lips. Add in the three of them in suits who outshine anyone else in this rundown diner and I can’t tear my eyes away. “You alright, cupcake?”

A whimper lodges in my throat as I nod a little harder than necessary. Blake can’t see that I’m hurting. I won’t allow it. “Just fine,” I croak as his gaze falls on the bandage on my neck. Concern flits through his expression but I start speaking before he can address it. “What can I get for you three today? The usual?” They don’t have a usual. In fact, Blake says ‘Surprise me’ and then his Alphas nod at me to comply with their Omega’s desire.

It shows me that not every Alpha is terrible or it might just be Blake’s personality that softens everyone around him.

Blake leans a little closer and reaches forward, his finger dipping into the pocket of my apron before tugging me toward him. “Surprise me, cupcake.” A wild grin splits across his lips even as pain surfaces behind those big brown eyes. Coming to see me like this hurts both of us because we can’t have what we want. I don’t even know how his Alphas indulge this sinful pleasure or if Blake has had to give something up to be here with me.

Even so, my body calms as his scent wraps around me. The added scents of his Alphas—earthy, leather, and a musk so thick I want to submit to it make it easier to lean. “Blake,” I whisper, trembling in his presence as he leans a little closer to draw his cheek against mine.

“You smell like me.”

I swallow as the revelation makes itself clear, Blake meeting my worried gaze again. His Alphas don't seem perturbed at our intimate reaction. In fact, the hooded eyes as they stare at Blake and I give me all sorts of ideas that I can't indulge. "I'll be right back with some waters and I'll put your orders in." I straighten my apron and bow my head to Blake's Alphas before scurrying back to the counter.

The pain flares up again, annoyingly so now that I'm not in their presence. For a moment, I could forget that I was a battered Omega, that I was a part of something I actually enjoyed. My jaw ticks as I scribble a few things on my notepad and tear it off before handing it to Shelly. I'm convinced Blake would eat dirt if I served it to him but I'm not that cruel. A few burgers and garlic fries should do it, although I wish I could serve them the finest steak.

"Take a minute, Champ before you fall over on my floor. I let you work here because you don't bring problems but an Omega fainting on my staff will bring eyes I don't need."

I like Shelly. She doesn't hold back her words like most Betas. Gratefully, I pat the table and rush to the bathroom as fast as I can, barely making it through the door before I stumble to my knees. My breathing kicks up as panic sets in. If I pass out here, they'll transport me to a hospital or try to contact my Alpha. I've done everything possible so that Hudson isn't my first point of contact.

Still, I'm sure they'd find a way to alert him where I was.

My fingers curl into the cold stone floor, the chill a relief to my bruised knees and achy hands. My head drops low as everything in me tells me to just curl up and stop fighting the pain, to let myself be consumed by it until it goes away. I almost do until two warm hands cup my cheeks and raise my head to meet those brown eyes again.

"You're breaking my heart, Luca. You're not okay, are you? What's going on? Is it

your Alpha or is it something else? I tried to come last week and I couldn't. We have this project and-"

I shake my head, cutting him off as he draws me into his lap. It's strange for an Omega to hold another but with Blake, it's always been perfect even before I presented. "Don't apologize. We're not supposed to do this anyway." He rubs his cheek along my forehead, coating me in more of his scent, claiming me. This is worse than just scandalous. We're both mated to other Alphas and Blake's Alphas would suffer the most, their Omega having gone 'rogue'.

I can't pull away, though.

"Tell me what's going on, cupcake. Please."

I hear the plea in his voice but I can't. He can't do anything to save me and anything he tries will hurt both of us. I won't do that to him. "Just an accident. You know how clumsy I am."

Blake grunts at the obvious lie, one of his hands lightly tapping the edge of the bandage on my neck. "And this?"

"I should get back." I push to my feet on shaky legs, taking several breaths as Blake just stares at me. I force a smile onto my lips, hoping to convince the both of us that I'm just fine. It doesn't work but I refuse to make a scene as I return to the counter, working the rest of my shift in silence.

Blake's soured scent makes me feel awful, the Omega trying to catch my attention and failing over the next hour and a half. It isn't until Shelly dismisses me, saying that we're over the main dinner rush that Blake finally corners me just outside. My entire body locks up with the lack of space and I can't correct my response fast enough for Blake to dismiss it.

Grayson, the Alpha who I went to school with, wraps a gentle arm around Blake's waist and pulls him back to his chest. "Luca, would you like a ride home?"

I frantically shake my head and then hiss at the throbbing pain growing in my head. I need to get off my feet as soon as possible but accepting a ride from Blake's pack will introduce Alpha scents into the house that Hudson will kill me for. Especially since Hudson and Grayson have met, if only briefly a few years ago. "I'm alright."

"You're not alright!" Blake whisper-yells, trying to pull from Grayson's hold. Blake's other Alpha sets a hand on Blake's shoulder and squeezes just enough to give the Omega a silent command. Blake settles immediately but the anger is still evident on his face. He feels just as helpless as I look, torn between forcing his Alphas to help me and letting me go. "He's not alright, Alpha. Please. " There's that plea again but it comes with glassy eyes and tears.

My heart clenches and I hold my breath, waiting for who is going to win this time around. Blake has never seen me like this and I don't intend to show him again. I need to hide it better so that he can enjoy his life so that he won't worry about me.

The other Alpha presses a kiss to Blake's forehead, whispering something before turning to me. "Luca, we would be more than happy to give you a ride if you need it."

"No, Alpha. I can walk." He's not my Alpha but I don't know any other way to address him. He's larger than Hudson and has a silent power that exudes confidence and demands my submission. The leather and musk scent wafting off him is both safe and mysterious, intriguing and downright terrifying. I bow my head to them, giving them my respect before heading down the sidewalk that will take me home.

I know they're all watching, Blake's scent fluctuating between despair and hope.

He wants to save me but I think I'm too far gone for that.

If I was a better Omega, I would quit my job and wait at home for Hudson every day.
I would leave all thoughts of Blake behind.

I'm not a better Omega.

And fuck, my heart wants Blake.

And Grayson.

And the other Alpha who's just a little too terrifying for me to think about right now.

4

Blake

“We have to go after him,” I whisper, still fighting against Grayson’s hold. The bastard has only tightened his arm around my waist every time I struggle and I suddenly hate being an Omega all over again. My Alphas dragged me toward the car but I still want to see Luca safely off. It’s never been this bad before, my need to protect and love the Omega that I can’t have.

But they didn’t see him in the bathroom and a little piece of my heart left with Luca today.

“Gray, I need-”

Luther steps in front of me, pressing both of us against the car so that I can no longer move. His expression is dark and unforgiving, his musk strangling me until the only thing I can do is submit. “Blake, I need you to breathe for me. Breathe .” I glare at him even as I take a few breaths, tears staining my cheeks for every second we’re still standing here. The rhythmic rise and fall of his chest starts to calm my erratic thoughts until my head is buried against him, my Alphas holding me steady. “ This is why I hate bringing you here. Because I can do nothing but watch you suffer for a man you love and can’t have. For a man that’s most definitely yours. Fate played a cruel joke on you, love.”

“ Please. ” I’m a selfish brat for asking Luther this but my heart is falling apart. It feels like a physical pain running through me, taking over me as I cling to him for

help. “Is it supposed to feel like this?” I ask, my voice barely over a whisper.

My Alphas’ arms tighten around me as I sob into Luther’s chest. “We’ll make sure he gets to his apartment but you have to let him go, Blake. This is going to be the hardest thing you’ve ever done but we’re right here for you. We will always be here for you.”

“I told you once that I’d make a terrible Omega.” I’m probably the only one in the entire world who doesn’t give all my attention to my Alphas. An Omega fallen for another mated Omega? It can’t happen. I don’t have what Luca needs and he can’t satisfy me either. Fate really did play a cruel joke on the both of us. Had Luca still been a Beta, he would have been mine. Grayson would have claimed him. I’m sure of it.

Luther holds me for a little bit longer before helping me climb into the back, Grayson reattaching himself to my side once I’m buckled in. No words flit between us as my Alpha starts off down the road in the opposite direction of our home. Not soon enough, Luca’s withered form comes into view, the Omega walking across the street and heading for a small apartment complex that looks like it has seen better days.

I know I shouldn’t watch, that my heart is about to be broken but I can’t look away as Luca reaches for the doorknob. The door swings open, an Alpha filling the space in the entryway before dragging Luca into a rough kiss. Luca immediately submits, my entire body rejecting what’s unfolding in front of me. Still, I recognize the way Luca’s body goes limp, the same way he does with me.

“Blake-” Grayson starts but I shake my head, trying to keep my emotions locked down.

“Let’s go home.” I place a hand over my heart before my fingers dig into my skin to rid me of pain that shouldn’t be possible. “I just needed to say goodbye, okay? We—I won’t go to the diner anymore. He has an Alpha. I have Alphas. Fuck. It’s not

supposed to hurt like this.” My Alphas remain silent. They know there’s nothing they can say to make this situation easier.

It isn’t until Grayson is stripping me out of my clothes and forcing me into my nest before I truly break down. “I don’t know how both of you don’t fucking hate me.” Grayson says nothing as he slides in behind me, wrapping a firm arm around my stomach. Luther takes a few more minutes, shutting off lights and turning on the security before moving to lie in front of me.

He drags his fingers down my cheek before pushing my hair from my forehead. The last few times I dragged them to the diner, the night ended in a fuckfest as we licked Luca’s scent from the air. A sweet ocean scent that reminds me of summer. Tonight, though, the pain is paralyzing my body. Even with Luca’s scent surrounding me, I can’t let go.

“You’re impossible to hate,” Luther says, the words rumbling through his chest. “I don’t need you to be perfect, love. I just want you to be happy.” A low growl permeates the air as I curl into him, promising myself that I’ll let Luca go and work toward moving on.

I can do this.

I can’t do this.

Luca

Hudson wasn't supposed to be home. He was supposed to be out working so that I could enjoy a free night at the diner but this entire night has gone to shit. The pain in Blake's eyes as his Alphas held him back was the most gut-wrenching moment of my entire life, even more so than the moment I presented and I knew I couldn't be his. Hudson's hand around my neck tightens as he drags me into the bedroom, the Alpha shaking me ruthlessly. I do my best to weather my expression but the slow hiss that escapes me just angers him more.

"Your job is to submit, Omega. Submit." His fingers dig in, pressing into the bandage on the left side. Tears gather in my eyes as I keep my hands fisted at my sides, refusing to give him the squeal of pain he's waiting for. I blink rapidly, trying to stay conscious as he growls in my face. My Omega wants to run but I know that will only incite his need to chase. "I told you to fucking submit, Omega."

My body relaxes completely in his grip, my head falling forward as I give in. I focus on Blake's warmth and Grayson's caring eyes as my lids fall shut. Anyone would be able to tell by my scent that I hate this situation and that my Alpha is hurting me but there's no one here to save me. The few neighbors we have on either side of us and upstairs are rarely ever home.

"That's a good Omega. Now go wash off that stink and present for me on the bed. You have 15 minutes." He thrusts me forward, my back slamming into the wall beside the bathroom entrance. Pain shoots down my spine but I bite my tongue,

nodding instead so that he'll leave me to myself.

The moment he leaves the room, tears spill down my cheeks at the life fate has given me. I don't know what I did to deserve this but I can't fathom a forever like this. What little strength I have left takes me into the bathroom. Without even thinking, I rip off the bandage on my neck and dig my fingers into it, intent on ripping Hudson's bite out of my shoulder.

I know it doesn't work like that. That without my Alpha telling me he is breaking the bond or it being surgically removed, there's no way to sever this connection. Still, I dig at it, watching as blood pours down my shoulder. The pain is nearly unbearable, my vision wavering but I don't stop.

Fury bleeds through our weak bond as Hudson stalks back in, his roar reverberating through the bedroom. He wrangles me out of the bathroom and onto the bed before ripping my hand away from his bite.

"You're a poor excuse for an Omega. Can't even handle a little rough play, Luca? What good are you? Your parents promised me a willing, submissive creature, and you... you can't even follow simple rules." Hudson hovers over me, lapping at the wound like he's starved for the scent of my blood. Seconds later, his teeth sink in, reclaiming me all over again. The weak bond strengthens, every last emotion he's feeling rushing through me.

I cry out as the pain sharpens, needles pricking everywhere along my arms and legs. My hands push against his chest as I try to fight him off but he's so much larger than I am that nothing I do will save me. Blake's scent coating my skin most likely only spurs Hudson's Alpha instincts on stronger, the sweet pear scent so much more inviting than my own.

Hudson claws at my clothes as tears blur my vision and I give into his advances.

Fighting will only hurt me in the end, my traitorous body releasing slick and coating my boxers. My scent sweetens, thick and syrupy for an Alpha that has become my nightmare. Hudson was never nice but he wasn't someone I was scared of. Now I just pray that the terror is over quickly so I can restart the healing process.

"Tonight is going to be fun, Omega. I'm going to mark you up so that everyone knows who you belong to. Everyone." He grins, blood coating his teeth and chin, his eyes wild. His hands grip my waist before flipping me over, my head lolling forward. My body is limp from the loss of blood but still responding to our bond and his touch. At least I won't feel it, right?

The rest of my clothes are discarded, the sound of Hudson's zipper being undone striking true fear in my heart. Even still, slick pours down the back of my thighs as my face is shoved into the pillow. Hudson's hot breath fans my ear just before he pushes inside.

"Next time, bring that damn Omega I always smell on you. He smells like dessert and I think I'm owed a piece."

Tomorrow, I'll tell Shelly I'm quitting.

There's no way that Hudson will get anywhere near Blake.

The next morning, I stumble into the diner, knowing very well that I look like death warmed over. I patched up Hudson's bite on my shoulder again but there are so many other cuts and scrapes along my chest, stomach, and back that it hurts to move. Fuck, it hurts to think about moving. Still, I needed to be here for my last shift.

Shelly takes one look at me and frowns before pointing to the sink in the back. "If I was an Alpha, I would send you home immediately. Don't look at me like that. Your Alpha is either a sick bastard or you get into a lot of trouble. Either way, I would be

stupid to keep you here right now. If I was an Alpha. However, I'm a Beta, and fuck the system. What are you doing here, Champ?"

I manage a smile even though it hurts like hell as I shuffle toward the dishwasher. "Needed a distraction, Shelly," I croak out. "But... last shift."

Hudson left early this morning, leaving me in a heap of cum, blood, and sweat without any regard to if I was dead or not. I think he'd still fuck me if I was dead which only sours my mood further. Shelly lets out a pitiful sigh, glaring at me as I turn to face the mountain of dishes that need to be run through the dishwasher.

"I have no idea how you push through so much shit, Champ. I applaud you for it but maybe it's time to say that it's too much."

I can't do that. There's no one to tell that my Alpha is abusing me. And when I leave here today, Hudson very well might kill me if I don't find a way out of that house. I counted the monies I had left over and it isn't enough to survive. However, I would choose starvation or death from the elements over his rough hand any day. It's why I left a packed bag by the entrance of the diner so that when I leave today, I head anywhere but home.

Because that isn't home.

It never was.

I reach for a plate, my vision wavering seconds before my legs buckle beneath me. I lost too much blood last night and Hudson throwing around my body only worsened my condition. A grimace slips through my lips at someone yelling my name, my limp body refusing to listen to me.

Get up, Luca. We can't go to the hospital.

I moan, trying to move as more hands push me to stay on the floor. I struggle against them but I might as well not even be moving. The only thing I pray is that Hudson isn't the one who shows up when I wake up from this hell.

Grayson

I can hardly concentrate with Blake's sour mood soiling our bond. The worst part is that he's not the only one that feels like this. Luther wasn't there when I met Blake and Luca. They were two peas in a pod, doing everything together. When Luca was a Beta, I had hopes that they would both be mine. After all, they were inseparable. All of that changed when Luca presented and he left school. Blake's demeanor changed and while he was still the cheeky piece of shit he always is, the light in his gorgeous doe eyes dimmed a little.

They brighten every time we sit at the diner but it's the heartbreak every time we leave that I can't handle. The heartbreak that I not only feel from Blake but my own. Luca has always intrigued me and at first, I was going to take him on because he was obviously Blake's. But when he presented? I swear the goddess herself was fucking with me. I salivated for his scent the way I did Blake. If the world wasn't so cruel, I would have mated them both but my honor won out—Luca was promised to an Alpha I had only met in passing.

It didn't matter that I was a few years older than both Omegas or that my social status was higher than Luca's promised Alpha. More than Blake's happiness was lost that day.

I huff out a sigh as a deep sadness trickles through the bond and hits me square in the chest. We have several deadlines to meet for this new update but Blake isn't focusing. Luther is trying but this dark cloud from last night has been growing. Blake wouldn't

eat breakfast and he's been silent since we arrived at the office an hour ago. Most of the employees have avoided Blake, not that I would blame them. A heartbroken Omega isn't a very inviting sight.

"Dude, Blake is really killing the morale. What happened?"

I look up to see my counterpart, a genius when it comes to designing exactly the chaos that comes out of Blake's mouth. Leaning back in my chair, I gesture for the Beta to close the door behind him, waiting until Riley plops his ass on one of the seats across from my desk. My office is down the hall from Luther and Blake's, mostly because the design department didn't want to be anywhere near the business aspect.

Blake also gets distracted easily and every time we pulled something up on the screen, he'd focus on us rather than his own work. Downside of being an Omega, I guess.

"Okay, so..." Riley starts and I shake my head, letting him know he's not in trouble.

"We're dealing with a mate situation, I guess?" I start. Riley and I spent a few years in college together before I met Blake and Luca. We're as close as friends and colleagues can get without truly knowing about each other's lives. Riley is mated to an Alpha/Omega duo, his Omega a second chance Omega that found her home with them after a horrible situation. "Similar to Juliana, I think."

Riley raises an eyebrow and leans forward. "No shit? Goddamn. I'm guessing Blake is the link, right?"

I nod, stringing a hand through my hair before pulling it back to rest behind my shoulders. A sigh falls from my lips, a strange sound mixed with a tamed Alpha growl at the discomfort in my chest. My Omega is hurting. I'm hurting and neither

one of us can fix this. That battered look on Luca's face guts me every time I close my eyes or dwell on his situation a little too long.

"What are you going to do? What's Luther saying?"

"That's the hard part. Luther is a fucking saint but it's not fair to him. It's also not fair to hold out hope for something that may never happen. Or that can't happen." I lace my fingers and place them on the desk before my head rests on them. "Riley, he's a fucking Omega."

Silence meets my declaration, a sudden weight lifted off my shoulders. I've never admitted to anyone, not even Blake that I'm attracted to two Omegas. It's rare and it's even rarer that it works out. There are always favorites and Omegas are territorial as fuck. There's no way that a situation including Blake and Luca could work out. Sure, they could say they would share but there would be an issue later on down the line.

"Please tell me this isn't Blake's best friend. The cute one with the sea-glass eyes? What was his name? Luke?"

"Luca."

"Fuck, Grayson. He's mated. That's wholly different than Juliana and you know that. You can't just pine after someone's Omega. That's not how it works! You-"

A growl rips through my throat as my head whips up and I glare at Riley before softening my expression. "Sorry. It's not like that, Riley. Truly. Luca is... he's hurting and we can't help him. Blake tortures himself by taking us to the diner Luca works at but yesterday... Riley, it's bad. I didn't tell Blake but Luca's bite is infected." I sigh, running my hands through my hair, tugging the strands all the way down. Frustration and helplessness bleed through me because I know that Luca's

Alpha is torturing him. I know for a fact that the kiss we saw wasn't one of love. It was possession. That Alpha was showing whoever was watching including Luca who the Omega belonged to.

Riley's eyes widen at my predicament, his attention darting to the door of my office as if he can see Blake from here. "Wait, seriously? Like two Omegas? That's like rare rare."

"I just need some advice before I do something fucking stupid, Riley." Beneath the confusing part of the issue, I'm fucking pissed. If I was just a little bigger, I would charge into that apartment and rip Luca from that Alpha's hands myself. Unfortunately, my size puts me on the defensive and I can't drag Luther into this. Not until he's onboard. If he ever is.

"There's no good advice in this situation. Luca has to be the one to say something and most battered Omegas never will. You could report it but if his Alpha says everything is fine, they won't push. That'll just make it worse for Luca. The only thing you could do is highly illegal and it still might not work." Riley leans forward. "You could steal him but again, unless Luca makes a report naming his Alpha by name, you're fucking screwed. Omega Rights in this country suck ass, Gray. They exist, sure but they don't work. Omegas have to invoke them but they've been living in a society for so long that regards them as property that there's only a slim chance an Omega will speak up."

"I figured as much. Thanks." I rub at my chest, realizing that Blake needs the day off. I can hide my emotions and my pain a lot better than he does. Regardless of how much Blake protests that he's just as capable as everyone else, there are times he needs a break.

This is one of those times.

I pat Riley's shoulder on the way out of my office and make a beeline for Blake's. I'm not surprised to see the ashen face of my Omega as he mindlessly twirls in his seat, his eyes unfocused. There's a stack of portfolios to his right and papers haphazardly spread across his desk that have been ignored. He's mumbling something as he spins in his chair, Blake a shell of himself.

It isn't until I get closer that I realize he's been crying.

"Baby, what's wrong?"

"You can't feel that? He's dying. It feels like he's dying. I don't even know why! He was okay yesterday. Not okay but—" I round the desk and crush him against my chest, effectively stopping the spinning chair. He wraps his arms around my back, fingers digging into my spine. "Where is Luther?" I glance across the way to see an empty office before remembering there's a meeting downtown. We decided to keep Blake here. "Right. Let's get you home. Maybe a bath? Or a quick fuck?"

Blake doesn't even crack a smile. That's how I know how truly broken he is.

A buzzing tears my attention away from my Omega and I glare at the cell phone on the desk, the hospital's number running across the screen. For a moment, I think that it might be Blake's test results, telling us if our Omega is fertile. We've talked about kids a few times but it's always been a future us problem.

Resituating so that I'm sitting in Blake's seat and he's curled into my chest, I take the call.

"Hello. Is Alpha Blake available?"

I blink several times, wondering if I heard that right before I snort. "Alpha—fuck, yeah. Hold on a second." There has to be a reason for the mix-up but I'll play. I

nudge Blake as I set the phone on the table so the nurse can't hear me. "Want to tell me why the hospital would be calling for an Alpha Blake?"

My Omega shoots up, eyes wide, panic searing through the bond as he fumbles for the phone. "Yes? Yes. This is Alpha Blake. Where is he? Yes, I'll be right there. Fuck, yes. Ten—fifteen minutes." Blake hangs up and scrambles off my lap, nearly making it to the door of his office before Luther grabs him. I'm not even sure how Luther is always one step ahead, making sure that we don't find ourselves in trouble but I love that about him.

"The bond has been all over the fucking place today so I cut the meeting short. Blake," Luther kneels so that he's looking up at our Omega. It's something Luther only does for him, one of the most submissive positions for an Alpha. "I'm not letting you go anywhere until you fucking talk to me." He reaches up to brush off Blake's tears, our Omega frantically looking around the room. "Blake Keller, look at me. There you go, love. Deep breaths. 1, 2. Good boy. Now, tell me what the fuck is going on? Who do I have to kill?"

That earns Luther a smile and I relax slightly as I move toward Blake, running a gentle hand across the nape of his neck. "Come on baby, talk to us. Was it about Luca?"

"Yes. He's at the hospital."

I frown. "Why didn't they contact his Alpha?"

"It was stupid. We put each other as Alpha contacts so that we wouldn't ever get caught up in all the bullshit." Blake gasps for air as he rambles. "I changed mine to you guys when we... but Luca, he never changed his. We didn't want to get picked up by an Omega Center. I just... we have to go. Please. "

Blake is fucking pleading, breaking my heart all over again and I can't deny him this. Not when I want it just as much. Luther stands and tugs Blake closer before gesturing for him to grab his coat at the end of the hall. Then my Alpha turns to me, leaning in so that Blake can't hear us. "I know that expression, Gray." He settles an arm around my waist as he presses a soft kiss to the corner of my mouth. "And I'm not angry at either of you. Luca belongs with us but I've seen what happens when an Alpha tries to fight the law regarding a bonded Omega. I want this for Blake. For you. For us."

"But not for you?" I ask. I'm out of line but I have to know that Luther isn't just placating us.

He kisses me again before twisting me around so that I'm staring into his eyes. "I don't know Luca the way you two do. I wasn't there when he presented. Biology tells me that we belong together but I won't break up a family to build mine. However, if I find out that those bruises and that infection were from his Alpha, I will do whatever it takes to save him. I'll promise you that."

It's not enough though and I know I'm digging a grave. I also know that we have seconds before Blake returns to usher us along. "Alpha--"

"Do you want to hear that I'm not in love with Luca? Is that what you want, Gray? Because I'm not. I won't lie to you and say that I am. I don't know him. He's sweet and he'll fit perfectly in the pack we've created. If that's how the cards fall." Luther grips my chin with his free hand, his thumb running along my jawline. "Luca will be easy to fall in love with if that's what he wants. Right now, I'm worried about his safety. Romance can come later."

That's all I needed to hear.

That Luther is willing to try.

That whatever this thing building between us four is something that has a chance.

Blake

Luther keeps holding me back, a firm hand on my shoulder keeping me in place despite my urgent requests for us to move faster. He knows I need Luca, that Luca's pain is my pain or maybe he just found that out a few moments ago when Grayson explained it. Luther looks overwhelmed by my tears but I can't explain the connection and why it's so fucking strong. I feel like I'm being torn apart when all I want is to curl up in my nest with my mates.

All of them.

A nurse clears her throat as we approach the front desk, my eyes everywhere but on the lady. "Who is Alpha Blake?"

I'm about to answer when Luther does. "I am. I received a call about my Omega." My mind swims at the fantasies of Luther calling Luca his Omega, our Omega but I shove that down, nearly jumping out of my skin. Luca's pain has lessened but his longing is still there, clawing its way out of my chest. If I don't see him soon, I'm going to start crying bloody murder.

The nurse looks at us suspiciously before heading toward the hall to the right. "Luca has sustained several bruises, his bite is infected, and he's been in and out of consciousness for a while. He's sedated now and the fluids should return some of the color to his face." She places a hand on a doorknob before turning to face Luther. "I have to ask, though. Protocol as it is. Where did your Omega sustain all of these

injuries? I've had to call the authorities."

Luther's jaw ticks before an unreadable expression settles on his face. "I will have to ask his other Alpha about these injuries since I was not present."

The nurse is about to ask another question when someone I recognize steps in, shooing her away. My personal doctor works at the same hospital, Quentin, a Beta and good friend of Luther's. He waits until the nurse is seated back at the reception before turning to us. "Blake, get your friend to delete your number. If the wrong person finds out you're posing as an Alpha, it won't be good for anyone. Luther, Grayson, always a pleasure. I'm sorry about the circumstances. Luca's injuries are severe but that's not what I'm worried about. It's the ones that have healed or are healing. Whatever this is, is long-term. Something that's been happening for years."

A cry tears from my throat as I reach for the door, hoping that Quentin will let me in.

"Be gentle with him, Blake. He's suffered a lot and he needs a gentle touch. I can sense how much you care for him but your emotions might be too much for him."

Luther pulls me back against his chest, waiting until I match his breathing before letting go. Only then does Quentin open the door. I walk through, holding back a gasp at the machines Luca is hooked up to, my beautiful cupcake lifeless on the small mattress. Bruises litter his arms and legs from what I can see, a few cuts and scrapes visible beside bandages covering everywhere else. His neck is completely wrapped as I lean over my Omega, stroking his cheek to bring him back to me.

Luca doesn't budge, tears falling down my cheeks again. "Why didn't you tell me?" I whisper. I bury my face in his shoulder, crying for my first love and pained that someone hurt him so much that I nearly lost him.

Quentin stands at the edge of the room discussing Luca's injuries and while I'm not

completely listening, I hear things like blood loss, nausea, weakened state, and traumatic response. It doesn't matter, though. Luca is here and in my arms.

“Blake, you can't—baby-”

I ignore Grayson, even pulling away when he tries to reach for me as I climb into Luca's bed, careful not to jostle him. My Omega whines beneath his oxygen mask before settling against me. His scent sweetens and wraps around me as I take his hand in mine, curling my fingers around his. It feels so good to hold him just like I used to, maybe even more so now.

“You're safe, cupcake,” I whisper in his ear. He shifts again, his lids fluttering open for a moment and connecting with mine. For the first time in a while, I see hope in those eyes. Then he falls asleep again and I tuck myself around him, refusing to let go.

Luther and Grayson can handle everything else.

Luca

I wake to a warm body, swaddled in a forest of fresh pears and melon body wash. Blake is wrapped around me like a koala, somehow avoiding all of the machines I'm hooked up to. For a few moments, I just stare at my heart and soul, the peace in his expression as he rests. He's always beautiful to me but even more so when he's happy and right now, his lips pressed to my shoulder, his arms around my body are everything.

I try to reach over and cuddle him back when pain shoots through me, causing me to wince. One of the machines starts beeping and then another, my breathing picking up as my eyes widen at the sudden chaos erupting in the room. Two seconds later, the door is thrown open, strong Alpha pheromones that I don't recognize hitting me beneath the oxygen mask.

Fear explodes in my chest as I scramble off the bed, screaming in a mixture of pain and terror as I try to smash myself into the corner of the room. I don't want to go back. My vision tunnels as I press my back against the wall, hands plastered against my face so that I don't have to see the Alphas coming for me to return me to Hudson. I don't want to go back. I can't go back.

Then that sweet pear scent is in front of me again, blocking everything else. I bury my head into Blake's shoulders, taking several lungfuls of his scent. I don't mind the added scents of his Alphas as I sag against him, giving in until my legs buckle beneath me and I crumple to the ground. Blake follows, tucking me into his chest.

“I’ve got you, Luca.”

My body trembles with the weight of my emotions, tears streaming down my face. “Don’t give me back. I can’t go back.”

His arms wrap tighter around me, his lips attaching to my temple before they begin to trail south until those soft lips meet where my jaw connects with my neck, the only part that isn't wrapped up in a bandage. I relax completely in his hold, letting out a little sigh of relief. It takes me a few moments to realize that Blake is rocking me back and forth, humming as he sucks on the sensitive skin. It’s a highly intimate gesture but Blake has never cared about etiquette—just me.

“Luca,” he purrs as he pulls back, cupping my tear-stained cheeks in his hands. “They have to check you out. Someone does.”

“Not an Alpha.”

I don’t want anyone else in here that I don’t recognize. I can’t handle the anxiety that comes with it right now.

Blake nods as he helps me to my feet and slowly back onto the mattress. The soft surface reminds me how much pain I’m in as he swings my feet over the edge, a Beta standing on the other side with an understanding smile. The Beta begins hooking the lines back up to me without a word, no judgment in his expression. “We just want to monitor your vitals for a little while longer before we release you to your… Alphas.” He smirks and my eyes widen, wondering if he found out my secret.

I twist around to grab Blake, the Omega already there to dole out more sweet kisses. “Quentin is my doctor, cupcake but you can’t use me as your phone call anymore. I-” His face turns up in a little pout and it’s one of the times that reminds me he’s also an Omega.

Grayson pops up behind Blake, setting his chin on his Omega's head. "I'd be more than happy to be your phone call, Luca. For now, we're going to take you home and get you all rested up."

A machine starts beeping again the moment my heart rate kicks up and a thick growl permeates from behind them. I swallow nervously as Luther approaches my bed before stopping a few feet away, respectful of my current state. "You're not going to your home, Luca. You'll stay with us until the police speak with your Alpha and we can determine nothing is going on."

"How—but you're not my Alpha." I croak. There's an unintelligible expression that flits across his face, something akin to disappointment but it's gone before I can dwell on it. "You can't take me home." Please don't take me home. God, if one of them drops me off back at the apartment, I'll do more than try to rip out Hudson's bite.

The big Alpha chuckles, threading his arms across his chest. His eyes flash with amusement, his lip turning up ever so slightly. "Luca, you have friends in very high places. Tell me that you would like to stay here overnight until they speak with your Alpha or for us to take you back to the apartment, I will. No questions asked."

None of this makes any sense. This has always just been about Blake and me. For some reason, I'm getting stupid ideas of all three of them and me.

You already have an Alpha.

I smack that horrid thought away, Blake squeezing my hand a little tighter. The hope in his eyes is overwhelming and staying with them for a night—even if that's all it is, will be the best night I've ever had. "It's okay? Your nest?" I don't want to encroach on the space he calls safe. My pheromones will drench every fucking thing in their house.

“I want you in my nest,” he says with a little growl, Grayson nipping at his ear.

“Cool it, babe. Luca needs to heal. Doc, when can we take him home?”

My face turns a shade of crimson as I remember there’s someone else in this room other than just Blake and his mates. Quentin, however, doesn’t pay me any mind. “Soon as Alpha Blake signs the discharge papers. Fuck me, Blake, I could never see you as an Alpha. Not even a Beta.” Quentin plays with a few more dials on a machine beside my head before grabbing a clipboard and waving at Luther to follow him.

“You are a pretty Omega, Blake,” I push out, my throat a little sore. Everything is throbbing and I’m hoping that being discharged comes with medication. A lot of it.

He giggles, a beautiful sound that warms my heart. Grayson reaches around Blake and pats my arm lightly. “I don’t know if this makes it worse, sweetheart, but Blake isn’t the only one who wants you. You are wanted and you aren’t an inconvenience.”

“I didn’t even say anything,” I whisper.

Grayson laughs as his hand settles on my arm, his fingers softly rubbing across my skin. His scent is soft in contrast to the other Alphas that had been in the room recently. “You didn’t have to. Blake, as much of a shit as he was—still is—always thought he was putting us out. He wasn’t. Neither are you. It will be an honor to have you there.”

“In my nest,” Blake says again. Grayson sighs but doesn’t scold the Omega this time. I say nothing because I have nothing to add to the conversation. Blake can ask me all he wants to step into his nest but I won’t do it. I won’t start something I can’t finish.

For one night, they are going to be my safe space but that doesn’t mean I need to insert myself into Blake’s most intimate places. Blake notices my lack of answer,

raising an eyebrow in a silent argument that I refuse to indulge. I'm just waiting for the doctor to return and free me so that I can find a corner to crawl into.

Without the practice of building a nest, my favorite spaces are corners and closets, whichever gives me the best vantage point of the door and also lets me feel completely surrounded. I stay quiet for the next several minutes, both Blake and Grayson touching me, calming my frantic emotions until I'm half asleep. The door to my room slides open, a deep honeyed voice reaching my ears before the doctor begins unhooking me from the machines.

I try to open my eyes to see what is going on when someone presses a kiss to my forehead, strong arms moving beneath me and gathering me against his chest. The hospital gown barely covers anything but I have no strength to argue as I let myself be carried outside and handed to Blake once inside a car. It takes me a few moments to realize Luther was the Alpha that held me.

He's terrifying and yet for some reason, he feels safe.

"I've got you, Luca. You're safe now," Blake mumbles against my ear. I want to believe that but with that fucking bite on my shoulder, I'm not safe until Hudson lets me go.

And that will never happen.

Luther

Luca is currently sleeping on the farthest end of the couch, wrapped up in Blake's bedcover, his nose stuffed so far into the blanket that I'm sure it's going to be difficult to hand Luca back tomorrow morning. Despite the severity of the situation, if Luca's Alpha gives enough of a bullshit answer to the police, I can't legally hold him from his Omega.

I'm currently focused on the way Blake and Grayson are both staring at the poor Omega, hope in their eyes that this might be a step in a different direction. Every time Blake tries to crawl a little closer, Grayson drags him back into his lap, whispering something in his ear to get him to stay put. It only works for a few moments and I have to bury down a laugh to keep from ruining the scene.

An Omega's biology makes them the pinnacle of their pack or the relationship. They crave attention. They like to nurture and to claim. There's no doubt in my mind that Blake has claimed Luca in a very untraditional way for an Omega. Omega's are also highly territorial but watching them in the same space, I can see that Luca would run this house—not Blake.

Blake has never once given a fuck about the house décor, what happens in the kitchen, or what pillows go in his nest. Just so long as there are pillows and we're present, Blake is happy. He spends more time building video games than following us around. I used to think I'd want a purely submissive Omega that would bend to my will but I don't think I could handle someone that sweet.

Not until Luca.

I sigh, a sound that turns into a growl when Blake tries to crawl over to Luca again. He glares at me, his sweet little ass propped up in the air, my Omega on all fours. He's inches from cuddling up beside Luca and as much as I want to see them wrapped around each other again, it needs to be Luca's choice.

Blake doesn't fight me when I tug him over the back of the couch and into my arms, the weariness he's been trying to hide suddenly taking a toll on him. Between working a full-time, high-stress job and this current situation, Blake needs rest and I would not be a good Alpha if I let him continue to push himself. "Let's go, love."

"But-"

"He will still be here when you wake up but I will not have you keeling over. You're my Omega to protect, alright?" His brows furrow and his lip juts out in a pout wholly uncharacteristic of him. I lean down to nip at it before settling my hands on his waist. "Blake, he is also my Omega to protect which is why I'm telling you to go rest."

"With him."

"No." God, having two Omegas is going to be a nightmare. Gone is the sassy brat of an Omega I mated. In his place is an Omega who wants to keep eyes on his most precious person and I don't blame Blake for one second. Unfortunately, Luca hasn't consented to anything more than coming home with us, and finding himself in Blake's nest might be a step too far for him.

Blake holds my gaze for several seconds before breaking it and looking back over at Luca. "He'll still be here?"

"Yes, love. He's not going anywhere tonight."

My Omega gives in and leans up to press a kiss to my lips before heading down the hallway. He probably won't sleep, not unless one of us joins him which I'm going to give Grayson that wonderful task. Luca is now my responsibility and I'm going to make sure he has absolutely everything he needs. Grayson catches onto my line of thought as he too climbs over the back of the couch and stands beside me.

"Blake is going to be a nightmare, you know that, right?"

"I wouldn't expect anything less. Just make sure he actually sleeps. Fuck him if you have to. I don't want to limit his hours at his own company but I won't be able to handle it if his health declines." I've watched other Omegas forced into the workforce and fall apart because their biology just can't handle stressful environments. It's a fucking awful gift from Mother Nature but it's the way of the world.

Grayson laughs, patting my arm. "I'm sure fucking our Omega will be such a hardship. Letting him fall asleep on my knot while-"

I wrap a hand around the Alpha's throat to cut off his words, playfully growling in his face. "Quit it. You're making me hard and we don't have time for me to fuck you." My thumb massages the side of his neck before I pull him into a soft kiss, loving the way he immediately melts against me. In the push to finish the new game updates at work, it's been nearly impossible to find time for our private lives.

That will have to change.

"Go. I've got Luca."

I round the couch and crouch down, staring at the small puffs of breath coming from the Omega. His sweet scent is starting to mix with Blake's as if they both were always present here. I won't admit it to the other two but I've been at half-mast since I walked into the hospital room, Luca's scent telling me that he isn't far from a heat.

My Alpha wants him but that's for the Omega to decide. I'll never take that choice from him.

"Sweetheart," I whisper, surprising myself at the tenderness in my voice. I don't even speak to Blake like that. Luca stirs slightly, an unfettered moan falling from his lips. He blinks a few times and then twists to meet my gaze, glassy eyes full of uncertainty making my heart hurt a little more than it already does. "Let's get you a bath, alright?"

He frowns, tightening his grip on the blanket before looking around. His breath picks up as he sits up, disoriented and obviously confused as to why he's here alone. Tears glaze his eyes as he turns back to me. "Blake-"

"Needed the rest. Grayson is with him and I need to clean you up, sweetheart. The doctor gave me some medicine for you but we need to take a bath and get some food in you before that." I reach a hand out toward him, his eyes growing wide with fear. It takes me a moment to realize he's not scared of me. He just doesn't want to lose the blanket. "You can keep Blake's blanket. I won't take that from you."

I slowly put out my arms like I did at the hospital, waiting for Luca to curl into them. Something grows in my chest—a need, maybe a craving to have Luca in my arms like this all the time. I push that feeling down even as Luca curls into me, his nose rubbing along my collarbone. His body shivers against me as I walk us toward the guest bathroom.

"It doesn't smell like Blake in here."

Luca will be embarrassed in the morning but I know he finds our scents safe. I also know that Grayson and Blake will have no problems being coated in Luca's scent. Changing course, I bring Luca into our main bathroom, grateful that a second entrance was built so we don't have to walk through the nest. I'm not sure I could

resist laying Luca in the middle of us and wrapping him up for the night.

The Omega peeks out of the blanket as I set him down on the toilet, drawing up a heated bath and placing descenter in the water. Luca's scent strengthens and I turn around to see him watching me, intrigued and terrified at the same time. "I'll leave you alone, sweetheart. They removed many of the bandages so you won't have to do anything."

Luca peeks at the water, bubbles rising and foaming before looking at me. "Don't leave me." He tightens the blanket around his shoulders again, shaking his head. "I... don't want to be alone."

"Sweetheart." I crouch in front of him, loving the way he leans forward for my touch. I gladly give it to him, caressing his cheek in my palm as I wipe his tears away with my thumb. "You're going to be alright, okay? However, I need to get you out of that hospital gown and you need food in that belly." Luca scoots forward, nuzzling into my hand. His eyes are closed, telling me that he trusts me and my pack. An honor.

Luca slowly lets go of the blanket when I tug, the pitiful fabric called a gown barely holding onto his shoulders. Quentin cleaned the cuts and bruises one last time before removing all of the bandages aside from the one on his neck and shoulder. I haven't seen the damage but Quentin mentioned that the wound was gruesome, that an Alpha should be charged to the fullest extent of the law for that kind of damage.

Deciding to take charge, I slip the gown from his shoulders, a gasp falling from Luca's lips when the bruises littered across his chest are revealed. He wraps his arms around himself, eyes downcast as I pull the gown off the rest of him. I run my tongue along my top teeth, trying to curtail my anger at what I'm seeing.

"Luca," his name is strained on my tongue as the Omega shivers, avoiding my stare. "Sweetheart."

The tears come back as Luca pushes away my hands before pulling me closer to shield himself with my chest. “Don’t ask. Please don’t ask. I just... don’t ask.” Luca is going to break my heart, isn’t he? I can’t imagine the horrors he’s gone through since before he was mated.

“I won’t ask. Are you up for a bath?” I didn’t even think about how much the hot water might hurt his open cuts but Luca merely just nods and it takes everything in me not to stomp outside and search for that Alpha to rip his arms off. Carefully, I pick Luca back up and settle him in the warm bubbly water before stepping back. He stares at the bubbles for several seconds before reaching out to me. I give him my hand, watching as he wordlessly tugs me forward. “If you need something little Omega, I need your words.”

I’m already overstepping by taking care of another Alpha’s Omega—however, these are special circumstances. At least, that’s what I’m telling myself so I can ease my emotions back to the little hole they came from.

“Don’t leave me.”

“I’m not going anywhere, little Omega.” I silently curse myself for the sweet names I’m giving him but Luca seems to preen beneath them. Still, he tugs my hand forward and into the water, his eyes wide with a silent plea.

“ Please. ”

“Words, little Omega.” Blake gets like this sometimes too, so far into his head that his Omega just tells him that he needs something. However, I won’t do anything without their consent. Their minds can be fragile in times like this and one wrong move will ruin all of the peace we’ve built over the last hour.

Luca lets out a little frustrated growl before dragging me closer. “Can you come in

with me? There's too much space." I frown, staring at the master bath and seeing how small Luca truly is inside of it. I'll be crucified if Luca's Alpha ever finds out what happened tonight but in my head, Luca isn't leaving.

I know what the law says but my Alpha is telling me that this little Omega is ours, that he's mine.

I strip and watch as Luca moves forward and I settle in behind him, Luca eagerly curling into my chest and closing his eyes. I run a hand gently up and down his arm before settling on his hip. "What did your Alpha do to you?" I whisper. It's a hard accusation but I'm 100% sure that this is the result of abusive behavior and not a clumsy Omega.

Luca trembles against me, his sweet scent souring for a moment before calming again. "What they're supposed to do to their Omegas."

He's dead. That Alpha is dead when I get my hands on him.

A few seconds later Luca is snoring, my Alpha rumbling with the pleasure of holding the Omega. It feels dangerously similar to the first time Blake trusted me with his safety.

I've told Blake a hundred times that Luca isn't ours to have. I'll apologize to him in the morning because Luca is staying right here where he belongs.

10

Grayson

“We can’t keep him, baby,” I try to reason with Blake for the umpteenth time. He’s been reconfiguring his nest for the past fifteen minutes, only looking up when the water started in the bath. His face turned up in the cutest frown before he restarted fixing things. “Blake, babe, what are you doing?”

He just glares at me before grabbing the hem of my shirt and ripping it over my head and weaving it into the edge. I watch him as he widens the perimeter and I start laughing when it finally makes sense.

“Blake, are you nesting?” Of course, our Omega would try to start preparing for the next part of his family but I’ve never seen him nest in my life. Blake doesn’t answer me before he stares at the door as if Luther and Luca might walk in and join us. That might be a step too much for Luca at the moment even if I’d love to wrap my arms around him and sink my knot into his sweet little hole.

That’ll come in time. For now? Luca needs to know that he’s loved and Blake’s brand of obsession is too much.

When no one walks through the door, I have to intervene. Blake has never outwardly exhibited many of the Omega characteristics he did when he was in school. The needy whines and frustrated pouts aren’t his thing but it doesn’t mean I don’t miss them and this version of Blake is definitely a favorite. At first, my Omega fights me, waiting for the rest of our pack to join. Then he gives in, melting into my chest,

silently pleading with me to take him out of his head.

“There you are,” I whisper against his lips, cradling his head in my hands as he straddles my lap. “I’m going to give you my knot and then you’re going to rest. Luca will still be here in the morning. I promise.” Luca isn’t going anywhere and with the fierce protective emotions rumbling through the bond, I know Luther won’t let it happen.

Blake sighs before kissing me back, turning his attention from Luca to me. Suddenly, I’m his main focus, the Omega pushing me down to lay in his nest as he rips at my clothes. The sweet scent of his arousal thickens in the air until it becomes a perfume threatening to suffocate me in the best of ways. I let Blake have his way as he struggles to pull my pants down my thighs.

He’s grunting and scowling at me as I just smile down at my beautiful Omega. It’s a few seconds too long before he’s gloriously naked and sliding down my cock, his chest rising and falling erratically with a mixture of panic and need. I won’t ever be a substitute for Luca but I don’t want to be. I just need Blake to relax, to rest, to fucking take a load off before he injures himself.

I’ll have to tell Luther in the morning that Blake might be so much closer to ending up in the hospital due to stress than any of us knows. Quentin gave us several things to watch out for but the call I was waiting on came in earlier when Blake unsuccessfully tried to wrap himself around Luca on the couch.

I chuckle as I reach forward and grab Blake by his ankle to drag him back into my lap again. He’s been trying to crawl over to where Luca is adorably perched at the edge of the lounge but the poor Omega needs space. Space that Blake won’t give him. I could just remove Blake from the situation altogether but this is too much fun, watching both of them give into their Omega and act on instincts.

Luther is bringing in a few things from the car, my phone buzzing ripping me from the Omegas on the couch.

Quentin

Can you talk?

Juggling two Omegas at the moment.

I both envy you and don't. It's about Blake's tests. You told me to text you as soon as possible.

We've been trying for a kid every now and then. Blake's excitement about starting a family builds and wanes. I'm beginning to see that his emotions are directly affected by how Luca is feeling. The tests were supposed to show us if a kid is even in our future or if we should start looking down other routes.

I'm guessing it's something bad?

Not really. No. Just... look at the test results when you get a chance. It might answer some questions. Once you all have discussed them, call me. How's Luca?

I've known Quentin long enough that he won't beat around the bush, that he'd tell me if something was wrong with Blake so I'm not worried. I glance up and tug Blake back over to me, the grown man growling at me. My purr rattles through my chest, calming him from throwing a fit but I can see that he's going to be a handful.

Doing alright. Sleeping. Any luck finding his Alpha? I'd be surprised if it's the same shit from college. He was a douchebag but not abusive.

No luck yet. Make sure Luca changes his contact to at least you or Luther. Calling

Alpha Blake is going to get your Omega in trouble. Talk later.

My Alpha instincts take over as Blake's fingers dig into my chest, demanding that I do something about his irritability. He's all grunts and moans and soft purrs, unable to articulate. For a moment, I wonder if he's been thrown into an impromptu heat but his scent is only a little stronger than usual.

"Fuck me, Gray. Stop getting distracted," he growls out, digging his fingers deeper into my chest. There are going to be marks in the morning. He pushes up and then slams back down on my cock, his eyes rolling into the back of his head, no doubt the piercing at the tip hitting the perfect spot. Blake continues that movement a few more times before I can't take it anymore and I flip us, driving into him with every ounce of strength I have.

I grab one of his legs and wrap it around my hip, plunging into his ass as he howls through every thrust. His hands move to my shoulders as I dip my lips to his neck, sucking on my bite. Blake becomes a mess of moans and snarls as his body tries to drag me in deeper. His ass strangles my cock, my knot fluttering at the edge of his hole. It's taking me everything to keep from rutting against him, from truly pounding into him.

He doesn't need that.

And yet, I need to push Luca out of his mind until that precious Omega is ready to be ours.

Blake's body locks up seconds before he melts into his nest, coming all over my and his chest. Seconds later, I'm stuffing my knot into his ass, nursing my bite from a few years ago until Blake has settled. Then I give into my release, letting out a low purr to calm my Omega. He lets out a long, deep sigh as I roll us over until I'm on my back and Blake is sprawled across my chest.

His scent blooms around us, his lids fluttering closed, the magic of an Alpha knot dragging him under. Blake despises how easy it is for him to submit at times like this and yet I love seeing the serene expression on his tired face. I lean up to kiss his forehead before dragging a discarded blanket over us to sleep.

A buzz keeps me from drifting off and I feel around for my forgotten phone, thanking the goddess that it's within reach. Blake's immediate snores make me chuckle as I unlock the screen and open the MED app to find our results.

Luther and I's test results are negative. We're in perfect health and our sperm count is average to high.

Blake's medical records on the other hand have a lot of words I don't recognize. Except for two sentences near the bottom. High Blood Pressure due to Stress. If the body cannot self-regulate, additional heart problems may occur.

There are several other terms after it that I have no idea what they are but I'm still stuck on that high blood pressure bit. It's common in his family so I'm not surprised but the stress he's under every day has to be way more than we anticipated if it's causing high blood pressure. God, I hate this for him.

Blake moans and shuffles around on my knot, muttering 'Luca' before his snores start up again.

11

Luca

I can't stop staring at him. Luther is very pretty for an Alpha. Terrifying but also pretty beneath all the gruffness that I've seen from afar. Tattoos cover his entire chest and most of his arms, ones I've never seen before because he's always in a suit when he comes to the diner. I kind of want to lick them.

What the fuck?

I don't know him like Blake or Grayson but his scent wraps around me like the best hug and he's been nothing but amazing since I've been here. He's also different than I would have imagined. Hudson is the only Alpha I've known beyond a friends-with-benefits type of situation and I've been trained to believe that I'm merely property.

Grayson and Luther have never been like that to Blake but I just haven't known anything else. Mom and Dad taught me to behave and to submit once I presented. I was trained to bow my head and give in. Luther doesn't demand my submission, though. Not like Hudson. The biggest difference is that I want to give it to Luther.

So. Fucking. Bad.

He wraps a fluffy towel around me and then takes a second one to set on the bathroom sink. I stare at it as he moves me to stand in front of the mirror and then turns me around so I'm looking at him rather than my reflection. "I have to change the bandage on your neck."

My hands move to where my bite is, my eyes widening at the wound he'll see beneath everything. "Quentin would have—"

"He knows I have medical training and didn't want you to feel uncomfortable. I don't want to hurt you, Luca, but the salve he provided will help it heal faster." He nods to a small bag on the counter that I didn't see before. "It should also take away some of the sting."

I don't want him to see.

I don't want him to understand how badly I've failed at being an Omega.

My eyes water as he waits for me to feel comfortable and I realize he turned me to face him so that I can't see it, so that I don't relive it. Luther hums as he undoes the tape from the bandage, his large hands surprisingly delicate. I bow my head against his chest, forgetting that he's completely naked.

Unfortunately—or maybe fortunately—I now have a perfect view of his thick cock, his knot pulsing at the base. He's hard, the length pressing lightly against my belly through my towel. I try not to focus on it but the only other option is reminding myself that my Alpha is Hudson and not Luther and I don't want to think about that.

So, instead, I imagine Luther's cock on my tongue and wonder what he tastes like. My nostrils flare as the scent of leather and musk thickens around me, mixing with my sweet perfume. "Little Omega, I need you to keep those thoughts to yourself." An embarrassing whine slips through my lips despite the conversation, Luther growling at my response. "It would be disrespectful to your Alpha to fuck you with his bite on your shoulder."

A waft of cold air hits my wound, telling me that Luther has successfully unwrapped it. Something starts to vibrate through Luther's chest, a sound between a growl and a

purr. Whatever it is, is fucking terrifying. I press back, glancing up into his eyes, darkened with anger as he stares at my neck. I move to cover it when Luther snarls before the expression completely changes to one of sorrow.

My hands settle on his chest as he wraps his arms around me, his nose running across the top of my head. His purr is thick and strong, settling my anxiety, Luther hauling me up onto the counter before stepping between my knees. “If I were a lesser man, your Alpha would be in pieces, Luca. Pieces. No Alpha given the honor to have an Omega should treat his bond with such violence.” Luther releases me, glancing down at my terrified expression. He gently pinches my chin, raising it so that I can see the softness returning in his eyes. “I didn’t mean to scare you, Luca, but you are too precious to be treated like this.”

I don’t even know how it happens but his lips are against mine one moment and then gone the next. I lean forward, chasing the powerful sensation but Luther merely shakes his head.

“Know that I want you, little Omega. More than is appropriate but legally, I shouldn’t even be touching you.” I watch as his Adam’s apple bobs up and down in his throat, Luther once again working on my neck and shoulder. He opens a few containers but my attention is on his face and his hands, muscles and veins twisting and turning as he ignores his own desires. I can smell it in his scent and when I touch his stomach, I can feel the way he takes an extra breath to hide what he wants.

No Alpha aside from Grayson has ever wanted me before.

I melt beneath his touch when the salve is applied, instant relief rushing through me. I’ve never been separate from the pain since Hudson started getting mean with it and I’m not sure I’ll ever be able to part with whatever that beautiful drug is.

A few moments later, my neck is rebandaged, Luther grabbing a towel to wrap

around himself. “How are you feeling?” When I say tired, he mentions that we’ll rest first before eating and taking the medication.

He scoops me up in his arms again, moving toward the guest bedroom before I stop him. “Where’s Blake?”

“In his nest.”

“He’s sleeping? He’s okay?”

“Yes, he will be.” Luther offers me a smile, tightening his arms around me. He’s obviously unsure where to put me but I don’t want to be in the guest room. I don’t want to be without their scents and I know it’ll be asking for the world, but I want to be with the men who saved me today. All of them. As if Luther can read my mind, he moves toward the bedroom down the hall. “If I was a better man, I would lay you down in that bed and say goodnight but I’m too selfish now that I have you in my arms, Luca. Trust that I don’t want to let you go but that I might have to.”

Those are the sweetest words that someone has ever said to me.

Luther steps inside and I whimper at the assault of Blake’s perfume in the air. My gorgeous Omega is sprawled across Grayson’s chest, both of them passed out. Blake is snoring as he always used to even though he claims he doesn’t. I’m set down beside them, Luther tilting his head to the side in the cutest way an Alpha can. “Let me grab you some clothes and-”

“This isn’t the first time I’ve been naked next to them, Alpha.” A giggle slips out and then I stare at Luther, horrified. I just admitted to my past relationship with his mates. Luther chuckles as he sheds the towel and climbs in beside me, pushing me to lie down. “I’m sorry. I didn’t-” Fear strangles my tongue as I hold my breath, waiting for the blow that Hudson would no doubt deal out. My face scrunches up and my hands

tighten into fists at my sides. Several seconds pass before I open my eyes, that same gruff look from the bathroom back on Luther's face.

"Your Alpha will die a cruel death, Luca. Knowing that you were loved by my mates brings me joy, little Omega. Watching Blake tell me all about the days you made him happy are memories I replay often. I think there's been a spot for you here much longer than any of us have realized."

I frown, not understanding what he's insinuating.

"If you hadn't been promised to another Alpha, Grayson would have mated you in a heartbeat. He asked once; if I'd ever take on two Omegas. I didn't know what he meant at the time. I do now." My breath catches in my throat as he scoots a little closer, stringing an arm across my stomach. I reach out for purchase, finding Blake's fingers which help to calm me down. Luther drags his lips up my chin and then kisses my ear before finishing his thought. "And my answer is yes, little Omega. I absolutely would take on two Omegas. Rest. We'll eat in a little bit."

Shock runs through me but the purr radiating through the nest lulls me into a security I haven't known for years. Sleep takes me under when Grayson flops onto his side, bringing Blake's back to my arm. I roll onto my side as well, curling around my Omega. I expect Luther to case us in but he merely moves a little closer until I can feel his arm against my back.

I want to complain when I remember how terrible of a situation this is for us. That either Luther or Grayson could end up with a fine or in jail for touching a mated Omega without permission. And still, I need the reassurance as I reach back and find Luther's hand.

When he doesn't reject me, threading his fingers through mine, I hope and pray that tomorrow will never come.

Grayson

I open my eyes to the most beautiful sight, Blake wrapped around me and Luca against him, Luca's lips attached to my Omega's shoulder. The smaller Omega reminds me of a koala but it's the way Luther has an arm over them both, a hand resting on my hip that brings a smile to my face. The mixture of pear and ocean fills my nose as I slowly dislodge my cock from Blake's ass, laughing as he whines in displeasure. The smell of our release blasts through the air, Luther's eyes now trained on the two Omegas between us.

Blake grunts and then flips over before wrapping himself around Luca and then falling back asleep. I should be jealous that Blake didn't reach for me or whine for me to fuck him back to sleep but these two are too precious together. I press a kiss to Blake's forehead and lightly tap Luca's shoulder before crawling out of the nest and scooting to the bathroom for a shower.

Fifteen minutes later, I shove myself into a set of dress pants and grab a shirt to put on after breakfast. I move into the kitchen to see Luther leaning against the counter as the coffee maker brews a fresh batch. His arms are folded across his chest, his beautiful tattoos on display. People rarely see them unless his sleeves are rolled up and even fewer know the meaning of the art etched into his skin.

They tell stories of his accomplishments and his loves and his losses. Stories of his parents, Blake and I, designs that represent his service to the country, and other stories he hasn't yet been ready to share. Despite how much of Luther's past I don't

know, I still love and trust him with my entire being.

Luther watches me as I place my shirt on the edge of the couch and then round the kitchen island to step into his chest before placing a firm kiss on his lips. He hums his appreciation as he steals another, tasting me for several moments, the world falling away from us until it's just us two. Luther has always been my rock and safe place since we started this pack but I've started to realize that sometimes he needs out of his head, the same way I do.

"God, you taste delicious," Luther purrs against my lips. "Blake doing alright? I didn't expect both of them to sleep that long."

"Blake started nesting. His pout is fucking adorable."

He wraps an arm around my back, letting it hang low just above my ass, the other moving upward so that his fingers can move through my hair. He searches my expression and then frowns. "What is it?"

"Quentin sent our results last night. After I finally got Blake to sleep, they came in and it said that he has high blood pressure caused by stress. That if it isn't regulated, he could have additional heart issues down the line." I hate this for Blake but even more for Luther. Luther is our Alpha, the man who has promised to take care of us and he can't protect Blake from this. The only thing we can do is force Blake to take time off from his own idea.

He's not going to like it.

Luther lets out a deep sigh. His silence is usually comforting but today it's unnerving especially since he smells like Luca. He might as well be drenched in that ocean scent even though I know he didn't cross the line we've all been wanting to.

“Talk to me, Luther. Don’t shut me out of whatever plan you’re going to make.”

“Blake will have to slow down and as much as I don’t want to, we’ll have to ask Quentin what kind of stress a child would have on our Omega’s heart. I won’t sacrifice his health for children, regardless of how much we all want a little Blake running around.” Luther places a kiss on my head as the coffee maker dings. He pushes off the counter and pulls down two mugs, facing away from me as he continues. “I’m also going to rip Luca’s Alpha apart. You didn’t see his mate bond.”

“Quentin mentioned it was infected.”

“It’s worse than that. His Alpha has been re-biting him, reclaiming him. He’s been ripping into flesh and leaving Luca like that to heal. Luca is that frail because his Alpha has all but rejected him.” Luther hunches over the counter, the muscles in his back tensing as his scent hardens. He’s pissed off and I am too but again, it’s different for my Alpha.

He hates the lack of control and Luca’s situation is the epitome of chaos.

What I’m about to say isn’t going to help.

“I’m 99% sure that Luca’s Alpha is the one from college. It’s only been a few years so it would make sense.”

Luther pours a healthy serving of coffee into a mug before handing it to me and then pouring his own. “Don’t give me his name, Gray. I’m hanging on by a thread here. You know Luca better than I do but seeing him last night... I don’t have the restraint I do with Blake. Luca is fragile and something inside of me wants to just keep him locked up in that nest so that the world can’t hurt him. At the same time, I want to show him off and tell everyone that he’s mine.”

I chuckle at Luther's confession because it's how I've felt for years. I was just smart enough not to act on it. Blake's obsession has fed into my own and knowing that Luther is feeling the same way tells me that Luca is going to find his way into our home sooner rather than later. "Good to know how you feel, Alpha."

"I almost fucked him, Gray. Almost flipped him over and sunk into his sweet little ass when his scent got all sticky and sweet. He's going to be trouble. Hell, both of them are." Luther takes a large gulp of his coffee before moving to the fridge. He starts pulling out ingredients for breakfast, glancing down the hall toward the nest a few times, and then continuing to work. "The finishing touches on the project have to be completed today. I can't keep Blake here but I'll make sure he eats. I need you to stay here for Luca. He's not going anywhere. I don't care who shows up at the house to retrieve him."

I open my mouth to protest but close it when Luther glares at me. It's not that I don't want to protect Luca but if one of the detectives we know shows up, I'll be hard-pressed to keep Luca from them.

"I'll keep Luca safe but good luck dragging Blake out of the house."

Luther offers me a deviant grin, closing the distance between us. "I have my ways. Now, let's get some food in their bellies before we all have to start our day. I think someone from the station might call but unless we find out who Luca's Alpha is, there won't be any updates."

The police aren't stupid. They'll find out.

"And then," Luther leans down to brush his lips over mine. "We're taking a fucking vacation. I haven't been the best Alpha." One of his hands settles around the back of my neck, the other moving between us as it slowly undoes the button of my dress pants. "Haven't spent as much time as I wanted taking you both apart. Blake's been

on heat suppressants for a while and we've all been working to get this project done. There's been no urgency ." His purr rumbles through his chest, the hand on my neck moving into my hair before gripping and pulling back hard.

A gasp leaves my lips at the same time his hand slips into my pants and wraps around my cock. "Alpha," I breathe, staring into his hooded eyes.

"Yes, love?"

"Are we really doing this in the kitchen?"

"It's my house. Yes."

I snort. "And what if Luca comes walking in here?"

"Then he can watch."

A strangled sound tears from my throat as he strokes me, his lips attacking mine with a fervor that's been absent these past couple of weeks. It's as if Luca's presence has renewed some need for each other and I'm not complaining. I wrap my hands around his biceps, rocking my hips into his hand, letting him control my pleasure.

His tongue slips into my mouth as he dominates the kiss before he abruptly breaks it and jerks my head back farther to start down my neck. Pleasure thrums through me as his lips attach to his bite, the soft scruff of his beard tickling my skin. "Fucking hell, Luther. You're going to make me come in my pants."

"That's the idea, Gray." His chuckle is a deep, delicious sound that mixes with his purr, drawing me under a haze that is impossible to escape. Luther is taking what he wants, laughing against my neck when I shudder through my release, coating his hand and the inside of my pants.

“I really liked these pants.”

“And you have more,” Luther purrs as he pulls away and stares at his hand before moving his fingers to his mouth. He stares at me as he sucks them inside, licking them clean of my release. My cock twitches, nearly ready for another round before I realize why.

“Luca’s about to go into heat, isn’t he? Shit.”

In a parallel universe, this would be a wonderful moment. Here, it could land Luther in jail. Attending to a mated Omega during a heat without their Alpha’s permission is punishable by law. If it’s the Alpha from college, I’m pretty damn sure he’ll rip into Luther without another thought.

“He is and whatever he wants is what we’ll do. I won’t let him suffer, Gray. I can’t do that.”

“Even at the risk of jail time?”

There’s no hesitation. “Yes.”

“Then I’m on board. Let me go shower again because you made me bust in my pants like a horny teenager.”

“You loved it,” Luther grins, his eyes twinkling.

I did. Very much. I hope I get a replay when our Omegas are watching.

Our Omegas.

It’s such a sweet thing to think about.

13

Luca

Blake has me crushed against his chest, his mouth open as he snores. I tap his nose and he flops onto his back before resuming those cute sounds. I find myself running a finger down his cheek and slowly moving south until I'm hovering over his naked cock. It's at half mast, glistening with precum from whatever he's dreaming about. However, it's the mixture of Grayson and Blake's scent that has me staring at the release between Blake's thighs.

Grayson must have slept inside of my Omega, my cheeks heating at the fantasy of Luther's fat cock stuffed in my ass overnight. An embarrassing amount of slick gathers around my hole as my cock hardens, the fantasy a little too real. The worst part is the unfettered moan that slips from my lips, Blake opening his eyes to see me holding my cock and trying my best not to stroke it.

The pain from yesterday is still there but it's minimal compared to where it was. I can barely feel the wounds on my neck and I'm hoping that whatever drugs Luther has will make the rest of the throbbing go away.

Heat blooms in the pit of my belly, horror settling in my chest as I realize that one of my irregular heats must be on the horizon. Most Omegas have them every 2-3 months. Mine are sporadic, last three to seven days, and come around every 2-6 months. My last one was almost six months ago so I'm due for one but this is the worst timing.

Another whine falls from my mouth as the heat becomes almost unbearable and turns into a cramp. I fold over, wrapping my arms around my stomach. Blake immediately is at my side, laying me back down into the nest before cupping my face to see what I need. “You’re having a heat spike, cupcake. Why didn’t you say you were going into heat?”

“Because I didn’t know,” I hiss through clenched teeth. Tears gather in my eyes as I stare up at him. “What is this?”

He frowns, his mussed-up hair and weary expression telling me that he’s not as strong as he puts out. “A heat spike? Luca, you’ve had a heat before, right?”

“Yes. Fuck. Do something. ”

Blake still seems confused. “Cupcake, heat spikes always happen before a heat.”

Not for me. In fact, I usually just start dripping slick down my legs and have to rush home and lock myself in my room. I take as much Benadryl and anything else I can manage to swallow so I don’t remember it before Hudson waltzes in. I’m always sated at the end and none the wiser except for the new bruises and bites. I make the best out of the worst situation.

The cramp worsens and I try to curl up again but Blake keeps me flattened out. “You need a cock, preferably one that has a knot but neither of my Alphas can fuck you. I, on the other hand, don’t have the same legal restrictions.” My eyes widen as he crawls off of me and scampers to the closet before returning with a toy we used too many times in college. I used to use it on Blake before I presented, giving him some relief before we switched and he would use it on me.

Slick gushes between my thighs again as he hurriedly rolls the rubber knot onto his cock to simulate an Alpha’s. It’s not perfect but it’s all we have. My brain is starting

to turn to mush, my Omega chanting for us to be filled. Seconds later, Blake is settling between my thighs, about to push inside my ass when I reach between us to turn it on.

He nearly flops on top of me as the scent of his arousal blooms in the air, the knot ring vibrating between us. Neither of us is going to last but watching Blake lose it is everything. He grips the blankets on either side of my head, snarling as he sinks into my ass in one push. I thrust toward him, needing more friction, crying out that it's not hard enough.

"Cupcake, I'm fucking trying," he grunts between thrusts but the angle isn't right and the heat pulsing through me is uncomfortable.

Blake pulls out and gently rolls me onto my stomach. Then he pulls my ass up in the air and slips right in, my entire body going limp as he hits the right spot. This time when he starts fucking me, relief washes over me, the heat dissipating. He places a gentle hand on the middle of my back, keeping me flat against the nest, his other hand gently holding onto my hair.

Just like he used to.

"Don't be gentle. I don't want gentle," I whine. I want it to hurt. I need it to hurt to remember that I'm a terrible Omega. After all, who has another Omega fuck them through a heat spike when they're already mated? Luther and Grayson have made it clear they want me but will this be an issue? We're not being quiet. There's no doubt they'll walk in here and see what we're doing. Will they give me back?

Blake tightens his grip on my hair, the sounds coming from him reminding me of an Alpha more than an Omega. Fear laces with pleasure as I come, Blake filling my ass seconds later as that knot ring pushes inside me. For a brief moment, it isn't Blake behind me but Hudson and the brush of Blake's lips across my shoulder blade is too

much.

“Stop!” It’s futile to scream. Hudson will just fuck me harder until he hurts. He’ll dig his hands into my stomach and bite my neck again. The fear turns to full-body terror as I scramble away from Blake, hands out in front of me to keep him from coming closer. He looks absolutely lost, shaking as he kneels where I left him. However, I’m not seeing my Omega, my best friend, and my mate.

I’m seeing Hudson. That hulking Alpha that just wants me to pop out babies and submit to him.

In a rush of panic, I dig into my bandage and rip it off, wanting to sever the connection from him. I can’t see where the bite is so I rush into the bathroom, frantically scratching at it to make it go away. When that doesn’t work, I snatch a small blade from the corner of the sink and dig into my skin to remove the bite altogether.

Tears glaze my eyes when I look into the mirror, several bites across my shoulder and neck. I’ll have to dislodge all of them.

You stupid, stupid Omega.

“Luca!”

I ignore my name as I dig into my shoulder again, the blade ripped away from me seconds before I’m tucked into a hard chest. Luther. A wet towel is wrapped around my neck and shoulders, silence meeting my frantic state. “What are you doing, sweetheart?” Luther asks after a little while. I’m shaking from the adrenaline but I’m lucid enough to realize the consequences of my actions.

Blake tried to fuck me through a heat spike and I freaked out the moment he flipped

me over. I left him in there, thinking he hurt me. My heart constricts in my chest as I try to wiggle out of Luther's hold.

"Not letting you go anywhere until you tell me what happened. You can't get rid of a bite unless it's surgically removed, Luca. You'll kill yourself before you ever accomplish that."

"Alpha, please. I... Blake..." I don't expect Luther to let me go but he does and I scramble back to the nest, crying out when Blake is still sitting on his knees. The knot ring is still vibrating, his cock angry and red, straining to come and yet his body rejecting the notion. Grayson is beside him, slowly removing the toy and dragging Blake into his lap but that doesn't soothe him. "Blake?"

He looks up at me, tears streaming down his cheeks. "I hurt you." I've never heard him sound so fucking broken as I move closer. A cold sensation trickles down my shoulder and I can only imagine the mess I'm making but Blake's emotions are more important.

"No. You didn't," I whine. I reach out for Blake's hand and he hesitates before giving it to me. "You flipped me over and I saw him. My Alpha. I should have never..." Blake swallows nervously as I come closer before wrapping my arms around his neck. It takes him several minutes to relax and then he takes me in his arms, both of us settled in Grayson's lap.

Grayson pets my hair, Luther standing at the edge of the nest. "Luca, we need to get that-"

"Just a second. A few more seconds." Blake needs me. He needs to know that it wasn't him. He needs to know that he'll always be one of my safe spaces. Always. I never want to see that look of despair on his face again.

14

Blake

Luther stole Luca from me a few minutes ago and tended to his neck. I haven't been able to move from my nest, concerned for my Omega and his severe reaction to showing me his back. I know that it's because of his abusive Alpha but that doesn't make it any easier to separate Luca's reaction and what I did.

Grayson throws me in the shower and somehow is able to force me into dress pants and a sweater before depositing me at the kitchen table. I don't say anything until Luca resurfaces, dressed in one of Luther's shirts. It swarms his entire body, making me smile as Luca crawls into my lap. I wrap my arms around him as Luca tucks his head into my chest, his legs hanging off the side of the chair.

"I'm sorry I scared you," I whisper, tightening my hold on him.

"It wasn't you."

That just makes me feel worse. I should have fought for him when he presented, yelled into the void, telling everyone that his parents were going to all but sell him to his Alpha. Grayson comes up behind me, patting my shoulder and then kissing Luca's cheek before moving to help Luther with breakfast. The silence that filters in is comfortable, my Alphas glancing at us every so often.

Even when Luther scoots two plates toward us, no one speaks. Luca doesn't move but my heart warms as I pick up a piece of bacon and hold it to his lips. He grins and

takes a small bite before grabbing a piece off the plate and handing it to me. I preen at the gesture, both of us feeding each other off the small plate. Neither of us cares when we start digging into the eggs, gathering small bits of cheesy goodness to offer to each other.

“God, I could watch them all day, Alpha.”

I glance up to see Luther leaning against the far counter, Grayson against him and Luther’s arm around the smaller Alpha’s waist. They look picturesque there, Luther dressed in a full suit and Gray hanging out in low-hanging sweatpants. I frown as my gaze drifts to a clock before moving back to my Alphas. Luther raises an eyebrow, asking me to voice my thoughts. When he raises his coffee mug to his lips, I know that he and Grayson must have spoken.

I already don’t like it.

“Do they do that a lot?” Luca asks, nodding to my Alphas. “They hold each other?”

“Yeah. They look like they stepped out of a magazine, don’t they?”

Luca giggles and nods, handing me another bit of eggs to swallow. His fingers hover in front of my lips and I take my time licking off the excess cheese. I shouldn’t be indulging myself like this, especially when Luca is so close to his heat but I can’t stop. Fortunately, my Alphas have more constraint, Grayson peeling Luca off my lap and carrying him to the couch. Luther stands in front of me as he hands me my coat, waiting for me to push back.

“I’m not going,” I say as I hop off the chair. “Luca needs me.” Even if I feel like shit for scaring him, I can’t leave.

Luther follows me to the sink as I wash my hands and start gathering the dishes to put

in the dishwasher. He doesn't respond to me as I wipe off the table and even grab a container to put the extra eggs in before putting it into the fridge.

"Why aren't you saying anything?"

"You cleaned the kitchen."

"So?" A frustrated growl slips before I huff out a sigh. "Alpha-"

He drags me into his chest, helping me into my coat without giving me room to refuse. "Luca is bringing out your Omega and it's fascinating to watch. Gray will take perfect care of Luca. You have a project to finish and I need to ensure you eat."

"You sound more like a babysitter than my Alpha."

"Sometimes, I feel like one because you can't be trusted to take care of yourself. Not a jab, just an observation. I also love taking care of you." Luther situates my coat until he's satisfied before taking a seat on a bar stool and pulling me between his knees. "However, Quentin uploaded our results yesterday. I wanted to have this conversation with you and Gray but the timing is off. Blake, the stress is messing with your heart."

I blink several times as if that will make me hear his words better. "So, I can't get pregnant?"

"That's not what I'm saying. I'm saying that currently, the stress you're experiencing is too much strain on your body. I know how much you value your work and your product and I'm not taking that away from you. Unfortunately, if we don't scale back somehow, you'll end up in the hospital."

I don't know how to feel. Starlight Falls is everything I've been working on. It's my

life's accomplishment. And Luther is asking me to give it up.

Luther's purr starts up, keeping me from lashing out as he knows I would. "Blake, listen to me. I am asking you not to work as hard. As your Alpha, I want you safe, healthy, and happy. You will still have as much control as you do now but I want you to trust that I have your best interests in mind."

"Like what?" My hands fist at my side. I don't want to get angry but I feel like things are slowly being pulled from me.

"That if I tell you to rest or to eat or to cut a meeting short, that you'll realize it's because I see something you don't. Gray and I see how tired you get, when you start to get bored, when you need something a little more stimulating than board meetings. We know how often you skip meals to meet a deadline or when you wake up in the middle of the night to write down that last idea. That changes. Now."

"Because you want a baby?"

Luther cups my cheeks in his head. "Love, of course I want children with you but that's not why I want you to slow down. I want you to slow down because of you. I need you by my side just like I need the other two and that won't happen if we keep at the current pace."

"So long as I don't have to stay at home. I'm not that kind of Omega."

"And I'm not the kind of Alpha that would ask that of you. So, are we okay moving forward? Will you trust me?"

I take more time than I should. Luther and Grayson are just looking out for me. I've known about the stress for months but didn't want them to think I was working too hard. Knowing that it could keep me from giving them the children they so

desperately want hurts. I don't want to give up on my job but I can do this for them.

"I trust you, Alpha."

"Children or not, I love you, Blake."

I weather a smile but it doesn't feel right on my face. I may not be able to give my Alphas the one thing every Alpha wants from an Omega. Luther doesn't let me go to wallow in my own emotions, though.

"Blake, you are no less of an Omega based on this health report. We still have other tests to do to see if your body can handle children. If that's what you want. Forget your Alphas and you tell me what you want." He keeps my gaze locked on his, his fingers playing with the hair behind my ears. "Tell me, love."

"I want babies."

"Then we'll have babies."

And I know he'll make it happen, whether they're mine or we adopt. It won't matter. They'll be ours. I've had dreams of carrying my own children but I just want a bundle of life to call ours.

Luca.

Inappropriate images of Luca with a pregnant belly waddling through our house settle in my head, my scent sweetening at the thought. I'm not even jealous if he were to bring life into this world because then he could give my Alphas— our Alphas— what I can't.

"And what are we thinking about right now?"

“Luca. Pregnant.” I blurt out.

“And that’s our cue to leave for work.” He ushers me toward the front door, my face heating when I turn to see Luca peeking over the back of the couch. He squeaks out a goodbye, Grayson throwing me a wild smile that tells me he’s thinking the same thing.

Luther didn’t say that I can’t have children but I know it’s unlikely if stress is causing my heart problems. However, if I could and Luca could... then it would be chaos. Two pregnant Omegas running around. Grayson and Luther would be out of their minds.

“Blake, what the fuck are you fantasizing about. I’m seconds away from fucking you in the car,” Luther growls out as he pushes me into the elevator.

“Both of us pregnant.”

I need a fucking filter but watching as Luther reaches down to adjust the growing bulge in his pants has me laughing for the first time since yesterday.

“One step at a time, Blake. Let’s finish this project and discuss what life with Luca looks like. Your enthusiasm is going to get us all in trouble.”

It’s a good thing we can’t get pregnant outside of a heat.

15

Luca

Grayson hasn't moved from his perch on the couch with me firmly tucked into the side since the other two left. Well, except to feed me two pills that have put me in a permanent state of bliss. I can barely feel my body let alone the pain. Something is playing on the TV but he's scrolling through his phone, most likely working. It's almost as if I'm not here and I'd believe that if it wasn't for his hand playing with the hem of Luther's shirt. It's hanging at my knees but every swipe of Grayson's fingers across my skin shoots heat down my spine and straight to my dick.

There's no way Grayson doesn't know what he's doing.

I'm about to address his wandering hands when my phone rings. I frown and look around the living room, pissed when it's sitting on the kitchen counter. It's too comfortable to move and yet that could be Hudson. If I don't answer, things might get worse. Grayson begrudgingly lets me go and the moment I retrieve the device, I wish I had let it ring.

Mom.

"Yes?" I answer timidly, cradling the device to my ear.

"What the fuck is wrong with you? Running away from your own Alpha? Hudson has been sick with worry, wondering if some harm came to you! No texts. No calls. Nothing. You pick the phone up right now and tell him that you're coming home.

Better yet. Stay there. I'll send him your location. You are a disgrace to this family, Luca."

My hand tightens around the device just as Grayson moves in front of me and tucks me into his chest. The sudden panic at my mother's voice disappears and I drink in the warmth of the Alpha's scent. "I'm not going back. He hurts me, Mom."

"He is your mate and your husband. Legally, you are his. I've sent him your location. Don't move."

Grayson slips the device from my hand and turns it off before returning it to the table. Then he pulls me back to the couch, wrapping a blanket around me that smells exactly like Blake. I'm surrounded by all of their scents, Grayson tucking me into his side again. "Your mother doesn't have a legal hold over you and your Alpha can't do anything pending the domestic case the hospital launched. If he shows up at the house, he will be arrested for trespassing."

"You can do that?"

"I can protect my Omega from an abusive Alpha, yes."

"You called me yours. Grayson-"

"Because you are. If I had been a better Alpha, I would have found a way to claim you. I wasn't and we lost you for years but you're back and you're not leaving without a fight. Unless you want to?" Grayson twists toward me before slowly pulling me into his lap to straddle his thighs. His cock thickens against my thigh, the Alpha running his hands up and down my torso before settling on my hips. "Luca, what do you want?"

"Not Hudson." I tense and hold his gaze, waiting for Grayson to make the

connection. Everyone knew of Hudson at college. It wasn't a secret that my parents were working for his family's company so it made sense I would be Hudson's the moment I presented as an Omega. Grayson doesn't let me curl into myself, though. His hands start moving again, up and down my torso, the effect keeping me from falling into a panic.

"The guy from school? He did this to you?"

"I used to like it. Some of it, but he's so mean with it, Gray. I thought... I thought that's what I deserved but you don't treat Blake like that. Neither of you have treated me like that." It's an odd feeling being caressed like this but I want more of it.

"Omegas are precious, gifts to an Alpha. You deserve so much more than Hudson and I can't wait to show you a completely different world than the one you were thrust into." He kisses my forehead before leaning back against the cushions, his hands settling on my waist again. His thighs spread, which spread my legs as well, his cock thickening against mine. Grayson raises an eyebrow, letting me direct this moment.

Neither of us moves for several moments until a bout of slick gathers between my thighs and drenches Grayson's pants. My cheeks heat in embarrassment but Grayson seems to be enjoying my plight, his fingers digging into my waist just enough for me to arch forward and brace myself on his shoulders. I swallow nervously as he rocks his hips up, the roughness of his pants dragging along my bare cock.

I should have accepted Luther's offer for shorts, another bout of slick running down my thighs. My fingers play with his hair settled around his neck as I search Grayson's expression. "What are you doing?" I ask. My question comes out softer than I had planned, heat bleeding through me again. I don't want another heat spike. I'm not ready.

“I can’t fuck you but that doesn’t mean I can’t play and it’s been too fucking long since you coated me in your scent. Tell me it’s okay to keep going or tell me to back off Luca.”

“Pl-ay?”

“Don’t get all shy on me now. I’m well aware of what you and Blake used to get up to. There are many ways to come, sweetheart. Just let me take care of you, hm?” Grayson’s eyes fall to my lips, his breathing picking up as he holds me. I can’t help the way I grind down over his bulge, needing the friction on my cock.

If I really am having heat spikes, playing with Grayson will only help ease me into my heat. Hudson will be furious when I have to return with him but that’s a problem for later.

“Yes. Please.”

He chuckles as he drags me flush with his chest, placing short, sweet kisses on my lips. “God, you’re precious. You always have been but this Omega side of you is perfect. Any hard limits, Luca?”

I just want him to make me come, not think about everything I don’t want but I know better. Grayson is being respectful of my space, asking me what will trigger me and I appreciate that. I just wish I didn’t have any issues. “Don’t turn me away from you.” He nods. “Be firm but not mean.” I chew on my bottom lip, wondering if he knows what that means.

Blake is wonderfully rough. Hudson is mean. I don’t want to come away with bruises but I want to feel the ghost of their touch after we’re done and maybe even the next day. Tears cloud my vision as I try to squirm my way off Grayson’s lap but he doesn’t let me. My breath catches in my throat as my fingers tighten in his hair,

Grayson immediately releasing me. His arms fall to his sides, his head tilted as he watches me.

“Did I hurt you?”

That panic returns and I start panting, unsure of what I want. I want Grayson’s hands but I also don’t want to hurt. It doesn’t help that my body is craving an Alpha regardless of what I feel or what I want. With Hudson, my Omega needed the contact. My slick was present when he was in the room as it is now. A slow whine tears from my throat at the inability to decide until Grayson takes over.

He pulls the discarded blanket around my shoulders and then lays me down on the couch before crawling on top of me, slowly lowering himself until I’m pressed into the cushions. Confusion sweeps over me and then peace, my Omega suddenly calmed with his presence. He’s blocking out the entire world, just the two of us but all three of their scents wrapped around me.

“Luca, I think you don’t like to make decisions. You never did before but I think you hate it even more now. All of the questions make it confusing. Am I right?” I hum my answer. “I can work with that. I’m going to stay right here for a little bit, alright?”

I nod, letting myself bury my nose into his bare chest. “How-”

“Blake gets overwhelmed occasionally until he panics. I haven’t had to do it for a while but this always helps. Comfortable, sweetheart?”

“Mmm.” It’s perfect. I don’t want him to ever move.

16

Grayson

It's nearly lunchtime, Luca curled up beneath Blake's blanket, snoring away. I left to get dressed and Luca climbed off the couch, yanked at my shirt until I took it off, and then returned to his spot before falling asleep. He's making a nest and I fucking love it.

The house is unnaturally quiet, though, and I don't know what to make of the several missed calls on Luca's phone when I turn it back on. His mother has sent several messages but it's the unsaved number that unnerves me, especially the last message.

Come outside, Omega. You can't stay in there forever.

Omega, you're going to get those Alphas in trouble.

Alpha Blake is going to pay for your crimes.

"Fuck." No wonder Quentin said to have Luca change his emergency contact. I grab my phone and quickly dial Luther, knowing that I'll be interrupting but this shit is important. He's also sent a message saying that everything has been taken care of but I don't know what that means. "Luther-"

"I need you to listen to me very carefully, Grayson." Luther saying my entire name is never a good thing. I feel through bond, only catching bits of Blake's uncertainty and desire to be home. There's nothing on Luther's end which means he's steeling his

emotions and I hate it. “Hudson showed up on the premises an hour ago. I tried calling you but someone called the police because he was threatening the lady at the front desk. He has no idea which floor is ours so he was trying to wrangle it out of her.”

The money from Starlight Falls could have afforded us a house but it didn’t fit our dynamic. Instead, we bought a condo that offers a private entrance, one that no one other than the front office has access to.

“Okay? That’s a good thing, though.”

“It would be but Hudson is adamant that we’re keeping his Omega from him. You need to get Luca dressed and meet us at the station. Don’t ask any questions. No, it’s not good but we can’t fight this. Clothes. Both of you. I’m gathering up Blake in just a minute.”

My heart is in my stomach at the pain we’re about to put Luca back into. “Have you told Blake yet?”

“No. I’m sure you’ll feel him when I do.”

I hang up and grab clothes, trying to gather things that are freshly washed and devoid of our scent. As much as I want Luca to find comfort in our scents, I don’t want Hudson to use that as a reason to punish him. I also don’t want him to find Blake’s scent and start obsessing over an Omega that isn’t his.

I give Luca several more seconds before I walk around the couch and crouch in front of him to deliver the horrid news. And just when I thought we were working toward a new beginning.

Blake

“I’m okay. I even ate lunch and drank water, Alpha.” I hold up the empty wrappers from the cafeteria downstairs, trying to show Luther that I’m okay. He said I had one more day before we had to discuss our future and how much effort I put into my job. Luther steps into my office and closes the door, his shoulders falling. “What’s wrong with Luca?” I pop out of my chair and reach for my coat, Luther stopping me from running out into the hallway.

“Blake, Luca and Gray are on the way to the police station. It seems Luca’s Alpha thought it was okay to threaten the receptionist at the apartment complex so someone called the police on him. However, he has a right to his Omega and we have to return Luca.”

“No! Luca is mine. ”

“I know, love. I know. He is ours but the alternative is someone forcefully removing Luca from our home and arresting Grayson. It’s a little backwards but he’ll be okay. We all will.” Luther wraps an arm around my shoulder, holding me until I stop trying to move around him. “Let’s go get our Omega, back, okay?”

“Yes, please.”

Luther definitely breaks a few laws to get to the station and I jump out the moment the car stops moving to rush inside. Luca is sitting a few inches from Hudson,

Grayson standing on the other side by a Beta I vaguely recognize. He reminds me of Grayson but with shorter hair and a reddish tone to his dark skin. His eyes are nearly silver as they meet mine, a mesmerizing look that I can't seem to tear myself away from.

Luther moves in behind me, gesturing me to stand beside Grayson as he reaches out to shake the Beta's hand. "I wish it were on better circumstances, Maceo."

"Same." Maceo nods to the officer behind the desk. "Detective Ward here has been investigating the complaint from the hospital and he has evidence that says Luca's injuries weren't inflicted at home." A laugh bubbles from my lips before I catch it, Grayson grabbing my shoulder and pulling me back into his chest when Hudson growls at me.

My blood runs cold as I stare at a man I haven't seen in a few years, fear racing through me at the look he's pinned me with. I can't imagine living with a man like that let alone being bonded to him. Luca's head is bowed, his hands settled in his lap as he leans away from Hudson, telling me everything I need to know.

"The problem is," Detective Ward begins. "That if the injuries weren't inflicted at home, we need to know where. Hurting an Omega to this extent is punishable by law, carrying a possible sentence of up to five years. I'm all for some rough play but this is excessive. One of the doctors provided the medical records and this is years worth of bruises and cuts."

Maceo leans into Luther, whispering so that only the three of us can hear. "I'd advise you to keep from explaining anything that happened in the last 24 hours aside from what is absolutely necessary."

Oh. He's the family lawyer. Right.

Luther nods and squeezes the Beta's shoulder before addressing Detective Ward. "I agree that Luca's medical file shows that many of these bruises and cuts were inflicted yesterday when he passed out at the diner. I could almost say that they were a result of his clumsy nature if I didn't know Luca personally. I also happen to know that his bite is infected and that doesn't happen outside the home."

I glance between Hudson and the detective, both of them shocked at Luther's declaration but where the detective is actually surprised, Hudson is furious. Hudson grabs the edge of Luca's chair and drags it toward him, the movement stopped when Luther places a foot just past one of the legs. Luca jerks from side to side before leaning toward Luther, clearly uncomfortable with the situation.

The sweet ocean scent I'm used to is a tsunami of emotions, his body trembling until Luther has to step closer to give Luca something to lean against. Detective Ward raises an eyebrow at the movement before chuckling. "If it was that easy, Hudson, I'd tell you to get fucked. Unfortunately, I need the Omega's word that he doesn't want to go back home."

"His name is Luca!" I push out, gripping Grayson's arm around my waist. "Luca."

"I apologize. Yes. Luca, I need you to tell me what happened. It's the difference between releasing you back to Hudson or finding a different avenue for your care."

Detective Ward makes it sound like Luca is a possession. Grayson buries his face in my neck, lightly running his lips over his bite so that I stay calm. Unfortunately, that just makes me more frustrated that I can't do anything other than wait for Luca to speak up. When Luca does nothing other than look at me for reassurance, I try to break Grayson's hold with no luck.

Maceo slowly moves forward and crouches in front of Luca, offering the warmest smile anyone has given Luca aside from the three of us. "Luca, let me tell you

something. Luther and I are very good friends. My job is to help him and his family which extends to you. That's what Luther told me. However, I can't do anything unless you tell me what happened."

"I don't-" Luca hiccups and leans a little farther into Luther. Luther can't touch him, though, not in front of Hudson. It's fucking obvious where Luca wants to be but the stupid laws require our verbal or written consent.

"If Hudson hurt you, I guarantee that you will not return with him."

Hudson laughs, "You can't promise him that shit."

Maceo glares at the Alpha before standing up, towering over him. "I can, actually. Law states that an Omega is allowed to move out of an abusive home if the Omega requests. Which is why I'm asking Luca whether or not-"

"I didn't hurt him! Sure, I was a little rough but he liked it. He always likes it. Has his pretty little ass propped up and waiting for me every time I come home. Although, he stinks like Alpha right now and it's not from me. You should be arresting this entire fucking pack—especially Alpha Blake for taking my Omega."

I freeze, wondering if the detective will come after me for that lie but the attention isn't on me. It's on Luca as Maceo continues to try and coax a response from him. Luca reaches out to Maceo, the Beta staring at the hand before swallowing it with his. "You... I don't want to go home."

"Did your Alpha hurt you?"

"Yes." The answer is so small I nearly miss it. Luca scrambles from his chair when Hudson reaches for him, Luther glaring at the Alpha before protecting my Omega. It's an impossible situation as Luther takes a step back, Hudson hovering a few

inches away. Maceo steps between them, Detective Ward scrambling around the desk to keep anything from happening.

Detective Ward places a hand on Hudson's chest, growling at the Alpha to make him stand down. "A report of abuse has been filed which keeps you from your Omega. Until the investigation is closed, any rights you have to Luca are null and void."

"I can smell his fucking heat coming. Those Alphas have no right to Luca when he-"

Maceo cuts in. "No, they don't. But that's a completely different matter." He turns to face Luther. "Do you want to press charges for Hudson showing up at your building? No? Great. Hudson, I would suggest you find somewhere else to be. Your Omega will be well taken care of until the investigation is over."

Hudson throws up his hands. "If Luther Keller so much as touches my goddamn Omega..."

"He will stay within his rights as an Alpha."

The detective grimaces as Hudson pushes away and stalks out of the station before turning to Maceo. "You make me look like I can't do my job, Mac. Seriously? I know you went to school to be some big bad lawyer after the police academy but shit, man. Also, what the fuck is this situation. Two Omegas in a pack?"

Maceo shrugs. "Not your place to judge. What is your place is to hand Luca's care over to Luther and I'll make sure I go over all of the legal ramifications associated with caring for a mated Omega until the investigation is completed."

I watch as the detective huffs out a sigh and returns to his desk before dragging a folder from the edge of his desk. "Then I have everything I need for now. Maceo graciously filled out all the paperwork you needed and while I would advise getting a

restraining order, it's legally impossible because you do have his Omega. Mac will explain all the ins and outs and Mac? Don't cut corners. Your friend may end up in jail for it."

The detective waves at us to leave his desk and we file out of the station, my first instinct to wrap myself around Luca. He eagerly shuffles into my arms, burying his head in my neck. Maceo raises an eyebrow at the two of us. "I thought you were fucking with me when you told me about them. Let's get them both home and then we can talk. It smells like stressed Omega and with two of them? It's not going to be good."

I refuse to let Luca go, though, Grayson awkwardly herding us into the back of his car. Luther piles into his own, Maceo jumping into the front seat. When the door closes, I finally let myself relax. "You're with me, cupcake."

18

Luther

“You realize that any way you cut it, Hudson is going to have you handcuffed in a week, right?” Maceo clicks his tongue as he stretches out in the front seat. The family lawyer, a few years older than my 30, has been a close friend since Blake started the company. At first, I couldn’t fucking stand Maceo and his take-no-bullshit attitude. The Beta looks like a fucking Alpha and carries himself as one but I grew to love the way he could spit fire just as fierce as anyone else.

He's gotten us out of a legal issue a time or two when Blake’s vision has landed us in hot water. He works miracles with words and printed threats and I have no doubt he’ll find us a way safely out of this clusterfuck as well.

“Wait, what?”

Maceo laughs as he threads his fingers behind his head, acting as if we didn’t just somehow acquire an Omega who we can’t touch. “Luther, don’t fuck with me. That Omega-”

“Luca.”

“Sorry, Luca , is going to go into heat in the next week. Maybe sooner with all the stress, especially with Blake hanging off of him. The problem is that although you are now his legal guardian until the investigation is complete, you still can’t touch him. Helping a mated Omega through their heat is illegal without their Alpha’s

permission. Hudson will never give you that.”

“He’s not going anywhere near my Omega.” A growl rumbles through my chest as I grip the wheel a little tighter.

Maceo bursts out laughing and his apathetic attitude is starting to piss me off until I realize he’s doing it on purpose. If he came at me like an Alpha, I’d rip his head off but submitting wouldn’t work in this situation either. I need someone who’s going to give me the facts and not back down when I yell at him for the reality we’ve found ourselves in.

“Luther, I can guarantee you that he’s not going to touch Luca. Hudson will probably spend a few nights in jail before the week is over. You might not want to press charges but your building probably will. That being said, if you touch your Omega—Luca, not Blake—you’re going to end up in jail. It’s not a matter of if, really. We both know you’re not going to sedate Luca or hole him up in a room just to hear him crying out for help. And because of that, Hudson will be waiting until Luca resurfaces to throw in a claim that you were there during his heat.”

This situation just keeps getting worse but I wasn’t lying to Grayson or Blake. I’m going to do everything in my power to keep Luca with us. “So, what’s the path forward?” Maceo knows exactly what I’m asking at this point. We’re going to take care of Luca but we need to be ready for the repercussions that come with this, including making sure that my assets are sealed away. Someone like Hudson will come for everything that I’m worth, my family, and both of my Omegas.

I won’t have it.

“Just let things happen. It’ll be easy to prove Hudson’s abuse and your connection to Luca. You’re protecting him from a horrid fate and as long as Luca will testify to that, you’re golden. It’s going to take some time but Grayson’s got them, right?”

I don't want to lob everything on Grayson. He's the strongest Alpha I know but he's also the sweetest. Giving him that burden to bear would be the worst thing I could do and yet we don't have many options. I pull into the parking lot, driving past the main lot and into the private one across from our entrance. "Maceo--"

"Just take care of your Omegas. They're going to need everything you have, including Blake. He looked like he was going to pass out. I've never seen him so pale."

I grunt at that as I slip out of the car, waiting for Maceo to follow. "I get it. Look, if they don't want you upstairs--"

Maceo throws his hands up in jest just as Blake appears at my side, all but carrying Luca wrapped around him. Grayson looks strung out and tortured, his cock thick between his thighs. I can't imagine what it's like being stuck in a car with their scents for that long. It's going to be a delicious torture once we get inside.

"He can come," Luca mutters just loud enough for me to hear it. "He smells like honey. Like warm tea. He can come." He snuggles further into Blake's chest and I swallow my chuckle as Blake pushes past us to the elevator. No one says anything but I know Grayson is thinking it.

No Omega talks about someone else's scent unless they're focused on it. I didn't see that coming. I'm also not entirely on board with it.

Grayson

We're barely upstairs before Blake is settled in the middle of the couch with Luca straddling his thighs, his head tucked into the Omega's shoulder. I never realized how fucking gorgeous they were together, nor how much smaller Luca is. Blake is gently rubbing his cheek along the top of Luca's head, the smaller Omega sighing every few seconds until it becomes this rhythmic purr of satisfaction. I wish I was settled right next to them, holding them both but that will have to wait.

"How long have they been like that?" Maceo asks, effectively ruining the moment.

I plop onto one of the bar stools and run my hands through my hair before pulling it into some kind of messy bun that would make a Valley girl jealous. Luther watches me with interest before his attention is stolen by our Omegas who are basically just petting each other. "Since we picked Luca up yesterday."

I shake my head. "Not exactly. They've been like that since before Luca presented. They've been close as fuck for years but this level of attachment is new." I have no doubt that it has more to do with the recent trauma than the fact I somehow missed that these two were bonded, as rare as it is.

Maceo blows out a low whistle, grinning when I glare at him. His laidback attitude grates on my nerves for completely different reasons than why Luther used to despise him. I refuse to admit that Luca's claim earlier was true for more than just him.

The Beta absolutely smells like honey and warm tea and it's more comfortable than I want it to be. Maceo pisses me off because my body wants him and sitting here at half mast, I can't tell if it's because of our Omegas or Maceo or all three. I'm confused.

The worst part is that Maceo is wholly unaffected by the scents in this room or he's just an excellent actor. "An Omega bond isn't easily broken. I'm surprised Blake didn't cry bloody murder when Luca left."

I think back to our college days and realize that in his own way, Blake did pitch a fit. It was just the kind of fit a 21-year-old throws that I thought was more Omega bullshit. It was before I mated Blake and before I was smart enough to fight for what I wanted. Granted, my parents are in no way as influential as Luca's and I wouldn't have been able to change anything.

"There was definitely something," I finally say. "But the bond didn't really snap in place, I guess? I have no idea how any of this works but Blake absolutely had a meltdown this morning and with the way they're holding each other, I don't think they're going to want to be separated any time soon." Which means that wherever Luca makes his nest is where we're going to be spending the most of our time.

Maceo shifts uncomfortably as he gestures to the front door. "We don't need to talk about it. Yes, I heard it and yes, I'm ignoring it. Lone wolf, remember? Just, both of you, don't pick up any calls from Hudson. Don't interact with him, taunt him, meet him. He's going to be a pain in your ass until he gets Luca back. Which he won't. Just be careful. Hudson is a sneaky fuck."

I frown at the Beta, Luther matching my expression. "What are you talking about?"

"Luca isn't the first Omega he's done this too but hopefully it will be the last. Now, take care of them because fuck, it stinks in here." Maceo waves a playful hand in

front of his nose but I can see the way his nostrils are flaring and the way his jaw tightens when Luca's scent thickens slightly. He slips out the front door, leaving me to look over at the chaos we've brought into the house.

Luca is resting his back against Blake's chest, his head tilted as Blake whispers something in his ear. There's a small smile on both of their faces and then a giggle, a pure sound coming from Luca's lips that cements his place here.

Luther steps up behind me and wraps his arms around my waist before pressing a kiss to my cheek. "Are you ready for this?"

"I want to be. Blake already knows what he wants. As for Luca, when he was here this morning, he had a really hard time making decisions. I think we're going to have to push... gently and that's not my forte." I can feel Luther's excitement as he kisses my cheek again before starting to nibble on my ear. That's when I bring up a conversation that neither one of us wants to dwell on. "Blake was really pale at the station, Luther. I'm concerned that this added stress is going to be bad for him and we both know he's going to throw everything into making Luca comfortable."

"One day at a time. It'll be difficult because we've let Blake run his show for so long. We've got a little time to figure it out. I left Bryant in charge for tomorrow so none of us are expected in the office."

I weather a laugh as I lean back against my Alpha. "Bryant, as in the code guy? God, I love the Alpha but he'll either blow up the building or create a masterpiece."

"I'm going to hope he can just keep everything in one piece." Luther kisses me one last time before nodding to the stove. "Let's figure out dinner while they figure out the nest situation."

20

Luca

I moved to the floor a few moments ago, needing more space to set pillows up in a various pattern, weaving Blake's blanket through it so that the pillows won't move. It's almost perfect as I reach for another pillow and find that there aren't any more. My face scrunches up as I meet Blake's eyes in a pout, a pout that quickly turns to worry at the ashen color of my Omega's skin.

There's a slight tremble to his hand when he pulls a pillow from behind him to hand to me.

"What's wrong Blake?"

He doesn't answer me, his eyes unfocusing before he rubs a hand over his chest. A grimace falls from his lips as he shifts to the side before letting out a short gasp. When Blake's scent goes sour, I know that he's not okay.

"Lay down, you stupid—head." I scowl at the awful version of a curse word as I push at him to lie across the couch rather than pushing through whatever this is. Fear spikes in my chest as I wrangle him into a horizontal position, about to yell for his Alphas when they're right there beside me. Grayson places a firm hand on Blake's forehead as Luther drags me a few feet away but I can't look anywhere other than at my Omega's face. "What's wrong with him?" The first of many tears slip down my cheek, Luther's purr keeping me from having an all-out panic attack.

Blake weakly tries to push Grayson away, mumbling something about being fine but his limbs look heavy as they flop back onto the couch.

“Stop moving, babe. Fuck, just stop moving.”

Luther sits on the floor and pulls me into his lap, cradling me against his chest so that I no longer have a perfect view of Blake. “He has some heart problems and stress doesn’t help. Too much stress and he could pass out.”

“But he’s an Omega! Everything is stressful!” I struggle against Luther’s confinement but he doesn’t budge. For a moment, I think about biting into his arm before Luther growls at me, my body stilling.

“I need you to take a deep breath and calm down, little Omega. You two are bonded in a way we don’t understand but I know that he can feel your anxiety. Your panic. Your desperate need to make everything okay.”

“Fuck. Sorry.” I take several deep breaths and curl into his chest, allowing Luther’s scent to calm me further. “How are you two holding it together so well?”

Luther sighs, pulling me back with him as I twist to meet his gaze. “I’m just better at hiding it than you are, sweetheart. Blake has been the center of this pack for a long time and it hurts to see him hurt. Hurts to see him long for someone he couldn’t have. Hurts to see him not be able to do all the things he wants to do. It hurts to know that even now that he has you, too much and he still won’t be able to enjoy it.” I see past the Alpha’s mask for the first time. There’s worry and a tinge of fear lurking in his expression. Uncertainty and wavering confidence to keep his pack safe.

To keep me safe.

I don’t know why I do it but I lean into his chest and press a kiss at the edge of his

collarbone, adding a little bit of my scent to his skin. His hands dig into my waist before he separates me from him. “Thank you, Luca.” He presses his forehead to mine, a trusting gesture from an Alpha while also blocking out Blake and Grayson on the other side of the couch. It’s just him and me in this little world for several seconds before he releases me and I look over at my Omega.

He's sitting up again, a little more color in his face but his breathing is a bit erratic, his eyes darting around the room as if he’s searching for something. Grayson disappears and then returns with a small fan and Blake’s glasses before moving my Omega onto the floor and into my ring of pillows. He looks perfect sitting there, even better when he puts on his glasses and shoots me the dorky smile I remember from school.

I eagerly crawl over to him and wedge myself into his side, both Alphas laughing at me.

“What do you want for dinner, loves?”

I can feel Blake start to answer before he clamps his mouth shut and looks at me. I’m still worried for him but don’t want to make a big deal out of it. It takes me several moments to realize that everyone is waiting for me to decide.

I don’t like that.

Hudson would have never asked. He never fed me either. There was a dinner function he was invited to and dragged me along for but told me to stay by his side. When he finally did make a plate and shove it in my hands, it was full of things I didn’t even know the name of. I waited until we got home to gorge on chips and warm soda.

What do I want to eat?

There are too many choices and one of them could be wrong. If Luther doesn't like something I choose, he could get angry. Or if Blake doesn't like it, then-

"Luca, look at me, sweetie." Grayson is crouched in front of us, his hands cupping my cheeks as he brings me out of my head. "There's those beautiful eyes. I'm assuming you want to stay in the living room, don't you?" I nod. "Sounds like a plan. How's pizza for dinner? Just like at college. Toppings still the same?"

I settle, feeling less frazzled when I'm only given the easy choices. "Pepperoni, extra cheese."

"I can do that." He ruffles a hand through my hair before leaning forward to place a kiss to the bridge of my nose and then doing the same to Blake. We both preen under the attention and then I return to fluffing up the pillows and making more room before tugging Luther inside the perimeter. He's smiling down at me and I can feel how proud he is, not that I understand why.

There's still something missing, though.

Grayson and Blake's scents are neatly woven into the pillows. Luther. I frown and stare at the Alpha, confused about how I'm supposed to add his scent into the space. He's already sitting here but it's not enough. I chew on my bottom lip, trying to focus but come up short on ideas. It isn't until Luther crosses his arms and pulls at the hem of his shirt and tugs it over his head. He hands it to me and I just stare at the cloth, wondering why Luther would do that.

"Luca, you're building a nest. You want all of us in it. Blake does the same thing."

"I'm not building... oh." I take Luther's shirt and hold it close to my chest, my eyes watering. Luther takes it to mean a bad thing so I shake my head. "I've never built one. There's no need for one when Hudson would just bend me over anywhere."

“Luca, Omega’s build nests because they feel safe, because they want a space of their own that’s undisturbed. It’s not just for fucking.”

My fingers dig into the cloth as his words hit me hard. I feel safe. Luther, Grayson, and Blake made me feel safe enough to build my first nest. The added scent of warm tea and honey lingering in the room just enhances the moment.

I twist around to tell Blake and his arms are open for me to crawl back into. “I did it. I built a nest.”

“You did, cupcake. I’m so proud of you.”

He looks almost as lively as he did yesterday, although he hasn’t moved from where I stuffed him into my nest. However, his approval is everything and the kiss he gives me finishes my Omega’s need to create this space.

When Grayson comes back from the kitchen, it’ll be perfect.

21

Blake

My arms feel like dead weights and even though I'm ecstatic seeing Luca vibrate in his nest, Luther's shirt clutched in his hands, I can't move. I don't even know what happened. This morning, I felt a little off but it wasn't anything to worry about. By the time we were at the station, I was having a little trouble breathing.

And now?

It feels like I've been drugged.

While Luther had Luca, Grayson told me just how much more serious this entire situation is. That it isn't just about high-stress situations but about how my Omega biology handles them. An Alpha or Beta would just remove themselves from the situation or push through. An Omega isn't so lucky. They want to please everyone around them and they want to be loved, cherished, fawned over.

Which means that when I'm met with a high-stress situation, I tend to push through rather than step back.

One of many reasons why I don't ever tell my Alphas that I feel a little bit off.

I don't want to fail them.

Strong arms band around my waist and drag me into a lap, Luther nuzzling my cheek

before dipping to my neck. Luca smiles wide at us before weaving Luther's shirt into the nest and running off to help Grayson, no doubt to drag him back over here faster.

"How are you feeling, love? No lies this time."

"Tired."

"Why didn't you say anything? Blake, I won't think of you any differently if you need to step back. It's still your company, your baby but you can't keep pushing through. Your body can't take it. I've watched you pass out more times than I can handle and it has to stop. You're taking the rest of the week off."

"What?" I try to sit up when Luther growls at me to stay put. "There's a project and--"

"And I can't trust you to tell me when it's too much. You'll work from here but the moment Grayson or I tell you to pack it up, you'll listen. Quentin mentioned that feeling faint is one of the symptoms and that if it happens too often, we'll need to go back for a few more tests." Luther kisses just below my scent gland and I sigh, fighting the relaxation that comes from his touch.

I don't know why I need to prove to my own fucking Alphas that I'm enough, that I'm okay. And then I realize I'm not trying to prove anything to them. I'm trying to prove it to Luca.

Soft giggles escape from the kitchen, Grayson's voice carrying over as he playfully yells at Luca to stop stealing pepperonis. I can only imagine Luca flitting around like a damn bird, swiping ingredients and stuffing them into his mouth like he did in college. Luca was always a nightmare to cook with. Either he was stealing food or he was yelling at everyone to get out of his kitchen so he could cook.

I hope I see many more days like that.

“What are you thinking about, Blake?” Luther shuffles me around until my back is against his chest, his thighs on either side of mine. He bows his head a little further to kiss the bite on my shoulder, my body finally giving in. His purr starts up as his arms wrap around my stomach, Luther patiently waiting for me to answer.

“I wanted to be Luca’s safe place. The one he could run to but I can’t even manage myself. It hurts to know that I’m not enough.” I’ve always known that Luca would need my Alphas and that has never bothered me. But to know that the bond between Luca and I could very well contribute to my heart problems pisses me off.

“Blake, you are Luca’s safe place but that doesn’t mean you have to be invincible. You’re allowed to break, to fall apart, to have bad days. Luca built his very first nest because he found you safe. That safety doesn’t come with requirements to be perfect. Hell, I’m not perfect and neither is Grayson.” His hands start to move, one of them slipping under my shirt and splaying across my belly, the other moving higher to settle around the front of my neck. Held like this, I’m completely Luther’s. “For the first time since we met, I’m going to ask something of you. It’s going to be difficult but I want you to try.”

“Yes?”

“Be our Omega. Whine for what you need. Throw temper tantrums when the food isn’t right or when we mess up the pillows. Give us those dirty looks when Luca doesn’t know how to tell us something isn’t right. Let out the part of you that you’ve denied for so long.”

“I don’t know how to do that. I also don’t want to be that. Are you asking me to come off the heat suppressants?”

“Blake, no. You told me how your heats make you feel and I would never subject you to that. However, I’m asking you to enjoy being an Omega. You’ll still own a

company and Luca will still be here but I want you to relax, to stop fighting your biology.”

“I’m not fighting-”

Luther chuckles as he pushes me to my feet and then directs me to my nest. I’m about to ask what he’s doing when he merely walks in and pulls a shirt from where I put it. I stare at the gaping hole in my nest before glaring at my Alpha. He continues, removing items until my breathing picks up and my hands fist at my sides.

“Just say it, Blake. What do you need?”

“Nothing. Why are you moving everything?”

“Tell me what’s wrong first.”

“You’re... my nest. Why would you destroy it?” The heaviness of what Luther is doing finally sinks in. I used to think I didn’t fucking care about my nest, that it just needed to be fluffy and full of my Alpha’s scents. That’s not the case at all. I just avoided every Omega instinct so I could push through my career without the extra burdens.

Luther hands me a pillow and I cling to it, unsure of how to move forward. I told my Alphas that I didn’t care about things and most of them truly don’t bother me but there’s so much that does. Messing up my nest doesn’t sit right with me. Something tells me to fix it immediately, to fill in that gaping hole. But it’s the other things I’ve never voiced, that I’ve told myself I didn’t need that are suddenly present.

Moments when Luther or Grayson would immediately shower after sex, rinsing off my scent and smelling like whatever body wash they used.

Days when they brought me food but didn't stay to eat with me.

Times when I successfully completed a project or wrapped up an upgrade and Luther didn't tell me how proud he was of me.

They're all stupid as fuck thoughts and in my position, it's hard to believe that I'm not being selfish if I were to ask for those things. Luther remains silent, letting me think through everything and come to terms with my own designation. He wants me to embrace who I am, what I am but I've been denying that side of myself for so long.

My attention flits between Luther and my nest as I let my Omega take over and tell me what I need. I reach down to swap out the pillow with a few pieces of clothing woven into the outer perimeter, my nest falling apart as I do. My heart constricts at the destruction but there's a reason. I return to the living and step up to the edge of Luca's nest, wondering where I fit in.

Grayson shows up with a cookie sheet of square pizza slices, Luca bounding in behind him with beer and Diet Coke. I'm still standing there when Luca tugs me inside of his nest. "You brought reinforcements," Luca giggles. His eyes sparkle for the first time in a while and I almost forget the circumstances for why he's here. He presses his lips to mine in a sweet kiss before I kneel in the middle and start handing Luca shirts and pants to add to the space.

This time when I look up at Luther, he's smiling, watching the both of us. I'm proud of you, he mouths to me. My cheeks warm. I love you, Alpha, I mouth right back.

Because I do.

Despite the shitty circumstances, I'm going to give in to my Omega instincts. The ones I've told myself are bullshit. If my Alpha wants me to lean, I'm going to try.

Grayson

It's fucking hilarious to watch two Omegas figure out how to make a nest together. They're riding their instincts high, wordlessly gesturing back and forth to figure out the best place to weave in shirts and pants that I've been looking for. I'll make a note to order another pair because every time I turn around, Blake has stolen it into his nest. I can only imagine what's going to happen when Luca makes a permanent one.

I'll have to lock up my socks.

I take up a seat in the corner, glancing over at Luther who has settled at the other side. The world is still weighing on his shoulders but he's happier than he has been in a while. I suspect it has to do with Luca's arrival and that he finally knocked some sense into Blake's head. Blake looks a bit livelier but I know that it won't stick. He's as stubborn as a mule and with Hudson still lurking around, there's no doubt in my mind that we're going to stumble into a situation filled with more stress than Blake can handle.

I swipe a piece of pizza and take a healthy bite. Blake approaches and promptly steals the pizza from my hands before pointing to my shirt. It's been a while since Blake has let his wordless desires become known. When Omegas are overwhelmed or singularly focused on something, they tend to point while grunting, whining, or throwing little temper tantrums. It's fucking adorable to watch Blake get angry at me for not giving him my shirt fast enough.

It's even funnier when Luca stomps over and snatches the shirt from me after I take it off. He glares at both of us before heading to the far edge and stuffing it in a small pocket of space. I raise an eyebrow as I'm about to address it when Blake plops into my lap and stuffs the rest of my slice into his face. He reminds me of a chipmunk as he begins to chew, grinning at his accomplishment. Luca is just as happy as he grabs two slices and snuggles up to Luther.

Luca hands Luther one piece, the cheese starting to slide. His giggles peel into his nest as Luther steals it and takes a bite. Seconds later, Luther is feeding Luca, bite by bite, the Omega squirming with excitement at being fed. He's being cherished and nourished and catered to. It's fucking perfect.

I grab one of the beers and pop open the cap, content to watch my mates relax for the first time in a while. Luca is preening beneath Luther's attention, grinning with every bite. He looks to Luther for his approval, blushing when our Alpha tells him how good of an Omega he is. It makes me wonder how often we've neglected Blake or if Blake even wants that kind of attention.

He's never asked for it and we never gave it to him. PDA was never his thing and even though being told he was doing a good job made him smile, I'm not sure we were doing him justice.

I twist Blake just a little, the chipmunk still chewing through the pizza he stuffed in his mouth. He avoids my gaze but I can feel the tendril of uncertainty running through the bond. "Blake, do you want those same things? You never wanted them before." His cheeks turn a beautiful shade of pink and I hold him a little closer. "Babe, do you want us to dote on you like that? To feed you? To tell you how good of an Omega you are?"

"No." His body freezes but his scent betrays him. It sweetens to a thick syrup, his arousal so strong that I can taste it on my tongue. My poor Omega has been holding

himself back, hasn't he? We'll have to change that and when I look up to see Luther and Luca staring at us, waiting for me to act, I know that I'll have two very eager men to help with that.

I drop my hand to Blake's thigh before moving to cup his cock in my hand. He hisses, the sound muffled by cheesy bread and pepperoni. "Keep chewing, babe." He squirms in my hand as I start to stroke him, Blake's breathing becoming labored as he holds onto my arm wrapped around his stomach. His hips move to meet my palm, his scent strengthening until I feel slick leaking into my sweatpants.

"Fuckkkkkk," Blake groans as he sags against me and I can't help myself as I slip my hand into his pants to grip him. His cock is warm beneath my touch, throbbing for release, and slick with pre cum.

"You are a good Omega, Blake. See the way your Alpha and your Omega are looking at you, wanting you, needing you?" I hold back a chuckle at Luca's full-blown pupils, his pants tented. Pizza sauce lingers on his lips as he leans forward, watching Blake take his pleasure. Luther's nostrils are flared, his eyes hooded as he takes us in and I couldn't feel more proud that I'm giving our Omega what he needs.

I continue my pace, picking up only slightly. His body constricts and writhes under my attention as I continue to tell him how perfect he is, how he's exactly who we want. He told us years ago that he didn't care about this, that it got in the way of his work. I'm seeing now that the world around him told him he couldn't be an Omega and a business owner. That's all going to change.

Another gush of slick coats my pants, my cock rock hard as it brushes against the seam of Blake's ass. I'm going to embarrass myself in a minute with the way Blake is rocking against me. His head falls back against my shoulder and I watch as he finally gives into his Omega, the most beautiful whine falling from his lips and activating my need to give him what he's craving. My purr rumbles through my chest and I dip

my lips to my bite, silently pushing him over the edge.

Luther's purr is even louder than mine, the satisfaction on his face causing me to lose control and pump my hips upward to meet Blake's ass. Luca is on all fours, crawling toward Blake, completely lost in the moment.

"Come for me, Omega," Luther bellows, his voice reverberating through the living room. "Come for us."

The pleased scream that tears from Blake's mouth is everything, his cum coating my hand and his pants as I find my own release. My knot throbs and thickens, yearning to be inside of my mate as Blake sags against me.

It isn't even two seconds later that Luca is dragging my hand from Blake's pants and licking the cum off my fingers. He's paying no attention to the three of us or the amusement on Blake's face.

"How are you doing, babe?" I ask, checking in. I nuzzle against his cheek, Blake letting out a little happy sigh. It's a wholly Omega sound, one that Luca responds to with a purr of his own until it's their soft rhythmic harmony filling the nest.

It's fucking perfect.

23

Luca

I woke up to kisses and cuddles with Blake, my Omega letting me pet his face while I sucked on his bottom lip until Luther rudely ripped me away and deposited me in the bathroom. He threw me over his shoulder and carried me like a caveman before I could even register the loss of Blake's warmth.

"Wait—why—"

Luther chuckles as he presses a kiss to my forehead. "There's a small emergency at the office which is why we need showers."

"I thought Blake wasn't going to—"

"He's not but confining him to the house won't make it any better. I thought we might like to go somewhere afterward."

I glare at him and then try to peek around him to get a glimpse of Blake. My poor Omega is groaning about not wanting to get up, Grayson dragging him past us to the bathroom down the hall. My nose wrinkles at the idea of using the soaps to wash off our scent and Luther steps forward to gently pinch my chin. "Sweetheart, there's pear-scented body wash in the corner."

"Really?" It's not perfect but smelling like Blake is the next best thing to having him right beside me.

“Mmhmm. Make sure to clean your neck, alright? I don’t want it getting worse. Your pills are on the counter if you need them.” His hand moves to cup my cheek and I nuzzle into it, loving how large his hands are. I turn my face just enough to press my nose into his palm, drinking in his scent for several seconds before realizing how fucking weird this is.

“Sorry.”

“Don’t apologize. Go take your shower. I’ll have breakfast ready and then we’ll go meet the other two.”

I can feel his uncertainty at letting Grayson and Blake go alone but I also understand why he’s dragging me along as well. Luther really does want to protect his family and I’ve become part of that. Knowing that I’ll get to see where all the magic happens, I rush to take my shower, nearly slipping on the heated tile in the process.

Fifteen minutes later, I’m doused in Blake’s body wash scent, my neck is rebandaged after several tries, and I’ve slipped into a pair of Blake’s clothes left for me on the sink. They’re a little too long but we haven’t had time for shopping and I’m not going back to Hudson’s for my stuff. It dawns on me that I never responded to Shelly about my shifts, the horror that I’ve probably been fired settling in my chest.

Unfortunately, that’s not the only issue right now.

Heat bleeds through me and it feels like someone punched me in the gut hard enough to bend me over. I grip the sink, hissing through a cramp as slick gathers around my hole and coats my boxers. My entire body trembles with another wave, more slick pooling between my legs until I crumble to the floor, holding my stomach from the pain. This heat spike is so much worse than the others and I can’t do anything other than curl up into a ball and hope it stops.

I scrunch my eyes shut as I pray for relief, sighing when the wave passes. It only comes back harder, a scream ripping from my throat. The bathroom door bursts open, Luther standing over me and surveying the situation. I don't need to say anything, his arms already sliding beneath me and transporting me back to my nest. The barrage of scents is everything I need as I start scratching at his clothes, whining for relief.

The last time this happened, I couldn't get enough of Hudson and even though I know he's not here, I can't stop thinking that my neediness will draw him into the first nest I ever made. One moment it's Luther hovering over me, asking me what I need and the next it's Hudson snarling at me and promising me that he's going to put a child in me.

"No! Don't touch me! Please. I'll just..." Another whine slips out as I scramble away from Luther, holing up in the corner of my nest. He's resting on his knees, nostrils flared, and pupils blown out but he's not coming at me. In fact, he hasn't moved since I screamed at him and he still isn't moving as tears cloud my vision and fall down my cheeks. Another wave hits me and I claw at my stomach, slick continuing to pool between my legs.

I thought my first heat with the Kellers would be a memorable experience but the sharp pain in my stomach and the desire running through the bond, Hudson's need to get to me is ruining everything.

"Sweetheart. Look at me." I can't do that. Even if his beautiful eyes are staring at me full of concern and love, I'll only see Hudson because I can feel Hudson. This time when Luther speaks, he's using the full force of his Alpha and it's not as harsh as I thought it would be. "Look at me." My head snaps up to his and he moves a little closer. "Take a deep breath. There you go. Another. One more."

My chest rises and falls as he closes the distance between us until he's kneeling right in front of me. "Please don't hurt me," I whisper as my body yearns for his touch.

Hudson is tugging at the bond, my Omega wanting to follow it to get relief but I know that I'll end up with more bruises and bites. I can't go back there.

"I would never dream of it. I'm going to make you feel better, okay?" He leans forward to drag me into his lap so that I'm straddling his thighs. I cling to his shirt, whimpering as I begin swiveling my hips to get better friction. His cock is thick and hard against my ass, nearly the right amount of pressure to make me come. I can't even stop so I bury my head into his chest, riding the friction until my entire body shakes with the orgasm. "Such a good Omega. Let me take care of you, sweetheart." His voice has softened again but I can barely breathe through the absolute need for an Alpha to knot me.

"Please. "

"Of course. I'm going to lay you down. There you go. Keep staring at me, little Omega. Don't take your eyes off of me." His fingers are gentle as they undo the buttons on my shirt and then push the sleeves off my arms. He leans down to kiss my lips, murmuring that I'm his precious Omega as he undoes my pants and shoves them down my legs. Then he removes himself from me and sits back against the edge of the couch.

I'm about to protest when he shoves open his dress pants, my eyes widening at the peek of his knot pushing through the opening. When he unearths it, a bead of precum coating the tip, I can't help myself as I crawl over and suck it into my mouth.

I barely swallow half of it as I lose myself to need, the taste of this Alpha filling my mouth. A moan slips from me, vibrating around his cock as I suck and lick like my life depends on it. Luther sifts a hand into my hair, chuckling as I gorge myself on his scent and his taste. "As much as I'd like to spill down your throat, little Omega, you need a knot. Those cramps are only going to get worse."

I meet his gaze, surprised to see his hooded eyes and the way his jaw keeps tensing. His nostrils flare as my scent blooms, more slick pooling between my legs. My heats have never been this fucking messy and I'm not sure I'm on board. Slowly, Luther drags me off his cock and then up to his lips, devouring my mouth and tasting himself on my tongue.

He helps me onto his lap, his cock sliding between my thighs, the obscene amount of slick causing me to shudder. "You're alright, Luca. You're with me." His lips move to the bridge of my nose and then my forehead as he lifts me up and slowly helps me onto his cock. I brace myself for the way he fills me—the girth so much wider than Hudson's.

It's just on the edge of too much, my ass sucking him in until I'm sure I can't take anymore.

"Alpha—"

"You can take it, little Omega. I know you can. Just like that. You're made for me, see? And if you come again, I'll give you my knot." My face scrunches up in confusion as he pumps up into my ass, my entire world spinning with pleasure. I cling to his shirt, the heavy scent of pheromones swirling around us. Some part of me believed Luther was only tolerating me for Blake and Grayson.

I don't believe that at all anymore.

Tendrils of anger flow through the bond with Hudson but I block it out as Luther takes care of me, sliding me up and down on his cock, using me for both our pleasure. I can barely think about anything else than his knot or the way his length drags inside of me, hitting just the right spot. My head falls backward as he continues his assault on my ass, my balls drawing up with the need to come again.

My cock finds friction against Luther's stomach and I cry out seconds before I release all over his expensive shirt. Luther doesn't stop though, picking up his pace as he moves me to rest on my back. Then he starts hammering into me, one hand beneath my thigh, the other lovingly wrapped around my shoulder. I'm curled into him as he fucks into me, his purr turning into a claiming growl that has the cabinets in the kitchen vibrating.

And then I feel it—that muscle expanding inside of me, plugging my ass, and Luther filling me up with his release. I cling to him as I come again, Luther still pumping into my ass until his knot is so swollen, he's just rocking against me.

Tears prick the edge of my eyes, Luther moving once more so that I'm sprawled across his chest, his knot hitting a completely different part inside of me. His hands settle on my waist before gently moving up and down my side, lulling me into a peaceful haze I didn't know was possible. "Is it always like this?" I mumble, feeling like I've been drugged but in the best of ways.

"It can be soothing, yes. It should be. How are you feeling?"

"No longer like a sex-crazed fiend." I sigh as I relax further against his chest, refusing to acknowledge that I've messed up his shirt. "You're way bigger than Hudson." My face drains of color and I try to pull away, whining when I remember I'm stuck on Luther's knot so I bury myself into his chest instead.

I'm waiting for the angry reaction, the yelling, the hitting, or Luther flipping me back over to tell me that he now owns me. I'm not expecting the laugh that rumbles through his chest, Luther gently wrapping his arms around my back. "Sweetheart, I'm going to take that as a compliment."

"Fuck, it is. I promise."

“Mmm.” He curls up just enough that I prop myself up to see what he’s doing, Luther’s lips attached to mine in the next second. He tastes warm and spicy and like everything I’ve been missing. “You’re going to be addicting Luca Desai.”

He used my parents’ last name. I stare at the man who’s vowed to protect me at all costs, realizing that he already sees me as part of his pack rather than Hudson’s property. The heat from before has dissipated but my body wants more, a little whine falling from my lips that has Luther gently gripping my waist again.

“I think Blake and Gray will understand if we’re a little late,” Luther mumbles against my lips before his hips start to move again.

24

Blake

I cradle the phone against my ear as Grayson leaves the car running to grab my prescription from the pharmacy. “Seriously, Doc?”

“Unfortunately, yes, Blake.” Quentin is the only doctor I know that speaks to me like a regular human being. It isn’t about Alpha, Beta, Omega with him and he’ll call me just as fast as he will my Alphas regarding anything about my health. “You have to take it easy or your heart could give out. I have absolutely no idea what it would take to get to that point but high-stress situations will only make it worse.”

“That’s bullshit, Doc, and you know it.”

“I do know it. I know that life has dealt you an unfair hand by giving you such an intelligent brain and not giving you the strength to pursue everything you need in life. The silver lining is that your Alphas are respectable men who won’t just lock you up at home.”

I sag in my seat, hating that everything has changed in just a few days. I went from discussing the idea of having children with my Alphas to learning that too much stress could make my heart fail. Luca’s arrival couldn’t have come at a better time, the sunshine he brings to our pack needed at a time like this. “So, just... don’t stress?”

Quentin bursts out laughing on the other end. “Blake, we both know you attract stress

like the plague. You're hardwired to find the most difficult situations and stick yourself into them. I'm asking you to think about more than just yourself for a minute. You have two wonderful Alphas and an Omega that's going to need you. You might think you can handle whatever life throws at you but your body can't and watching you fall apart over and over again is going to hurt your mates. Just be careful, okay? The blockers should help reduce a lot of the foreign scents and make it easier to function in public settings."

"Yeah, okay."

I hang up after promising to dwell on my new reality as Grayson slides back into the driver's seat and hands me a small bottle of cream. I stare at it for several seconds before opening it and scooping a small amount to cover my scent gland. Instant relief pours through me as I can only smell the scents saturated into this car. My nose wrinkles at the loss of Luca's scent but I know where to get more.

It's the lack of all the foreign scents I'm amazed at. All the lingering smells from when friends would sit in this car or those that touched the door handles or the Alpha that shook Grayson's hand in the pharmacy. All gone. I didn't even notice how hard my body was working to dismiss those scents and now I can breathe.

"Better?" Grayson asks as I twist to look at him, no doubt with a stupid doped look on my face. He leans over to kiss me, lingering before he pulls back. "We'll get all this figured out. I'm going to run upstairs real quick and deal with whatever this mess is. It shouldn't take long and then we'll meet up with Luther and Grayson, okay?"

Absolute pleasure bleeds through the bond and my connection with Luca hits me all at once—scared, in pain, satiated. And then I feel an emotion that tells me all this is going to work out—in love. "I think Luther just fucked the ever-living daylights out of Luca," I say, grinning. I've been on the fence, just as my Alphas have as we try to circumvent this really tricky situation. However, it's good to know that they're both

on board.

Grayson chuckles, the same stupid grin on his face. “Yeah, he did.”

That Luca isn’t just mine, but also theirs.

The drive to the company is silent but comfortable, Grayson doling out several more kisses before he heads inside. I’m a horny mess feeling Luther’s arousal and Luca’s but I can’t really whip out my dick here in the parking lot. That and the fact that the moment I touch my dick, my ass will start leaking slick and we can’t have that.

Not in this beautiful car.

I shift in my seat and spread my thighs, resisting the urge to cup my cock in my hand and give it a firm stroke. Needing something to distract myself, I open the glove compartment and start fiddling with old receipts. Each one brings up a distant memory that I’ve all but forgotten from ice cream to movie nights to weird restaurants that Luther wanted us to try.

For the first part of our relationship, we tried to be that traditional pack that everyone wrote about in the papers. After all, I started a damn company. I tried to play the submissive but brilliant Omega, Luther the protective and dominant Alpha, and Grayson, the sweet Alpha who ensured that our pack was taken care of. None of that worked, though. For one thing, I’ve never been submissive. Ever.

Even when Luca was a Beta and he fucked me to give me relief, I was directing the entire interaction. I should have known then that Luca was an Omega. Luther is protective and dominant but he’s not fierce or rough. He’ll raise his voice if he needs to but he prefers to observe, to let me lead and support me. Luther deals with all the unruly Alphas and Betas that don’t believe I can hold my own but doesn’t take over my process.

And Grayson, as sweet as he is, is just as eccentric as I am. He's strong and fierce but also submissive to our Alpha in a way that most of society would disapprove of. I've never faulted him for it and I love the way he gives in so easily when Luther is around. Watching them together is fucking beautiful and I make it a point to be around every time Grayson falls into Luther's arms.

It isn't often but it's a fantasy I yearn for over and over again.

Another receipt catches my eye that I don't recognize before I check the date. Two years ago. The receipt is for an ungodly amount of Italian food that I remember had been spread out in my nest, my Alphas taking turns feeding me until I was too stuffed to move.

It's what happened directly before the Italian food was ordered though. The receipt is dated a day after one of my last heats where I finally had the conversation with my Alphas that I didn't want to be an Omega anymore. Concerned, they wrapped me up in my blankets and held me close, waiting for me to further explain what I meant.

"I can't do this anymore."

My Alphas tense against me and I curse myself for how that came out. Grayson runs his nose along my cheek, pulling a sigh from me as I relax into his hold. Luther is sitting in front of us, my feet in his lap as he slowly massages the bridge. "You're going to have to explain that, Blake. There's a lot of things I'm thinking that you can't do and I'm hoping it's none of them."

My eyes widen as I furiously shake my head. "I'm not breaking up with you! I... I don't want to go into heat anymore. I've been researching pills and other remedies because I can't do it anymore. I hate this part of being an Omega." Tears cloud my vision as I gasp, Grayson doing his best to keep me calm.

“Whatever you need, babe. Can you tell us why, though? I know a heat is different for every Omega but is it us? Or was it the nest?”

God, I don’t deserve these men. “It’s not you. It’s the feeling of losing myself. I can’t control anything. There’s just need and craving and I can see myself and I hate that version. I hate how I’m here but I’m not.”

Luther scoots forward, putting his legs out so that they are on either side of Grayson. I’m between both of my Alphas, Luther smiling down at my strung-out form. “Then we won’t have a heat, Blake. We’ll speak with your doctor, find out what is the healthiest solution, and move on from there.”

“You aren’t mad?”

“Blake-”

“Because heats are an integral part of an Omega’s being and I don’t want them. I’m out of control. A mess and then for days afterward, I can’t think of anything else other than that version of me. I hate it! I hate him.”

Luther roughly wraps a hand around my neck and pulls me forward a little. “Don’t. I love him. I love you. I love every last part of you, Blake. However, I will not force you to deal with that part of you. I will not watch you suffer every three months because of what society believes an Omega should do. Remember that I love all of you, Blake. All of you. Even the parts you hate.”

I haven’t had a heat since then, medically prescribed heat blockers keeping me from succumbing to that blubbery haze. Neither Luther nor Grayson have expressed any interest or need for me to come off of them. Not until I mentioned something about babies. The drugs in my system aren’t conducive to carrying a child, not to mention I’m only fertile during my heats.

Not that it matters anymore.

The stress of being pregnant could kill me.

And yet, there's still a thought of a little me running around the house. One day.

I open the door and jump out, deciding to stroll around the lower lobby. I might even grab a sandwich and show Grayson that I can be a good Omega occasionally by remembering to eat. A few steps into the deli, I'm greeted by one of the designers.

"Aren't you supposed to be off today?"

"Yes, which is why you didn't see me. I just came for a sandwich. Scouts honor." I hold up three fingers on one hand, stare at it, and then switch hands.

"You were definitely not a scout, Mr. Keller."

My nose wrinkles at the respect and I shake my head. "Mr. Keller is my Alpha, either one of them. I'm just Blake." She giggles and I move past her, heading to the counter to order my favorite cucumber sandwich. The problem is that I have no idea how Grayson orders it. It just appears on my desk most days and I've never paid enough attention to the receipt or wrapper.

"Ah, Mr. Keller. I didn't think we'd see-"

"Blake, please," I whine. I've never been Mr. Keller to anyone outside of work and I find it weird that the respect follows me outside my office and anywhere other than the 9th and 10th floors of this building. "I just came in for one of those cucumber sandwiches Grayson always gets but I don't know what he orders." I search the menu and frown when it's not on there.

The employee offers a soft laugh, the woman a few years older than me. She shakes her head, short curls bouncing on her head as I push my glasses up my nose. “Blake, Grayson has those specially made for you. An Omega special, he calls it. Cucumbers are excellent for you guys.”

“How would he know that?”

“He didn’t. I did.” She grins and I finally catch her sweet scent. “My Alphas are health nuts and Grayson wanted to make sure you got something delicious but also filling. Hence the sandwiches. I can make you one right now if you like?”

I nod and lean against the counter, making a mental note to tell Grayson how much I fucking love him. The girl flits around the back, pulling together ingredients that I can’t keep track of. All I know is that there’s more than just cucumbers and bread. The girl starts humming, bouncing around as she wraps it up in the delicate plastic I always receive it in.

Her happiness drops in the next second, the temperature of the café lowering a few degrees as the scent of cigarettes and rotten oranges fills my nose. It blasts through the scent blockers and I slap a hand over my mouth and nose, terrified as the smell approaches. When it stops just behind me, fear explodes through me.

Lips hover near my ear, a chuckle following an Alpha’s hot breath. “Fancy meeting you here. You smell an awful lot like my Omega but you wouldn’t happen to know where he is, would you?”

My eyes widen as the girl backs away, frantically searching for the deli phone to alert for help. I dart forward as a hand wraps around the front of my throat and drags me into a hard chest. I squirm and kick back at the Alpha, crying out to be released but his strength far outweighs mine. Still, I pull at the hand around my neck as he cuts off my circulation. A low pitiful whine of distress slips through my lips. Hopefully, it’s

enough to send Grayson down here faster than the girl will be able to pick up the phone.

“Hudson?” I cough out his name, still trying to drag in enough air to breathe. As far as high-stress situations go, this is one of them.

“I was wondering if you even knew who I was.” He grips the back of my neck so hard I know he’ll leave marks. Luther is going to have a fit when he sees it. Hudson breathes along the exposed skin, his lips brushing along my bites. “It would be so easy to rip these out and replace them with mine. I should for what your Alphas are doing to my Omega.”

“Do-don’t.”

My breathing is becoming labored as I continue to struggle but find no use. My limbs are heavy, my chest beating painfully as my vision tunnels. I was so fucking relaxed this morning and so ecstatic to spend time with my mates outside of work.

If I had stayed in the fucking car...

“You know I felt your Alpha fucking my Omega this morning? Felt my Omega’s pleasure and need. I could almost hear his screams. He was probably screaming for me. And once he goes into heat, I’ll have the evidence to arrest your Alpha for touching my Omega.” His hand tightens around my neck as I scratch at his fingers.

“Let the Omega go, sir.” A sound echoes through the deli, my hackles rising that there are guns pointed at us. I wonder how Hudson even got past security as I’m sure Luther would have advised them not to let this man in. Worse still, it took them so fucking long to come in here that they’re going to be the first ones I fire when I’m not so rattled.

Hudson doesn't budge, a silent chuckle rumbling through his chest. I hate feeling him against me, hate feeling the way his cock thickens against the small of my back as if he's thinking about ways to fuck me even now. His tongue darts out to taste the scents on my skin and I shudder in his hold from disgust. I try to struggle again but find his grip on my neck even tighter than before. I have absolutely no leverage and the only thing I can see is the girl's panicked expression.

"Get the fuck off my Omega, Hudson!"

We're spun around, Grayson standing there, a vein popping out of his forehead. I've never seen him so fucking angry before, the Alpha seemingly larger than he usually is. The rage pouring off of him is fiercer than I've ever seen but I've also never been attacked before. Two guards on either side of Grayson have their guns raised, a threatening scene I would rather not be part of.

Hudson laughs as he wraps an arm around my chest to keep me from moving. "Guess your Omega signaled for help? Pesky little thing, those bonds. Give me mine back and we'll call it even."

"Never in a million years will I give Luca back to you, you abusive bastard. I could have you arrested for touching my Omega as well as trespassing on these grounds. You have no business here."

"Thought I could get a cucumber sandwich."

I snort, using the last bit of energy that I have. "They're not even on the menu." Hudson must have been watching me for a while if he knew about the sandwiches, which means he's known about my fascination with Luca far longer than just a few days ago.

"You'll regret taking Luca from me. His parents gave him to me and you had no right

to take him away. I'll find something on you three. I'll promise you that. And if I don't, maybe I'll just take you in place of him." Hudson releases me and throws me toward Grayson, trying to use the distraction to escape. He falls right into the guards' arms, though, growling at them to release him because he hasn't done anything wrong. Sirens in the distance tell me he won't get far but I'm currently focusing on trying to breathe.

Which isn't working.

It takes several tries and Grayson coaxing me to stay with him before I draw in a large breath before hacking my lungs out. He holds onto me, allowing me to bury my head in his chest and stay there until I can catch my bearings. There's a multitude of other sounds but I don't focus on anything other than Grayson telling me how I'm the best Omega and how wonderful of a job I did.

My limbs are still heavy and I feel a little woozy but the terror from that situation is waning. I'm safe in Grayson's arms, familiar scents wrapping around me when I find myself being lowered into my backup nest. It's a small room on the 10th floor at the back of my office and I have no idea how I didn't realize Grayson was carrying me away from the deli.

"The girl-"

"Is fine. I made sure to call one of her Alphas. How are you, though? Let me see your neck?" Grayson has to pry me off him before angling my head to the side to expose my neck. "Shit, babe. Does it hurt?" He runs his fingers across the bare skin but I don't respond. I'm not sure if it hurts or not. I don't want to answer any other questions. I just want to exist for a little bit. In peace. In the darkness. Maybe curl up into a ball and forget everything around me.

My fingers reach for a pillow as I allow my instincts to take over, the Omega part of

me curling into the nest for comfort. Grayson sighs as he sheds his jacket and drapes it over me before I drag it over my head to complete the cocoon. He settles behind me, tucking me into his chest before dialing a number. I suspect it's Luther but I'm too tired to say anything, sleep dragging me under and into a dark void of nothingness.

25

Hudson

I throw an elbow at Detective Ward, growling at the bastard for treating me like a fucking criminal. He knows my connections to the mayor and the chief of police and he still thought coming out here to make a spectacle of me was a good idea? The fact that he didn't tell the guards to unhand me just means that he's now farther up on my shit list. "Hudson, you really have to stop antagonizing the Keller family. They're in a completely different league than you."

I burst out laughing as I head to my car, Detective Ward hurrying after me. I made sure to park in the lot a street over so I wouldn't be detected but it's all for naught. Nothing worked out the way I needed it to. I was supposed to get my Omega back or Blake was to come with me to save his stupid little family. "Luther Keller is a fucking joke with his pretty words and crack lawyer. None of that is going to help him keep my Omega from me, Charles."

The detective stops short and I turn, realizing that there's a piece of the puzzle I haven't been privy to. "Hudson, medical records don't lie. I don't care what kind of stories you fielded the other detectives off with, but not everyone can be paid off by daddy's money and bribes from the mayor. Abusing an Omega is illegal but since we only have your explanation at the moment, we can't officially close the investigation. And since Alpha Keller mentioned that he won't be available for the next week to answer questions--"

I stalk toward him, grabbing the front of his shirt and dragging him to me. "What the

fuck are you talking about Charles? Luther has my Omega.”

Detective Ward gently peels off my hand, looking around to see if anyone is watching. I probably shouldn't be manhandling an officer in plain view of everyone but he needs to understand that he's not top of the food chain. I am. He clears his throat and steps back before straightening his collar. “Hudson, we've known each other for a while but don't bullshit me. You should be rotting in a cell for what you did to that kid but the chief says your connections would make that a hassle and no one likes paperwork. I'm advising you to stay the fuck out of trouble and the fuck away from the Keller family.”

“I don't think you understand-”

“No, you don't understand.” Detective Ward puffs out his chest, growling at me to stand down. He's smaller than I am but in this moment, I obey and shut up to listen. “The Keller family is respectable and will keep Luca safe until it is determined whether or not you abused your rights as his Alpha. I am not on the case because of my connection to you.”

“This is bullshit, Charles. They took my Omega from me and now Luther is fucking him. My Omega's heat is almost here and they're holing him up in that house-”

“That's another matter.”

I fist my hands at my sides, weathering every emotion begging to be released. Detective Ward has no idea how close I was to dragging Blake out of that deli rather than standing there and playing with him. I knew giving the Omega something to fear would slowly tear at him until maybe he decided that Luca was better off somewhere else. There's no fucking way Luther and that soft Alpha can take care of two Omegas. “Charles, look into it because if this shit is going to be on my record, fucking a mated Omega through a heat needs to be on his. I didn't give my approval

and I can guarantee you that he's going to do it out of the kindness of his heart or some bullshit. I wouldn't be surprised if Luther Keller fucks my Omega because his Omega said to."

Detective Ward lets out a heavy sigh. "Hudson, you're in way over your head at this point. Even if Luther Keller is arrested for that, the courts will easily see that he did it in good faith. Protecting a battered Omega is in his favor."

"It might be but while he's in jail, waiting for a trial, I'll be taking everything else he has. If he wants to play with my family, it's time I play with his."

26

Luther

I couldn't get to the office fast enough, a few of the guards lingering in the lobby when I arrived with Luca. I ignored all of them, except for the head of security who began debriefing me on the issue seconds after I stepped into the building. With Luca attached to my side, I focus on rubbing a hand up and down his back to keep him calm. No doubt he could feel the anxiety pouring off of me as I sped a little faster down the road and told him that we needed to get inside.

Fifteen minutes ago, my heart was in my throat, thinking the absolute worst.

Luca pulls out his phone and grimaces as a text pops up, his scent going sour. I reach over to squeeze his leg, the Omega turning to me with the brightest smile he can muster but I can tell it's fake. "Who's the message from, sweetheart?"

"My mom. She's really angry."

I didn't think I'd have to weather a set of parents, especially not one like Luca's. They all but sold him to Hudson for a piece of wealth and while my monetary worth isn't something to scoff at, Hudson is in an entirely different league.

"She keeps telling me just to go back." He sniffles and swipes up on the screen, the message disappearing. "I told her before we left that Hudson hit me and Mom said I wasn't being submissive enough."

I secretly add Luca's mother to the long list of people who are going to experience everything Luca felt over the years. I'm not sure if I want her dead or just across the fucking universe and away from her son. My hands tighten on the steering wheel as I try to find the right words to say. When I can't find anything constructive, I remain silent, hoping that my hand on his thigh is enough comfort.

He picks up my hand, holding it in both of his and reminding me how much smaller he is than I am. Luca leans down and presses a kiss into my palm before continuing to hold it in his lap. The moment is ruined when fear ripples through the bond.

I dial Blake, making sure to keep it on the private line so that I'll hear it in my earpiece rather than over the console. When he doesn't answer, I try Grayson.

"What the fuck is going on?" I growl, pressing the gas pedal a little harder.

"Not entirely sure. Just get here—fuck. It's Hudson. Don't do anything rash. I've got this, okay? Blake is going to need all of us."

Grayson hangs up and it takes everything in me not to break every last law in the universe to get to my Omega.

"Alpha?"

"Sweetheart, Blake is going to need all three of us when we get there but I need you to take a deep breath and stay calm. You are the sunshine he's going to need while I take out the trash."

Luca tightens his hold on my hand, his expression darkening until I'm sure I've never seen a look that full of rage on an Omega before. "Hudson can't hurt him. He's not allowed to."

“He won’t, sweetheart. We’ll make sure of it.”

“Thanks, Carlson. I’ll check in in a bit.” There are a few more pressing matters than the lack of security or the fact that they let the one man I barred from entry into this building. Once I review the security tapes, I’m sure 90% of the staff will have to be replaced.

I’m not even halfway into Blake’s office when Luca detaches from me and runs into the adjacent room to curl into the Omega’s arms. They look so perfect together, Grayson on the other side, gently running his fingers through Blake’s hair. The Omegas wrap around each other like koalas, Grayson taking the opportunity to move away and stand up to stretch.

The moment he crosses the room, I take him in my arms and kiss the ever-living fuck out of him. He melts against my chest immediately, sagging against me with relief. “God, I thought-”

“But he didn’t and he won’t. The detective from last time wants to speak with us but he isn’t allowed in this room or anywhere near Blake’s office. I’m not going to add to the stress if I can help it.” Each word is mumbled into Grayson’s hair as I tighten my hold around him, refusing to let go. I want to do the same to Blake but I know in this moment, the last thing he needs is to be smothered.

And yet, I can’t stop staring at the love of my life and the Omega who’s slowly edging his way into my heart. Blake moans something intelligible before his lids shoot open and his head turns so that our eyes meet. He looks more fragile than I’ve ever seen him, almost smaller than Luca if that’s possible. “Alpha.”

My heart breaks as he reaches up to me and I release Grayson to go to Blake, kneeling at the edge of his nest to be invited in. Blake doesn’t say anything, just launches himself at me, sobbing into my neck. Luca is sitting there in Blake’s

absence, confused and scared, our new little family slowly being torn apart by a man who doesn't deserve to live.

"I got you, love. Fuck, I got you."

Blake still doesn't say anything, rubbing his nose up and down the length of my neck, drawing in my scent until I'm the only thing he can smell. Grayson moves to my side, sifting a hand into Blake's unruly curls as we crowd around him. Luca is still sitting off by himself and I have to open my arm to let him know that he belongs here just as much as the others. He scrambles into the open space, wedging himself into Blake's side before the Omega finally calms.

Blake needs all of us.

We stay like that for several moments until the vibration of my phone interrupts us. I ignore the first call before Grayson nudges me during the second one. Slowly, I peel Blake off of me, weathering a growl when I see Hudson's fingerprints around his neck. My lip curls up in a snarl, Grayson pushing me away to address Blake and Luca. "Luther needs to take this call and he'll be back, okay?"

Neither of our Omegas speak as Luca helps Blake back into the nest and then curls around him. Grayson takes the distraction to push me out into Blake's office. "I know you want to fucking murder that Alpha but not right now. We have much more pressing matters, okay? Blake needs us to stay levelheaded."

I laugh, a bitter sound that has Grayson cringing. "Not sure how much longer I can hold back, Gray. Hudson is determined to retrieve Luca and I keep letting that fucker close to my family. He fucking touched Blake. And the bruises on Luca's body—" A wild growl rips from my throat before I can swallow it.

Blake is no doubt feeling all of this through the bond. I'm usually better at steeling

my emotions but this can't be helped. When my phone starts vibrating again, I whip out the device and yell into the earpiece. "What?!?"

"Luther? I understand that this is a trying—"

"Stop with the bullshit, Detective Ward. Hudson should have never been allowed in this building, let alone anywhere near my family. He is out of control."

"I agree but—"

I slam a fist down on Blake's desk, barely holding back a snarl. The law can kiss my ass at this point. "Charles, may I call you that because it seems that we're on a first-name basis—Hudson crossed a line. Many lines and yet he's still roaming free while you guys conduct some crack investigation."

The detective clears his throat, laughing nervously. "Luther—Alpha Keller—this is a unique situation in that it's very hard to legally keep Hudson away from you because you have his—"

"I have his nothing. And this building is private property. Next time Hudson attacks my family, including either one of my Omegas, I won't be calling you to deal with it." I hang up, Grayson trying to get my attention but I've already made up my mind.

"Alpha, fuck, wait a second." Grayson stays my hand before I make another call, stepping into my line of sight. He places the other hand on my cheek, waiting for me to lean into his touch. "There's my Luther. Hey, let me in on your plans. You don't have to do this all alone. Two Omegas is a lot to deal with but you have me."

He presses his forehead against my chest before I finally give in. "Hudson is a threat and an unknown. I despise unknowns, Gray. He needs to be dealt with." I hum my agreement and he continues as I start playing with his hair, loving how soft it feels on

my rough fingers. “I’m going to ask for an order of protection. It’s the only card I have left to play until at least Luca’s heat is over. Hudson will not take either one of them from us.”

“No, he won’t. There’s just one problem—we need to get our Omegas home. This isn’t the right environment for them and it’s not fair to Blake for his coworkers and employees to see him like this. He deserves his privacy. However, I also know that time is of the essence and a protective order requires the signature of every Alpha in this pack.”

I can smell Grayson’s distaste for the situation. Every instinct is telling me to crawl into that nest and claim Blake to prove to him and to myself that he’s still mine, ours. Unfortunately, Blake wouldn’t want that. He draws comfort from us and he needs us but not the way Luca does. And while I know Blake has to learn how to lean into his own instincts, I also know that fucking Blake into the pillows will terrify him right now.

With the way I need to claim him, my hand will wrap around his throat much the same way Hudson’s did and I can’t do that to him.

“Call Maceo, Alpha. Tell him what we need and see how fast someone will grant it.”

Grayson doesn’t have to tell me twice.

I step away from him and dial Maceo’s number, steeling my emotions so Blake doesn’t feel the raging anger running through me. “I need you here.” That’s not what I meant to say and there’s definitely some underlying current where I feel comfortable enough with Maceo around my Omegas—one who is in distress and the other who is on the cusp of a heat.

“Would it be incredibly awkward if I told you that I was already here? Don’t hate me

but I was on the phone with Detective Ward when he got pulled away so I hopped on over, just in case I got your call. I'll be up in a minute."

I should be furious that Maceo is so fucking attentive to my family in a way that he isn't with his other clients until I remember how Luca finds his scent safe. Whether I like it or not, Maceo is part of this chaos and if I push against it, I'll only be hurting Luca.

Two minutes later on the dot, Maceo waves outside of Blake's office, frowning when I gesture for him to come in. "Am I allowed in here? God, your Omegas stink. What do you need?" This isn't the first time he's mentioned my Omegas' scents and I'm beginning to think that Luca isn't the only one that catches his interest, something I'll have to bring up later.

"An order of protection. Now, yesterday. A week ago." I perch my ass on the edge of Blake's desk, folding my arms across my chest. Grayson is awkwardly standing a few feet from the bedroom, unsure of the situation. I can't blame him. "Maceo, Hudson is too fucking close for comfort but I need this done legally and not through back channels. I'm already breaking the law with Luca."

The Beta grins at the declaration. "No shit. I can submit a petition for you, which can be expedited if approved by an officer. I know a few judges who could have it signed off by tonight or tomorrow morning but it's going to be temporary. Until a judge gets you in court to determine the reason for filing an order of protection, nothing will be permanent. Even then, it's not an effective solution for someone like Hudson."

"I can't get a restraining order because Luca is still legally his. The investigation has determined that I am Luca's primary Alpha but because of Hudson's claim, barring the fucking Alpha is a lot messier. Maceo--"

"Three steps ahead of you." Maceo's grin doesn't falter as he places his bag on the

table and slips out a thick portfolio. “I assumed that it might come to this and I like to be prepared. I asked one of the detectives involved with the investigation to meet you in your office to sign the documentation.”

A frown takes over my rage-filled expression. “It’s not Detective Ward?”

“No. He’s closely associated with Hudson so he’s not directly on this case. Conflict of interest. I was as surprised as you are to learn that there might be some issues in pushing this investigation along. Is there anything else I can do?”

I’m about to have to find another lawyer or see where Maceo truly stands with my family. I observe him for a few moments, knowing that what I’m about to ask of him is unacceptable and yet, I have no other alternatives. Maceo blows out a deep breath and I see his smile falter, his nostrils flaring as he reacts to my Omegas’ scents. The muscles in his jaw tense, his hands twisted at his sides, tightened into fists.

Control.

It’s more than I’ve seen in many other Alphas and Betas. They lunge at the first sweet perfume that fills the air.

“I need you to stay here,” I finally say.

Grayson glares at me and I accept his shock and immediate distaste with my words. However, that emotion quickly turns into understanding as he comes to stand beside me, supporting my decision. Grayson and I will be across the hall, discussing an order of protection with an officer I don’t know while Blake and Luca are tucked away in the bedroom off to the side. I refuse to leave them unprotected but I also don’t want anyone else in this office if I can help it.

Which leaves Maceo.

The Beta swallows nervously. “Luther...”

“Just make sure that no one enters this office until we’re ready to leave. I’m asking a lot of you and I understand if you want to say no but I trust you. You’re also all I have.”

He wrings his hands together before sporting a small smile. “I’ll just add it to your tab. They’re your Omegas. I get how important that is. Take the portfolio with you. When you’re ready to sign, let me know so I can make sure it’s filled out properly.”

I feel like I might be making a mistake as I check in on Blake and Luca one last time before walking across the hall. Grayson is directly behind me, waiting until the door shuts before speaking. “Are you going to acknowledge that Maceo might be more than just our lawyer?”

“Not until he does. If he wants to take that step, I need him to tell me that. I’m not going to force him into something when he made it very clear that he goes it alone. I also know that if I hover and try to monitor the situation, it’ll never happen organically.”

Grayson smiles up at me. “And you thought that while Blake is in distress is a good time to test this?”

“No. I just know that Maceo is the only man that I trust not to disrespect our family. I could ask one of the guards but I’m thinking of firing them after today’s stunt.” I stare across the hall, smirking at the way Maceo is turned toward the bedroom door, his head tilted, intrigue wafting off of him. He’s a respectable Beta and even though he looks like an Alpha, I know he won’t disrespect our business partnership or my Omegas.

And if for some reason he thinks about it, I’ll be right there to rip his head off his

shoulders.

Maceo

I can't believe Luther motherfucking Keller left me in this room with two Omegas a door away. He trusts me? How is that fucking possible? I know he can sense my interest and my arousal. Luca smells like a wet dream but it's Blake's distressed scent that has me wired right now. I've always been attracted to the lean Omega that owns a fucking gaming company but his scent has never done more than tickle my nose.

Now? The sour scent of distress is fucking with my senses. I'm torn between wanting to soothe his emotions and finding a way to bury Hudson in a hole. The whiplash is annoying and even more so, Luther's watchful eye across the hallway.

I settle in Blake's chair, trying really hard not to lean over the desk and take in more of Blake's scent—a scent from a time when he was happy and thriving. I didn't see the Omega before he made it into his nest and I can't imagine the absolute terror he's feeling from being approached by Hudson. That Alpha is not a pretty individual and he gives off vibes I don't want to be anywhere near.

Needing a distraction, I search through my briefcase and retrieve another file to begin working through. While most of my work revolves around keeping Starlight Falls and this company running, I pick up a few odd jobs here and there to keep my portfolio diverse. Most of the extra cases I end up getting are unfaithful spouses or family members cheating one another out of money. Annoying stuff, basically.

Time passes as Luther, Grayson, and the detective across the hallway speak about the

order of protection. I know for a fact that they're discussing more than just that and the way Luther launches out of his chair tells me that it isn't going well. Grayson has to play mediator and I'm suddenly glad I didn't offer to be in that room.

A creaking door steals my attention, glassy eyes and a mop of curls peering out into the office from the bedroom. Luca looks around for several minutes before catching my attention. "Hi." His voice is adorably small as he moves to open the door a little wider to slip through. I bite my tongue before a growl makes its way to the surface, both of their scents hitting me full force.

"Your Alphas are tied up right now. They should be done soon." Keep it professional, Maceo.

"Okay."

I expect him to slip back into the room but he just stands there, looking around and then at me before he starts looking around again. "Luca, do you need something?"

"No."

"Is Blake okay?"

His nose wrinkles and he bites his bottom lip, his brows furrowing in concentration. "No."

"Let me go get one of your Alphas, okay?"

"No."

I don't know what to do but my instincts are telling me to fix it. Just as I'm about to ask another question, Luca approaches and holds his hand out. I stare at the offending

limb for several seconds before the Omega lets out a little frustrated growl, digs his fingers into my arm, and drags me to the bedroom. Uncertainty takes over my rational mind as Blake comes into view, sitting against the far side of the nest.

The nest isn't anything elegant, mostly just bedding and blankets that an Omega would find comfortable but void of the colors and personality I would have expected.

"Why am I in here?" I whisper.

"Because he could smell you but he couldn't see you. He said he needed to see you."

That makes sense. Omegas are highly territorial of their space and adding my scent to the mix must be confusing for Blake. He's staring at me, observing me, his scent strengthening slightly as he meets my eyes. I feel frozen beneath his attention, forbidden feelings rushing through me as I stand at the edge of a nest I should never fantasize about falling into.

I'm already loving the fierce grip on my arm from Luca and the delicate ocean notes of his scent wrapping around me. When Luca tries to pull me forward, I hold my ground. "I can't go in there. I'm not part of your pack."

Luca doesn't listen, trying to dislodge me from where I stand with no success. "Alpha."

"Beta," I correct him, mildly concerned that this is the start of a heat spike and that it has nothing to do with Blake. Luca might be my Omega— might —but I can't say the same for Blake. I don't know. I haven't let myself try to figure it out because I've always believed and accepted that I would go this road alone. It's never been a problem until now.

Panicked, I send Luther and Grayson a joint text.

SOS. Luca is trying to pull me into the nest.

Grayson

How is Blake?

I frown. These Alphas should be furious that I'm this close to their Omegas unattended.

His color is returning but Luca is trying to get me into the nest.

Luther

What does Blake want?

What?

Luther

Whatever you're comfortable with, give them what they want.

Permission from their Alpha. From both of them.

This time when Luca tugs, I don't pull away. He settles me in the middle of the nest, Blake making room for my arrival. He doesn't speak, just slowly lays his head on my shoulder and closes his eyes. His body relaxes, Luca curling up to my other side. For several moments, I don't breathe. I'm not sure what I thought having an Omega was like but this wasn't it.

This feeling of completeness, of belonging, of needing to make everything right.

I lean into the instinct, wrapping a gentle arm around Blake's shoulder to pull him farther into my chest. When he lets out a purr of contentment, I respond, making a wholly Alpha sound that has never come from my mouth. Blake tenses and then relaxes again, Luca vibrating with acceptance on the other side.

"See? You're perfect," Luca whispers and I'm not sure if he's referring to this moment or in general.

I'm also still not sure that their Alphas won't have my head for being in this nest.

Mates were never part of my life plan. So much for plans.

28

Blake

A foreign scent brings me out of my stress-induced sleep, a mixture of whiskey and cedar filling my nose. It's a pleasant aroma but one I've only caught faint notes from before. When I finally open my eyes and realize who I'm leaning on, it comes back to me.

"Who is that?"

Luca hums against my chest, trying to curl in tighter as if he isn't already plastered against me. I need my Alphas in here. No. I need to be at home with all of them. This isn't my nest even if being in here is less chaotic than out in my office. I can't imagine what the employees are going to say after seeing me carted up here. God, I should have never left the fucking car.

"Blake, you keep searching for something."

I frown and sit up a little, wondering what I need. I haven't been this in touch with my Omega for years and it's disconcerting. I also know there's a scent in my office that I don't recognize but need closer. "Who's out there?"

Luca sniffs at the air and then smiles, his entire face lighting up. "Maceo." I can see that the lawyer is going to have a part in my life but I thought it was going to be just Luca. "Do you need him in here?"

“I need to see him. I... I can smell him but I can’t-”

“I know. It’s an Omega thing. We have to know what everything is to feel comfortable sometimes. I’ll go get him.” He slides out of the nest and I’m about to grab him back when I realize I don’t mind the idea of Maceo being in the nest. I just need to match the scent with him and then go back to sleep to forget that Hudson was ever here.

Oh, and I need my Alphas. And Luca.

And Maceo.

Fuck.

Suddenly, Maceo is standing at the edge of the nest, looking wildly uncomfortable. My heart beats a little faster for a man I’ve seen a billion times and never felt anything for. And yet, in this moment, I need him in addition to my mates. I feel fucking guilty for even thinking of Maceo as more than the family lawyer but I need his scent closer.

I need him closer.

However, I can’t find the words to speak, some part of me in distress because of the decisions I’ll have to make. Maceo won’t share. Not like Luther and Grayson. This can’t work and I’m making a bigger mess than can be fixed on top of the mess we’re already dealing with.

Maceo’s laid-back demeanor has been switched out for the calm expression on his face, Luca sleeping on the other side, his mouth open and drool pooling on the Beta’s shirt. I stifle a chuckle at the scene, at how perfectly Maceo fits between us and then the guilt rushes back at me. I caught the tail end of Maceo panic texting, most likely

my Alphas for permission so I know that the Beta isn't acting on his own accord.

His arms pull me a little tighter into his chest and I give in to the feeling—maybe a little too much when I dig my nose into his collarbone. Maceo shoots up and scoots back into the nest, throwing me a sheepish smile. He's adorable after a nap, not an adjective I would normally use for the man. However, his mussed black hair and wild (hazel) eyes flitting around the nest add an innocence to him that softens his outer appearance.

Add in the fact that he's very obviously aroused and reacting to our scents and the nervous laughter I've been holding back bubbles to the surface. I'm a wreck, stressed out and terrified of what happens now, my body unsure of how to deal with reality. So, I laugh. Maceo looks highly concerned at my reaction while Luca is still rubbing the sleep from his eyes.

“What—what's so funny? Luca-”

My Omega crawls over to me and I flinch at his touch, wanting to lean into this crazed emotion before sliding to the other end of the scale. The forced happiness doesn't last as I start sucking in air, trying not to panic as I remember Hudson's fingers around my neck and the threats he whispered in my ear.

“Hey, you're with us. I know what you're going through, okay? It's terrifying, the nightmares haunt me but it gets better.”

I can't seem to see through the panicked haze as I start searching for more than what's in my nest. This Omega bullshit is annoying as fuck. I stumble to my feet, Luca yelling something but I brush it off. No one is in my office but that doesn't stop me from all but crawling across the hallway, pulling Luther's chair from under the table, and forcing myself into his lap.

The panic stops, his thick arms banding around me. “I’ve got you, love. Where is Maceo? I thought-”

“Good. I just... Hudson...” Frustration bleeds through me at the inability to form my words around taking in gulps of air. Grayson sits beside us, running his nose along my temple and cheek to further calm me. Both of their Alpha purrs start up, a similar but more powerful sound than Maceo’s. I didn’t even know a Beta could do that but that’s the least of my worries. I can tell that my Alphas think Maceo did something. “Maceo good. All good. Smells good.”

Grayson snorts at the way my body tenses up. “We thought as much but that’s a decision he and you have to make. Not us. Besides, you and Luca deserve the world. Whoever that is.”

I snuggle in closer, wishing I was back in the nest so I could feel both of them pressed up against me. Luther tightens his hold on me, murmuring something before a door opens and then closes. I tense again, realizing that I interrupted something. “Just the detective, love. Fixing up a few things and filing for an order of protection. He should have never been in the fucking building.”

“I should have never left the car.”

Luther pinches my chin and roughly angles my face up to see his. “You shouldn’t have to be scared of walking outside. I’ve told you too many times that the world is your oyster, that you should be able to do whatever you want and that isn’t changing. We might have to take it a little slower now that we know things but I’m not planning on seeing that kind of fear in your eyes ever again. Or in Luca’s.”

He kisses me like he’s going to lose me, like everything we’ve built together is going to fall apart. I cling to him, needing him to know that I’m not going anywhere. I’m happy right here in our strange ass pack. Grayson steals me away from Luther and

straddles me on his lap, giving me a similar kiss but this one I can feel the fear and disappointment that Grayson hadn't rescued me sooner. My Alpha claims me, taking special care to avoid my neck.

"I am so fucking sorry for not getting there sooner, babe." Grayson's hands settle on my waist, his hips pushing up involuntarily. He's hard and I'm needier than usual but this isn't the time or place to start something. "Let's go home, alright?"

I nod, sagging against his chest in relief. We'll have to address the Hudson situation eventually but there's something else pressing on my mind. "What about Maceo?" It feels selfish to even ask and I don't know why my need for him didn't pop up the first time I met him. "I don't know why but he feels... it works but I don't-"

Luther chuckles as he leans back in his chair. "Blake, Omegas don't always choose a mate because of a scent match. Sometimes it's a biological connection or event that brings them together. I'm pretty sure that Luca and Maceo are scent matches. With you, I think it's something much deeper, something that would only surface in a situation like this. Shitty as it is, he might be your mate just in a different way."

I'm too tired to figure out what that means.

Grayson helps me off his lap and gathers my hands in his. "What Luther is trying to say is that this is going to be weird and it's going to take some time getting used to another dominant male in this pack if that's what Maceo chooses. You and Luca need him. I can see it, feel it. There's been a change in the last few days and I can't say I wasn't blindsided by it but I don't mind it."

"It isn't all about me, Gray. It shouldn't be-"

"You and Luca are our Omegas. It absolutely should be all about you. You are the pinnacle of the pack and I know you don't like that kind of spotlight but get ready."

I weather a small smile just as Maceo pushes inside the office, Luca grinning at the three of us. He's real close to Maceo's side but not touching, obviously just as confused as I am about wanting the third male. "Need me for anything else?" Maceo shoves his hands in his pockets, reminding me of an awkward college student than a man nearly ten years my senior. "As much as I'd love to hash out everything here and get all four of you on the same page, one of you is in preheat and the other looks like you're about to keel over. Distressed Omegas are like a beacon." I open my mouth to protest when a snarl slips from the Beta. "I don't care if you own the fucking company, Blake, you need rest. Both of you."

I stand there, stunned, waiting for either Luther or Grayson to lash out at Maceo. After all, a Beta just ordered a mated Omega to do something in front of his Alphas. Only silence meets my ears until Luther's chuckles fill the room. "I couldn't have said it better myself." He rises to his feet, Luca scurrying over to his side for sweet kisses.

In just a day or two, Luca has gone from being terrified of touching my Alphas to seeking them out and I fucking love the change. It's a testament to how much an environment can change an Omega's emotions. Luther tugs me into a hug as well, my Alpha holding us both against him. It feels perfect like this, beside Luca, surrounded by mates that I didn't even know I had. I also want to just curl up at home in Luca's nest.

"Get home safely. If you're good, maybe we'll have a little fun when we get home."

With the way Luca's cheeks pink, I know those words were for him. However, I also know that Luther doesn't want me to exert myself any more than I have to. I decide not to bring up the fact that Hudson's scent blasted through the medicine. We spend a few more moments there before Grayson leads us out of the office and to the car.

Luther

After Grayson guides our Omegas out of the office and downstairs, the Beta plops into the seat the Alpha just emptied, running his hands through his hair, obviously panicked. “I’m so fucking sorry. It just happened.”

For as long as I’ve known him, Maceo’s confidence has been through the roof. Nothing has deterred his laidback personality, not even my gruff responses to some of his suggestions—rational as they were. I watch with mild amusement as Maceo starts to jostle his leg, his anxiety growing. “I gave you permission, Mac. That hasn’t changed. I’d have more of a problem if you had ill intentions or I didn’t know you. As it stands, that’s not the case.” I’m not sure how I feel about Maceo as part of our pack. I know that things between Maceo and I won’t change, that we won’t share a mate bond like he will with my Omegas if he chooses to go down that path.

Maceo throws me a tight smile, trying to fall back into his usual demeanor and failing. “Luther-”

“Everything about this is chaotic and fucked up. None of this is how I planned it and you know how much I hate being out of control which is why I need to ask. What are your intentions with my Omegas?” I don’t want to push Maceo but we don’t have time to be on the fence. With Luca days away from his heat, he’s going to ask for everyone he finds safe. One of those is the Beta currently trying to figure out my angle.

Maceo pushes to his feet and starts pacing but I won't let him think I'm trying to trap him. I just need to know where he stands so that when Luca and possibly Blake ask where Maceo is, I can give them the truth. Gently. It's taking everything in me to set my pride aside as I tell myself this is for my Omegas and that my discomfort comes second.

"Mac, listen to me." The Beta stops pacing and faces me as I stand. He swallows nervously and I continue. "Luca had a spike this morning and he'll probably have another one tonight. If it's anything like Blake's heats, he'll last a few more days or he'll go into heat tonight. We don't have a week to figure out things and that order of protection is going to save his life."

"Hudson is waiting for you to slip up. Order of protection or not, this won't protect you from going to jail."

"Right."

Maceo frowns, running a hand down his face. "Luther, what do you need from me? To watch the company for a few days? Lock up your assets?"

"No, let's get back to my first question." I step up to Maceo, making sure that he's giving me his undivided attention. I've never heard of an Alpha asking a Beta to join in on a heat for his Omega but I don't have a choice. Luca needs everyone in his corner and the Omega has made it very clear who he's finding comfortable in his space.

The Beta throws up his hands. "I told you I have no fucking intentions, Luther!"

"And yet you slept in a nest with my Omegas."

"I don't—" His face creases in exasperation. "I... they needed me and I was there."

Fuck! I didn't plan on feeling like this for Luca and Blake... it just happened. I promise I wasn't looking for them. This is going to be chaos, Luther. Fucking chaos.

"And we'll navigate that as it comes, however, there's one thing I have to ask you. Something that may not come easy to you." I blow out a deep breath, catching his eyes again. "Submit to me. I don't need you on your knees but I need to know that you aren't going to try and run this pack." As the words fall from my lips, I know that Maceo will take them wrong. "My instincts tell me that I shouldn't let you anywhere near them and yet in my heart, I know that you are exactly the missing piece that they need. I have no idea how you fit in with them, with us."

"Are you asking me to be there for Luca's heat because I'm not sure I can do that. It feels like betrayal, Luther. Besides, going from a plan to be a one-man show to a pack of five? That's-

"A lot." I put a few steps between us, sitting on the edge of my desk to give Maceo space. "All I'm asking is that you don't challenge me."

"Done."

"And that if Luca asks, you're either all in or you let him down gently. I don't want him to hurt anymore than he already does."

"Done."

"Hudson is going to try everything he can while I'm in jail so I need to call up a few contacts..."

Maceo snorts and then fixes his expression. "Blake and Luca will never let a foreign scent in that house, helpful or otherwise. Right after Luca's heat, too?"

“I won’t leave them alone with Grayson. I love the Alpha but two Omegas are a lot. Are you offering Maceo?”

“No.”

“Try again.”

“I’m just saying that they don’t hate my scent.”

“And I want you to have a little more faith in yourself. Think about it.” This feels right even if it’s not traditional. A pack of five. “Let’s figure out the business first and then Luca’s heat. Even after Hudson’s bite is removed from Luca, he will try to undermine my authority over my pack. This conflict won’t stop after the investigation severs his connection from his Omega.”

Maceo shakes his head, silent for several moments before he speaks. “Luther, they won’t remove the bite from Luca’s neck. Not until after the investigation is fully completed, with Luca’s testimony. That could be next week or it could be months. Until then, I’m sure Hudson will find a way to keep you locked up and away from your family.”

“Maceo, I have no other alternative. Luca is mine to protect as is every other member of my pack. That won’t change because of the consequences involved. All I need to know is where you stand.”

“I’ll protect your family, Luther. I can’t promise you that I can give your Omegas everything they want from me but I’ll make sure they are safe and that Grayson has everything he needs to provide for them.”

That’s all I can ask and somehow, I don’t think it’ll be enough.

30

Luca

When Blake asked to stop by a store, I thought it would be for groceries or dinner. I didn't expect to be standing in one of the aisles at Plush City, an Omega's wet dream. There's blankets and pillows of every size and color, stuffed animals, fairy lights, and decorations that I've only seen in magazines. After Hudson demanded I leave college and wrangled me into his home, there was no need for any of this. There's no space in that apartment and he would have shredded anything that was too bright.

Here, though, it feels like heaven.

Everything is so soft and beautiful.

It feels like I've been here for hours as I touch things and stuff my face into them, grinning and giggling before I remember that I'm not alone. I swallow nervously as I turn around to check on Blake. We haven't spoken about the incident and he didn't want to talk about it in the car. His face was still ashen and his scent a little sour but he stopped shaking. We also haven't spoken about Maceo being in the nest or the way Blake freaked out and went on a little hunt for his Alphas.

I stop in my tracks when I see Grayson behind a cart, all of the things I've touched inside. Blake is leaning against the edge, a wild smile on his face, his eyes sparkling. I can tell he's still scared and a little worried, his eyes darting to each side. No doubt he can't stop thinking of Hudson creeping up behind him but Blake is enjoying my excitement in this store.

“Wait. I... we need to get things for Blake’s nest too.”

Blake shakes his head. “Cupcake, this is for your nest. Not mine. You’re the one going into heat.” His voice is a little scratchy and I realize why he hasn’t said much the entire time. Tears glaze over his eyes as the memory comes back, Blake reaching up to lightly touch his neck. Grayson wraps an arm around his shoulder and pulls him into his chest, whispering several words in his ear before Blake relaxes.

“Luca, as much as I want to stay and watch you pick out absolutely everything, we need to get home.”

I nod, moving back toward the register. Grayson told me there wasn’t a limit but I hadn’t prepared to pick so many things. I also know that Blake is pushing himself to be okay when he’s not. The last time that happened, he passed out on me and I can’t watch that happen again. I take Blake’s hand in mine, grinning up at him as he leans in for a soft kiss. He stumbles forward, setting me off on another round of giggles as Grayson jokingly pushes us out of the way to scan the items. I reach for one and he snatches it out of my reach.

“You’re allowed to have things, Luca, and Blake makes quite the paycheck. It’s his money we’re spending.”

No wonder Blake is so ridiculously proud of this outing. He’s providing for me, his Omega, and I can’t feel more special. There are blankets and plushies and clothes that I definitely didn’t pick out. “You got me pants,” I whisper. Blake nods, running his nose along my cheek but not speaking. I wouldn’t have said anything until the end of time, letting my men dress me in their own clothes but it’s nice to have something of my own.

By the time Grayson is depositing the bags on the couch, I’m already unpacking them, furiously stuffing them where they need to go in my nest. Blake is helping as

he sits on the edge of the couch, handing me items. He always picks the right one which can't be said for Grayson who has been banished to anywhere other than the living room after helping us push the couch to the edge of the room.

“Do you at least want a mattress, Luca?”

I frown at the thought. “No, why would you suggest that?” A mattress offers edges that people can fall off of. Pillows and blankets will slide off and then I'll have to fix it. No, the floor is much better. Grayson laughs at my response but I don't see what's funny. “Blake—” I growl in frustration, unsure what's wrong. My nest is beautiful but it's not perfect.

“What is it, cupcake?” He looks up from his perch on the couch, holding a pillow that feels like a cloud. I know because I rubbed my face all over it in the car. “Ah, it's too bright in here, isn't it?” I nod, watching as Blake pushes off the couch and retrieves a small stool from the hallway closet. “We can turn off the lights but that bulb is part of the kitchen set. We'll need to pull it out.”

He sets the stool in the middle of my nest and helps me climb on before I start twisting the bulb. With the lights off and the soft lamp at the edge, it's just the right ambiance. Once this light is off, it'll be perfect. I hiss as the heat from the bulb burns into my fingers but I focus on unscrewing it. And with one last twist, I sag against Blake with relief.

There.

“What in god's name are you two doing?”

I tense, causing Blake to stumble and we go crashing to the floor before I can look up and see Grayson leaning over the edge of the couch. He's laughing at us and I sit up, frowning at his reaction. “It was too bright, okay?” I help Blake to sit up, my Omega

pulling me into his lap. He's been a little touchier since the incident and I want to ask but I also don't want to ruin it.

Grayson rounds the couch and stops at the edge of my nest before raising an eyebrow. I nod and he steps inside before sitting beside us. "Your nest is perfect, Luca. It's gorgeous and I'm happy that you like it. I can't wait to see all of us inside here, taking care of you."

"Maceo, too?" I let out a little sigh and tuck my face into Blake's chest. "I don't know why I said that. I have you guys."

"Do you want Maceo?" Grayson places a hand on my back and I shudder beneath his touch. He removes it a second later and I hate that I still can't enjoy these men when I can't see them. "Luca, this is very important. I know it's awkward but this conversation has to happen before you are out of your mind in heat. You won't be able to make these kinds of decisions and if Maceo is someone you want, we have to know now."

"No. I just... I like his scent but I have you." I twist around, forcing a smile on my face. My instincts are yelling at me to tell the truth but that has only ever gotten me in trouble. I'm just being greedy when Blake and his family have taken me in. I don't deserve yet another male.

"You didn't answer my question, Luca." His voice deepens, adding a serious tone to it. I shudder again and crawl off Blake's lap to sit in front of them. "Hey, Luca, baby come here."

I hesitate, unsure if he's just placating me or if he really wants me near him. When he's still holding out his hands, I do as he asks but sit beside him, hoping Blake will mirror my movements. My Omega does, both of us casing the Alpha in. "It feels selfish and I'm very grateful for what I have. Wanting Maceo and being practical are

two different things.”

Grayson chuckles, mussing up my hair before kissing my temple. “God, you’re as stubborn as Blake. They are different things but what you want is more important than what’s practical. You’ve been denied a lot of things. This is us making up for it. Think of it as a courting present, hmm?”

I don’t like that. “What about what Blake wants? At the deli-”

His sour scent returns full force before disappearing completely until it’s just the faint smell of pears in my nest. I hate it. “I don’t-” He clears his throat and winces as he turns away from me. “No.” Grayson didn’t even mention it when we got home and I don’t know why. I don’t know why we aren’t addressing it or talking about it. Blake clutches one of the pillows against his chest, starting to crawl away from us. “ Please .”

I sit back on my knees, trying to make everything better but this one is impossible. Blake should be curled up in a space with his Alphas and possibly Maceo and me, sleeping the day away and enjoying the comfort that comes from a pack huddle. Instead, he’s in my nest and I just don’t get it. “Blake-”

“No!” He chucks the item at me.

Grayson sighs, his entire form deflating as he crawls after Blake and moves him back to the center of the nest. I love seeing Blake here but not at the expense of his emotions. He’s vibrating with fear as he rubs at his neck, tears streaming down his cheeks. I saw Blake breakdown at the company but it didn’t make sense how fast he fell into a subdued state. He must have been in shock.

And now that he feels safe, back at home, he can let go.

“Don’t. He...” Blake is still furiously rubbing at his neck while trying to push Grayson off of him. His panic is rising, his breathing ragged. Any longer and the stress might make him pass out again. My heart hurts for my Omega and I can’t do anything other than watch him fight his own Alpha—the same way I nearly did with Luther.

God, this is my fault.

“Blake, breathe with me. Deep breaths. Hey, we’re right here with you. Look at me, babe. There you go. There you go. ” Grayson cups the side of Blake’s face before kissing his nose and then his lips, Blake letting out a little sigh of relief. “He is nowhere near us and he’s not going to get in here. None of this is your fault. None of it.”

Blake whines, unshed tears covering his beautiful eyes. “Sorry.”

“Nothing to apologize for. Not one thing, babe.”

I’m still perched on my knees, unsure of whether to approach but do anyway. Luther and Grayson have told me I’m part of this and I don’t want Blake to hurt. I settle against his side, gently wrapping an arm around his stomach. “I hate that he got you. I hate that you had to experience my pain and my nightmare. I hate that Alpha so fucking much and I hate that he ever got to own me.”

Blake shakily raises a hand to my bandage as I run my fingers down his neck. I’ve always wanted to share something with Blake but never this. Never Hudson. Never the terror I experienced every day, waiting for Hudson to burst in and demand my ass.

I kiss him, needing his scent wrapped around me again. He doesn’t take charge like he usually does, just sifts his fingers into my hair and plays with the curls. When he

gasps for air, I pull back and snuggle into his shoulder, Grayson taking up the other side. I like that who is in the middle changes based on what we need. Sometimes, it's me. Other times it's Grayson or Blake. And that one time it was Maceo.

"I think... no, I want Maceo, Gray." It comes out as a jumble of words, Grayson laughing at me. I just glare at him, Grayson reaching over to pull my bottom lip which is jutted out further than the top one. "Blake?"

Grayson and Luther don't really know why I dragged Maceo into the nest at the office but I'm sure they can guess. Still, I'm going to check with Blake every chance I get because while they said this was my nest, I built it for Blake and me. He helped me build it, put it together, and I wouldn't imagine a moment without him in my space.

Blake shifts between us, his lids sliding close. "Maceo is nice."

That's enough approval for me.

Grayson

Having two Omegas in this nest is both chaotic and the best thing that has ever happened to us. Their sweet scents are intoxicating and I'm having a hard time not doing anything other than hold Blake against my chest. Luca's heat is going to be glorious. Blake lets out a little moan when I shift to get comfortable, trying not to let him feel how stiff my cock is. That only jostles Luca on the other side who crawled over at some point.

His tongue darts out to taste the skin on my neck, his hips slowly moving against my thigh. I watch, enraptured as the little Omega uses me for his pleasure, which explains why their scents are so fucking thick in the room. I know that the threat is still out there and both of them have healing to do but I can't ruin this moment.

Luca's body shudders as he comes, his lids slowly opening, a faint blush on his cheeks. "Hi." I chuckle at his abashed expression and lean down to kiss him, loving the way his hips start moving again. "I can't stop it." The sweet scent of his slick fills the air, Blake suddenly alert. Luca whines again, his movements becoming a little more frantic and I realize that this is the start of another spike.

I don't expect for Blake to respond, his aroused scent mingling with Luca's. I sit up slightly, staring at the chaos unfolding in front of me. Luca isn't happy with the loss of my leg, tearing at his clothes until he's gloriously naked and crawling to Blake for relief. I watch as Blake takes the smaller Omega in his arms, allowing Luca to undress him. There's a few seconds between them shedding clothes to Luca sliding

onto Blake's cock for relief.

They both let out some kind of growl that's both adorable and makes my cock unbearably hard. Luca isn't himself as he swivels his hips, snarling and grunting for another release. He digs his fingers into Blake's chest, Blake gripping the smaller Omega's waist. I'm torn between the shock of seeing Luca fully naked, the bruises and cuts littered across his body and watching this beautiful sight of two Omegas together.

The squelch of their slick makes this entire scene messier, both of them trying to find a release. Luca's skin flushes a light pink with his efforts as he sprays cum all along Blake's chest and torso but he doesn't stop.

"Cupcake, you need a knot." Blake's voice is still scratchy but he's giving everything he has to Luca. I worry that Luca's heat is going to be hard on him but it'll be impossible to keep him out of the nest. We'll just have to be extra vigilant when that time comes.

Luca whines for more, slick coating his thighs and Blake's. "It's enough. Blake... I can't. I need..." I wait for one of them to signal for me, undressing as quietly as I can. Part of this is something I've waited for for too long. The other part of me is terrified that I'm going to fuck this up. Luca has been through so much and seeing him unsure of what he needs guts me.

"Cupcake," Blake says again, pulling Luca into a frenzied kiss. "No knot."

I'm just about to reach over and rip Luca off Blake's cock when the little Omega snarls at me. I freeze, unsure of how to move forward. His hips are still rocking, his mesmerizing eyes glazed over with the effect of his heat. "Don't take him from me."

I tilt my head to the side, confused. Blake doesn't seem to understand either, his face

contorted with pleasure. His grip tightens on Luca's waist and then he comes, his release spilling between them. I nearly forgot how much Omegas come during and around a heat. Even if Blake isn't in heat, his body might as well be responding as if he is. I fear that Blake will hate these next few days as much as he hates his own heat.

I send up a quick prayer to whatever deity is beyond the clouds that Blake can keep his wits about him.

Luca's expression keeps changing as he tries to draw out another orgasm from Blake. "Babe, you need a knot. Blake can't give you that. You're going to wear both of you out and still be frustrated."

"Both, then."

"What?" I hiss, reaching down to grip my cock in my hand. I'm going to come like a fucking teenager if it's what I'm thinking. Luther and I have filled Blake more than a few times, loving the way he howls between us until he's impaled on two cocks, two fully expanded knots, with nowhere to move. "Luca, you have to clarify that."

Luca just leans forward, his chest pressed against Blake's, his eyes still on mine. The new position shows off his beautiful ass and where Blake is stuffed inside of him. There's an obscene amount of cum and slick pooling between their thighs but that just draws me forward. My tongue darts out to lick my lips before I catch myself. Every other time I've tried to step behind Luca, he's been terrified.

This can't work.

He wiggles his ass at me and as enticing as it is, I don't want to terrify him. Once inside of him, it's going to be fucking hard to stop and I want more for my real first time with him.

“Luca...”

“Just keep talking to me. I need this. Both of you. I can’t... I need Blake but I need you. I... please .” He whines again, more slick pooling between their thighs as Blake steals his lips for a kiss. I move in slowly, holding my breath so I don’t spook him. Every instinct is telling me to rut into him, to claim him, to make him ours but that would terrify Luca and ruin what little bond we’ve built since he’s been here.

I also know that there’s no way in hell I’m going to knot him with Blake inside of him. Not only will that be too much for Luca, it’ll be too much for Blake. We can fill him in other ways that won’t stick him in a nightmare of our own making but I need Blake’s attention. I hover over Luca’s back, placing my hand over Blake’s on the little Omega’s waist.

Blake’s eyes pop open and meet mine and I wait for the small nod to enact our plan. He snaps his hips up a few times before Luca is coming again, the little Omega whining for both of us. When Luca sits up, I gently pull him off Blake’s cock, flip him over and sit him in my lap. He grips my shoulders, crying out as I squeeze into his tight heat, the little Omega snarling at me for stealing him from Blake.

“Both. Both. Both. ”

My knot is already fluttering at Luca’s entrance, screaming at me to knot and claim my new Omega. I muster up every ounce of control I have left as I wait for Blake to stand up and show me that he’s okay. He’s covered in slick and sweat and cum as he stumbles toward us, a sloppy smile on his face as he feeds his cock to Luca, the little Omega greedily grabbing Blake’s thighs and shoving his face forward.

I forget to move, watching as Luca rides my cock, Blake roughly sifting his hand into the little Omega’s hair and using his mouth for his pleasure. We’re never going to get anything done watching these two together, not that I care. God, they’re fucking

gorgeous.

Luca's face scrunches up as he tears his mouth off of Blake and looks at me, "Help me." He wiggles on my cock, his thighs trembling from exertion. I'm about to explode inside of him until I realize what he's talking about. I grip his thighs and raise him up, Luca's eyes widening. "No! Like before. Lay over me. Please. Please." The terror in his eyes reminds me that some part of his thoughts are still focused on Hudson and while he's always enjoyed a little bit of dominance in the bedroom, pain isn't his thing.

I lay him down in the middle of his nest before moving on top of him and sliding back into his slick heat. He grips my arms as I begin moving again, waiting until Luca's face scrunches up in that adorable way before pushing my cock deeper inside of him, my knot nudging past his hole. He lets out a little squeal as he sprays his release against my chest and I unload in his ass, gently rocking against him until he relaxes.

Blake plops down beside us, sprawled on his stomach as he reaches over for my hand. He's breathing a little heavy but he manages a thumbs up before curling into Luca's side. I prop my arms up on either side of Luca, not wanting to squish him but the little Omega is adamant that he shoulders all of my weight. "Like this?"

"Mmmm, perfect."

He uses that word so easily with us that I'm beginning to truly believe it. I kiss the top of his head, Luca relaxing further as the pheromones from my Alpha start to take over. Luca tilts his head to the side, his fingers trailing up my arm. "Bite, please."

I still, unsure of what to do. We're knotted together, Luca stuck on my cock for however long it takes. Since he's not been getting the nutrients and attention he needs from an Alpha, it could be a little while. "Fuck, babe. I can't give that to you." Luca

starts squirming and I have to flip us over so that he realizes we're truly stuck together. Blake props himself up on one arm, trying to stay awake and failing miserably.

"I need it out. You know I can feel him and he's so angry." The haze of his heat spike is gone, the fiery little Omega I first fell in love with back in his nest. He places a hand on my chest before using the other to rip at his bandage. "I want it out. Just bite me. I saw that you could bite me and it'll go away. He's there, pulling, teasing, yelling. Gray, I don't want him there."

A heavy sigh falls from my lips as I sift for the right words to say. Luca is still scratching at his bandage so I grab his hand and hold it in mine. If he starts stressing out, it's going to be bad for all of us. "Luca, I know it's hard but I'm not dominant enough to bite over Hudson's mark. I will bite you, though, Luca. You will bear my mark and I will claim you."

He wiggles on my lap and I realize he's trying to dislodge my knot. "I'll just ask Luther."

Fucking hell. "Luca!" I spit his name with a little more force than necessary, his entire body locking up as he meets my eyes. "Baby, I'm so fucking sorry. You have absolutely no idea what you're asking."

"And you don't understand what it's like to have him in my head. I don't want him anywhere near me. I need it out. I would cut it out myself if I could!" He struggles against me, trying to retrieve his hand to scratch at his bandage again. The snarl he throws in my face is too adorable even if he's pissed and terrified. All that squirming he's doing is making me hard too and I'm seconds away from filling him up a second time.

"Luca, just—fuck..." My cock swells and fills the little Omega up, Luca's eyes

widening as he lets out a guttural groan that has his scent sweetening again. I can almost taste it, it's so thick. Blake is just as affected as he sits the rest of the way up and drags Luca into a tongue-licking kiss, both of them lost to the pheromones floating around the room. "Luca, it's a difficult spot to be in but we'll figure this out. I promise."

Even if that means one of us has to bite him to give him his peace.

32

Blake

The next morning offers me a little reprieve, my Alphas are working out in the living room where Luca stationed them and told them not to move. He's fucking adorable, restuffing his nest after Grayson switched out everything covered in cum and sweat. Of course, Luca whined through the whole thing, a grown man nearly throwing a temper tantrum until Luther stopped it with one look.

My little Omega has been wordless all morning, with wide eyes and pouts that have us all over him. He's going to be fucking gorgeous over the next several days even if I'm already hard and leaking, slick gathering around my hole every time his scent bursts forth. It's the only reason Grayson deposited me in my own nest and told me to get some rest before Luca's heat actually hits.

None of us have spoken about it but I know that I won't be able to participate the entire time. The stress of a heat is bad enough but my desire to please Luca with whatever he needs will be a strain on my heart. As much as I don't want to admit it, at some point, I'll have to leave the nest.

I snuggle into one of the larger pillows in my nest, enjoying the darkness that surrounds me. Someone's murmuring out in the hall before a low growl cuts it off and then a whimper follows. No doubt Luca is trying to ask for something again and Luther is putting a stop to it. I honestly wish I was in there to see it because I know for a fact that Luther is enjoying every last bit of this version of Luca. The bond is warm and happy and protective.

I flop onto my back, hating the way heat courses through me. I'm not in heat but I might as well be. His thickening scent is affecting me more than I had planned and I'm praying I don't lose my head over the next several days. It's the only thing I can't stand—losing my control. My Alphas know that but it's not something I've ever shared with Luca. I never told him that I despise parts of my Omega biology because it keeps me from what I love.

That I despise who I am at times because I can't control my reactions, my needs, or my cravings.

He'll find out eventually but a small part of me is glad that I'll have a distraction from the nightmare that is Hudson. The bruise has disappeared but the memory hasn't and I'll be glad when it goes away.

Ding!

I frown and reach for my phone, not surprised to see one of the designers—the one from the little sandwich shop, Addie—pinging me on Teams for a review.

Hey, Mr. Keller

It's Blake.

But

Blake or I can't help

Fine. Blake, look we need this document signed off and both of your Alphas are in meetings. I know you're all working from home and your status says that you're out of office but could you review a document?

Grayson can't do it?

He's interviewing a new coder.

Send it over.

My Alphas will have my ass for working but I'm bored as fuck in here. I also know that this will only take a few minutes and any stress incurred from doing so will be minimal. I hope. I'm 100% wrong when I see the document she sent over.

Addie, this is 11 pages

Please? We can't start building the add on to Starlight Falls II without you reviewing the SOP.

Sure.

A low whine filters through my lips as I reach down to adjust my cock for the umpteenth time. Slick slips down my thighs as that sweet ocean scent meets my nose until I seriously think about humping a pillow for relief. Is this how my Alphas felt when I was in heat? Because this is ridiculous.

Focus, Blake.

My heart beats a little faster as I blink a few times and then refocus on my phone. Several minutes go by before I realize that I've been rereading the same goddamn paragraph. It's frustrating as fuck not being able to concentrate when an entire company is depending on me and my craft. It feels like hours before I get to the end, my body throbbing with the need to come or fuck someone or just hump a pillow.

Looks great. Do I need to sign something?

Can you log in and sign off? How's DocuSign?

DocuSign is preferable.

If I slip out of this room to retrieve my laptop, I'm done for. Five minutes later, I'm finished with the request, and not a moment too soon as the door bursts open, Luca stumbling inside. His wild eyes fall on me, his hair in disarray, my Omega wonderfully naked. He smells like sex and honey as he climbs into my nest and rips my pants open for my cock.

"Hey cupcake, what's going on?"

He doesn't say a word, just continues tearing at my clothes, growling at me in frustration until I start helping. When I'm finally undressed, he flops onto his back and tugs me with him, only relaxing when I slide into his ass.

"Hey, Luca. Talk to me. What's going on?" I prop myself up on my arms on either side of him, searching his beautiful eyes for any sign of distress. He hooks a leg around my waist, his hands moving to my shoulders as he pushes his hips up to take me deeper. "Luca, cupcake, what is going on? Where is Luther or Grayson?"

His face twists up in an adorable scowl. "Grayson stopped fucking me. He got a call and told me to wait. I was done waiting." I laugh as I give in, picking up a slow pace that has us both whining for release. His expressions dance around on his face as I lean down to kiss him, torturing him with my cock until I can't hold back anymore.

I'll never be able to drag these moments out, not as an Omega. The need to come will always be too great but I'll enjoy it anyway. My head falls to his shoulder as I pump my hips a few more times before filling his ass, Luca letting out a strained groan as he sprays across our chests. His grip on my shoulders lessens and I let him guide me until I'm lying on top of him.

Grayson has done this for me once or twice and I fucking love the weight and the way he's able to block out the entire world. It makes sense that Luca would crave the same feeling. I run my nose along his chest, covering him in my scent, alternating between almost petting him and licking the smells off his face. He tastes like both of my Alphas and I'm desperate for a replay.

Luca places his hands between us, lightly tapping his fingers between us. "You were working in here. I know it."

I frown, wondering how the fuck he knew that. "Luca—"

"You always get that little scrunch in your nose when you're thinking hard. You did it at school and you'd do it at the diner. Fuck. I never called Shelly about my shifts. I'm probably fired. It doesn't matter. You're not supposed to be doing anything, Blake." Luca pushes me off him and then rolls onto his side, hovering over my arm as I fall to my back. "I need you to be there during my heat but your Alphas keep telling me that if you're resting, you won't be."

That's the most I've heard him speak all morning even if it's mixed with little gasps and hisses as his heat pushes forth. I reach up to caress the side of his face, promising myself that I'll work harder to take care of my body. Luther has been saying it for a while but Quentin truly laid it out for me—that I'm not the only one who hurts when I stress myself out.

"I need you to fuck me during my heat, Blake. I want to see them fuck you and me and—" His jaw clenches and then he buries his head against my shoulder. "You're my safe space, Blake. Please. "

I sigh, sagging into the cushions as I pull him on top of me. He pats my chest softly, letting me know he doesn't need another round. His heat is going to be messy as fuck, both of us leaking and needy, crying out to be filled. And yet, I'm a little excited

about getting lost in his scent. I want to keep my head about it but I want to enjoy it.

“You don’t have to prove anything to me, okay? You’re perfect.”

For that, I drag him into another kiss.

33

Luther

Luca is trouble, way more trouble than Blake ever was during a heat. It took me thirty minutes longer than usual to get out the door, Luca barring my exit when I tried to leave.

“Gray, I just need to run in and get a few things situated. It looks like Luca’s heat is going to hit tonight and I need to make sure everyone has what they need before we stop responding.” I snort at the Alpha who’s flushed a deep red, his long hair plastered to the sweat on his face and shoulders. Luca is sprawled across his chest, Grayson’s knot deep inside him. I think that’s the third spike Luca has had in the last few hours.

Those wordless bouts have given way to short sentences and little growls, Luca trying to position us in his nest to work before he climbs onto our cock. I left Grayson to complete that task, needing to concentrate before I let my instincts ride me hard. Checking in on Blake, I smirk at the way his attention is focused on his phone. The little fucker is most definitely working when he’s supposed to be resting.

He thinks we separated him from the chaos to sleep. I separated him because I know he’ll be lulled into finishing a few things and he’ll need the strength and lack of distractions to do it. Giving him the resources and space to continue being who he is, is my job. I want Blake to succeed but not at the cost of his own health.

Closing the door, I march back into the living room, confused when Luca is no longer

in the nest. Grayson twists around to laugh at me before pointing to the front door. There in all his glory is my little Omega, his hands on his hips, that adorable pout back on his face. He's wearing a pair of boxers and nothing else, his chest flushed with arousal and sweat. However, this time, I'm pretty sure he's actually angry. "Sweetheart?"

"You don't smell like me anymore."

Many of the preheat rituals we shared with Blake haven't happened in over a year. I've forgotten some of the nuances that come with an Omega and their territory, Luca displaying them more fiercely than Blake ever did. It dawns on me that Luca is trying to protect his new family. He's trying to make sure that at the end of this, he's still ours. Luca's territorial instincts are riding him hard which explains why he keeps dragging us into his nest. He needs to see us, to know that we'll be here for his heat.

"Sweetheart, I need to go take care of a few things and then I'll be right back." As I suspected, Luca is definitely going to run this pack. Barring my exit because I took a shower is a new one and it's going to be difficult to persuade Luca that I'm not leaving for good. He'll say he'll understand but his instincts won't.

Grayson comes up beside me, reaching for Luca. "Hey, let's let our Alpha go to work, alright? He'll be back."

Luca steps out of reach, snarling at Grayson and then focusing back on me. I chuckle at his defiance which just makes him angrier. "Why don't you want to smell like me?" I have no answer for that. We'll need to buy an ocean-scented wash to get past Luca's detection system but it won't help me at this moment. I'm tempted to growl at him like I have the last few times but those were playful in nature. Any sound that comes from me right now will be irritated and slightly annoyed.

"Luca—"

A beautiful whine slips from his lips, tears glazing his eyes as they dart between us. He starts fiddling with his fingers, his shoulders slouching. "I'm sorry. I don't know what's wrong with me. I never wanted Hudson's scent on me but you're leaving and you don't smell like me. Some part of me thinks you aren't coming back but that's stupid talk. Blake is here."

God, Hudson is still on my shit list but I hope I get to kill him and then bring him back to life and kill him again. When a cry falls from Luca, I realize I have to rectify this. The office can wait. I set my bag down on the floor and step up to Luca, the little Omega falling against me with relief. "Sweetheart, it's okay to want your Alphas close during your heat. It's been a little while since Blake's last one and I've forgotten a few things. And no, I'm not just coming back because Blake is here. You're here too, Luca." I wrap my arms tightly around his back, letting Luca rub his face into my suit.

He shudders and then whines again, the thick scent of his perfume filling the air.

"Alpha, I can take him."

"I got him this time, Gray. Rest. You'll be with him for the rest of the day." Gently, I pick Luca up and smile into those glazed eyes. "Hello, sweetheart. I'm going to take good care of you." He just nods, a mumbling mess all over again as I lean him against the front door and slowly drag his slick-soaked boxers down his legs.

I reach between us to undo my pants, knowing that I'll need a new suit after this. Not that it matters because the moment I slip into Luca, it's like everything is right with the world. Even the general hum through the bond coming from Blake tells me this is where I'm supposed to be. Luca curls into my chest as I fuck him, the little Omega mewling and scratching at my suit until he comes and I knot him. His entire body falls limp, his instincts satisfied.

The office isn't as busy as I thought it would be with the launch of the new plugin just a week away and Starlight Falls II advertising in the works. We've all been pulling long hours, maybe unnecessarily so but I do everything I can to bring Blake's dream to fruition. That's when I realize, I haven't seen him pick up a video game in months. He usually plays in one of the conference rooms to work out any kinks or gather new ideas. The console we brought home hasn't been touched and I don't even think it's been unboxed from where it's stuffed in the utility closet.

My heart falls, wondering if we haven't been doing everything we can to both support and cherish Blake in the way that he's needed. Has he fallen out of love with this world or has his interests changed? I stuff those thoughts into the back of my mind as I make sure the design team is set and then hand Bryant the keys to the kingdom. Once I set my status to away and let everyone know that we'll be unavailable for my Omega's heat as is custom, I pile myself back into the car and head for home.

No doubt that information will somehow get to Hudson, even after I hired a new security team. I still can't figure out how Hudson made it into the building, past several guards but I suspect that his ties to the mayor and other high officials give him the power to threaten my family.

From what I could pull together, Hudson is a piece of work and he's going to be a bitch to get rid of. He's more connected than I am and his reach boasts a strength I could only dream of. The problem is that he has absolutely no business having an Omega or a mate at all. According to Luca, they're not only mated but also married which will prove even harder to undo.

I pull into the private lot and head for the elevator, relaxing slightly when I catch Maceo's text that the order of protection is now active. For the next few days, Hudson won't be allowed anywhere near us, including in the lobby of our apartment building. The moment I walk inside our apartment, the sweet sounds of Blake and

Luca fucking hit my ears. My cock thickens in my pants, almost painfully, as their scents wrap around me, the Omegas' moans muffled, which means they're in Blake's nest.

My attention turns to a shirtless Grayson who's faithfully preparing food for us as he used to before Blake's heat, his hands trembling as he tries to close a container. "Gray, are you alright?" He glances up, a delirious smile on his face and I chuckle at the sorry state of my mate. He's covered in hickies and sweat, the bond strong and happy between us. "Ah, they got you good, didn't they?"

"They're insatiable. Luca had another spike but since then he's been attached to Blake's side. I'm hoping that when his heat actually hits, he gives Blake a reprieve because I'm not sure how long he's going to hold out. Blake, not Luca." Grayson growls as he slams the top down on the container and still fails to get it latched. This is the part that no one discusses about having two Omegas in the house, the constant adrenaline of being on edge, at full mast, and the toll it takes on our bodies.

I move toward Gray and slip the container from him before closing it. "Talk to me, Gray. What's going on?"

"Just worried that we won't be able to give them everything they need, especially after the incident with Hudson."

I hum my response, pulling Gray into my arms and pressing a kiss to his forehead. "Well, everything at the company should be okay. Maceo also mentioned that the order of protection went through. There's that, at least. I did want to ask. Does Blake seem different to you? I haven't caught him playing on the console at work or here. Have we forgotten something? Have I been doing something wrong?" It pains me not to know what has changed in our family dynamic. I'm supposed to protect them and yet I can't even take care of my Omega.

“Alpha, you remember when he pitched the idea for Starlight Falls, right?” Grayson leans back against the counter, my hands falling to the surface on either side of him. He curls his fingers into the lapels of my suit, smiling up at me. “It’s a wonderful tale of discovery, adventure, and forbidden love. All about being with someone you can’t have.”

Dread fills my chest at the implication. Blake built an entire game around the fantasy of having Luca in his bed, in his home, and in his pack. “It was an obsession, wasn’t it? Fuck. How did I not know that?”

“Because you’re always so good at taking care of us, giving us what we need, that when I figured that out, I knew it would destroy you. Luca was already mated and Blake found a way to keep himself put together. I never told him I knew because it didn’t matter. If our Omega was happy, I was happy. He was safe and well taken care of and owned an entire company.”

I drop my head to his shoulder, hating that I hadn’t done anything sooner. Not that there was anything to do. “And now?”

“We started going to the diner more. They started texting again. The fantasy was real for him. He didn’t need the game, not like he used to.” Grayson kisses the edge of my jaw, sucking the skin into his mouth. “Stop worrying. You are a perfect Alpha and you’re going to be even more perfect when Luca is officially ours.” His last words come out in a purr as he continues to kiss and suck until he’s sucking on the bite he gave me a year ago, a growl rumbling through my chest. “Now, Alpha, I need you to fuck me because I’ve been hard for the last hour and a half listening to them.”

“Why not just go in there?” I ask, my jaw pulling tight when Grayson reaches between us to undo my belt. “They would have been all over you.”

“Because I need my Alpha, just like they do.”

That's all the invitation I need as I rip his sweats down his thighs and flip him against the counter. I press up against his back, immediately dropping my head to my bite. His hips buck back against me, my cock swelling further until I need relief. He smells like both Omegas and himself, a mixture of scents that drives me crazy. I unzip my pants and pop open the button, unearthing my cock so that it can rest against the seam of Grayson's ass.

We haven't fucked in a while but just the thought of filling him has me rocking against him, Grayson grunting as he pushes back against me. "Please tell me there's lube in one of the drawers." I'm not above using spit but my mate deserves more care than that. This isn't a frenzied joining. This is reminding him that he's just as important as the two Omegas currently stashed away in the nest. Grayson pulls out the drawer beside us and I grin at the half-used bottle.

Liberally coating my cock, I then stuff two fingers between his ass cheeks and rim his hole. He flattens himself against the counter, pushing back as I begin to fuck him and open him up wide enough for me. "Jesus, Luther. Just fuck me already or I'm going to come before you're even inside of me." Grayson knows exactly what words like that do to me as I snarl at him for threatening my process. I sink into his ass, leaning over his back so that he can't move, my lips moving to the bite in his shoulder again. "Jesus Christ, I think I'm in heaven."

"Your sweet ass is a lot better than some pearly gates, Gray." I wrap my hand in his hair and pull back, loving the groan he gives me in response. His back arches as he pushes up on his hands to accommodate the position. His ass is trying to suck me in further and while I would fucking love to give him my knot, I'm not sure how Luca would react.

I slide out and then spear back in, watching the muscles in my mate's back and shoulders tense and flex. He's a gorgeous work of art with hair that anyone would be jealous of, the silk between my fingers in stark contrast to the roughness of my hand.

Grunts and groans spill through his clenched jaw but I don't want him to temper his sounds.

Not for me.

Not for them.

“Let them hear you, Gray. I want them to know exactly what we're doing out here.”

At first, Grayson doesn't comply so I fuck into him harder, snarling over my bite before I suck on it hard enough for him to fall limp. Then he cries out, bucking back against me, his ass desperately trying to take me all in again. I brace my free hand on his hip, using him to milk my cock as he jerks himself off, both of us lost to the haze of our Omegas' scent.

The aromas thicken and I glance up to see both of them, beautifully naked at the edge of the kitchen. Blake is covered in many of the same hickies that Grayson is, the red blotches and scratches from a very angry Omega close to his heat. Luca is standing beside him, wide-eyed, enraptured with the way I'm fucking into another Alpha. A whine slips out, drawing Grayson's attention. Luca swallows nervously, looking between the both of us, the scent of his slick reaching my nose.

“Look at our pretty Omegas, Gray.” I push a little of my Alpha voice into my words, loving the way both Omegas shiver beneath the power. Luca scrunches up his nose, his hands fisted at his side and I think for a moment, he's going to demand a knot. When I spear into Grayson one last time, roaring through my release, I make sure to keep my gaze locked with Luca.

He's still standing there, confused and flushed.

And then he comes.

Just like that.

A faint blush hangs on his cheeks as he scurries back to Blake's nest, Blake laughing as he comes closer. I slip out of Grayson's ass, watching as my release dribbles down the back of his legs, my knot angry that it isn't currently plugging an Omega. "I would have wanted to watch," Blake whines as he comes up to my side, his head angled backward for a kiss. He may not be as wordless as Luca but he's riding his Omega instincts hard. I gladly grant him the kiss he's looking for, gently holding onto his left shoulder. He moves to the left just slightly so that my hand moves to the front of his neck.

"Blake—"

"I need to erase his touch, okay? Just hold me like you used to." Tears fill his eyes as he meets my gaze, silently pleading to be held and cherished. God, how could I have missed this? " Please. " He pleads differently than Luca but it's no less heart-wrenching.

My hand tightens around his neck as I drag him forward and kiss him again, Blake finally melting against me. Grayson comes up behind him, holding us together, giving our Omega the comfort he needs. I hope it'll be enough.

34

Luca

Everyone is situated in my nest after I took two showers to scrub myself of the embarrassment of coming in front of Blake's Alphas like that. Then I doused myself in pear-scented soap and curled into the corner before climbing into Luther's lap. I don't want to need them but as my heat draws near, I can't fathom not touching them. Luther has no idea what was going on in my head this morning when he tried to leave and I'm not going to tell him the truth.

Some part of me thought he was leaving for good. The other part thought he didn't want me. After all, he washed off my scent and put on clothes when we had spent the entire evening and part of the morning together. Now, I have to sit in his lap to make sure that he won't go anywhere. He draped his suit jacket over my arms and then wrapped himself around me, facing me toward the other two.

Grayson is sitting up with Blake's head in his lap, the Alpha playing with the Omega's sweaty curls. Blake's breathing is a little shallow and I know I was too hard on him but fuck, his scent was too sweet. I also wasn't myself, scratching and clawing at him for a knot when rationally, I knew he didn't have one. Paired with Blake still trying to finish up something at work and I'm mad at myself for not crawling out into the living room for Grayson again.

Luther's feather-light touch on my shoulder which moves to my neck reminds me that I took off the bandage earlier. The bites are healing with the salve and my Alphas' attention, something crucial for an Omega. I shiver beneath his touch, Luther

pulling away but I just shake my head. “I like it. I promise. Hudson never touched me like that.” I scowl at myself for bringing him up again. “Sorry.”

“Stop apologizing, sweetheart. You were in a terrible position for a long fucking time, too long. Healing takes time.”

“I want to be okay now, though.” I need to be. I have to be. I also know that I’m not and won’t be for a while. Hudson keeps tugging on his end of the bond, reminding me that he’s here, lingering. He knows what is about to happen but I refuse to let him take away this new bubble of safety. It’s mine .

“You will be, little Omega. Now, before you have another spike, I have some questions that have to be answered. This is your heat and we want to make it as comfortable as possible, okay?” I nod, Luther still playing with the side of my neck that is free of Hudson’s torture. His other hand settles around my waist, fingers splayed across my stomach. I feel owned and I don’t even think he knows that his movements are equivalent to telling everyone that he’s going to claim me. “I assume you want to have your heat out here, right?”

“Yes please.” I love Blake’s nest but it isn’t big enough. It’s also too dark. He likes no light. I want a little light and I’m very proud of the fairy lights draped around the living room. Grayson and Luther keep telling me how perfect it is and even Blake called me cupcake after I rebuilt it.

Luther presses a kiss to the top of my head, shifting beneath me. His hard cock presses against my ass and my entire body responds as I melt against his chest. It’s both inconvenient and wonderful, knowing that he’ll catch me. He doesn’t even stop me when I twist around to open his pants and strip mine off to fit him inside me. I sag against him as he fills me, his knot fluttering against my ass. With another push, he’s all the way inside and I breathe out a sigh of relief, dragging his arm back around my waist.

He chuckles, a deep hearty sound that runs down my spine, and makes a beeline for my dick. It's then that I realize I'm half naked, sitting on an Alpha cock, while staring at my other two mates. They're both intrigued by my needy ass but I can't even feel ashamed because of the absolute euphoria running through me.

"Better, little Omega?" I nod enthusiastically, holding onto his arm. I don't even need to come. Just feeling him inside of me as his fingers start moving across my neck again is enough. "You'll probably go into heat tonight or tomorrow morning. Luca, as awkward as this is, I have to ask. What or who do you need here?"

I nibble on my lower lip, not wanting to answer that.

"Luca, do you want Maceo?" Luther gently wraps his fingers around my neck, taking special care to avoid the healing wounds on my shoulder. Then he twists me so that I can see his face. My cheeks heat and I whine in response, unable to hold it back. "You're a good little Omega, sweetheart. So precious." He kisses me again and then turns his attention to Blake. I feel like I've accomplished the absolute world with Luther's praise, grinning at my best friend and lover who sits up slightly to meet his Alpha's gaze. "How do you feel about Maceo being here for Luca's heat?"

I hold my breath, wondering if Blake will lean into his instincts or if he'll agree just because I want him here. His nose scrunches up, pushing those adorable glasses farther up his face. "He's hot. If he's here for Luca, I don't mind." Blake shrugs and then curls up again beside Grayson. I hate that answer.

Grayson leans over him, "Babe, I know it's weird and strange but bringing Maceo into this house isn't just a Luca thing. This house holds your nest as well and an unfamiliar male could threaten all of that. It's a biological response, not a logical one so we need to know how to give you both what you need and want without harming what you have." He starts running his fingers through Blake's hair again, the Omega struggling with what he wants and what he thinks he's allowed to have.

“That’s being selfish,” he mumbles.

I grunt at him, thrusting my leg out to jab him in the back. “If I’m allowed to be selfish, so are you.”

“Cupcake,” Blake flops onto his other side. “It doesn’t work like that. I have two Alphas and I can’t... that’s not...”

Luther cuts in, knowing full well that Blake is warring with the same emotions I was earlier. It’s much easier for me to choose and whine because I’m so close to my heat. My instincts are riding me hard. They aren’t the same for Blake. “Love, you are allowed to ask for anything you want and need and I will do my best to bring it to you.”

“It was just a response. You guys weren’t there and I didn’t know what his scent was. That’s-”

My eyes widen as Luther launches forward so that I’m on my hands and knees, his knot still firmly lodged inside of me. He hovers over my back, his hand wrapped around Blake’s neck, his teeth bared. Blake’s face contorts with a mixture of anger and confusion as he tries to stand up to his Alpha. He eventually submits, letting out a little whimper as I’m stuck between us. I’m equal parts turned on and feeling like I’ve interrupted something.

Of course, my body decides that it wants to be fucked, slick dripping between Luther’s knot and my hole. My cock hardens as I start rocking forward, trying to find friction on his knot. Luther stays my movement, his attention still firmly on Blake. “You don’t get to ignore what you need, love. I know for a fact that you would have never pulled Maceo into that nest if some part of you didn’t want him as more than just a family friend. You’ve never pulled in any of your other coworkers or classmates. Tell me again that you don’t need him and I’ll let this go. I’ll fuck Luca

like he needs and then we'll eat like this conversation never happened."

"But Luca needs Maceo," he whines.

"Tell me you don't need him."

I don't understand the reverse psychology but it works on Blake. His shoulders fall and Luther's hold relaxes. "I don't want to need him. I never needed him before." Tears gather in his eyes and then one rolls down his cheek. "It was just supposed to be us," he cries. His head drops to his chest, Grayson pulling him into his lap.

Grayson wraps him up tightly, removing his glasses and wiping away his tears. "Biology doesn't work like that, babe. You're both allowed to need, to want, to crave. You're allowed to get angry with how things are because we can't always see past all the Alpha bullshit. Blake, you're allowed to ask for more than we're giving you and if Maceo is who you need, he'll be here. For both of you." The Alpha kisses Blake's forehead before turning to us. "Alpha, stop torturing Luca and fuck him already."

"With pleasure," Luther growls. I'm not ready for the way he starts rocking against my ass with inhuman speed, my entire body alight with ecstasy. All rational thought flies out the window until I'm just a mess of little whimpers and cries, my fingers digging into the plushness of my nest.

I think I found my perfect forever.

I just hope I get to keep it.

35

Luca

By dinner, I can barely feel my body, slick permanently coating my hole as I search for food. Luther is whispering something to Grayson, Blake sprawled out across from them. He looks paler than I'd like but he keeps insisting that he's okay. I hope and pray his Alphas are strong enough to pull him out during my heat so he doesn't suffer.

I scratch my chest in a moment of clarity, needing to eat and to fix my nest again while I still can. The only thing I'm wearing is Luther's suit jacket, the thing swallowing me whole but I love it. It hangs down by my knees as I pull out a piece of cheesecake I've been eyeing for two days. I have no idea where it came from but I want it.

The plate hits the table seconds before Hudson tugs on the bond. I growl under my breath, frowning when my phone lights up. All of our phones are lined up on the edge of the counter, just in case but I shouldn't be getting any calls. I've blocked everyone I would rather not speak to and while I finally remembered to message Shelly, she said she understood. So, she shouldn't be calling me either.

Looking over at the living room, I make the worst decision and snatch my phone before scampering off to the bathroom. When I look at the screen, the elated feeling that I've been carrying around all day is destroyed.

Unknown

You thought you'd just play house with other Alphas

I'm going to destroy them and then when you're back with me, I'm going to fuck you until you're carrying my pups. That's what your parents gave you over for.

You're a worthless piece of shit, Luca. Text me back or I'll find a way to take Blake with me instead. That delicious pear scent hanging around you sometimes, I'll make him mine.

Let them fuck you and they're dead.

I cry out, holding my phone to my chest. I can't have my heat with the Kellers. We all want each other but I won't do that to Blake's Alphas. I won't take them from him. Fuck, Maceo is coming. I'll have to tell him I don't want him here.

Or, I'll just stay in here.

Heat blooms in the pit of my belly and I try to ignore it. "It's just another heat spike," I tell myself but this feels different. Worse, somehow. Slick drips down my thighs and I bend over, holding my stomach as a cramp tears through my body. "Not now. Not now." I have to get out of here. Frantically searching the walls gives me no reprieve. There's no window in here.

The cramp worsens and I drop to my knees, holding back a scream of pain. My entire body wants Luther or Grayson to soothe this feeling but I won't do that. Think, Luca. Think! Years of researching Omega heats gives me some knowledge on lessening the cramps. Ice cold water is one remedy, not foolproof but it's the only thing I have.

I rush to the shower and switch the knob to cold before shedding Luther's jacket and jumping inside. I swallow back a shriek at the temperature, making sure to stand right under the spray until the cramp goes away. The next wave drags me down to my

knees, my body trembling as it wars with the different temperatures.

“Luca, this is the worst idea you’ve ever had,” I say to myself, crouched over, my phone still clutched in my hand and yet, I can’t move as another cramp tears through me.

36

Blake

I jolt awake.

It's time and yet, Luca isn't in his nest. I can feel his need and terror running through me but he's not here. Panicked, I rush to my nest, Grayson calling after me. I don't answer, grumbling when I find it empty. "Where's Luca?" I cry. Did he leave? Did Hudson take him? Unconsciously, I wrap a hand around my neck and start checking the bed and the bathroom. Neither one reveals Luca. When I run back into the hall, Grayson steadies me with his hands on my shoulders. "Luca. Where is Luca? He's in heat. He's scared. Where's my cupcake?"

Tears stream down my face as the sound of water hits my ears and I take off toward the guest bathroom, growling at the locked door. He's so scared and he's in pain, trying to help himself.

"Cupcake, open the door. Luca, we can help you. Please." I jiggle the handle, trying to push against the wood with no luck. Grayson has to yank me away, Luther moving into the room to kick the door open. I don't expect to see Luca trying to fuck himself on his fingers, his body blue from the cold water of the shower. He's shaking uncontrollably, tears streaming down his cheeks as he puts a hand out, whimpering about how we can't help him. "I don't understand. Luther, help him. He needs us."

I try to break free of Grayson's hold and fail, only able to watch as Luther steps inside the bathroom to retrieve my Omega. Luca shies away from him, screaming

something incoherent. I don't understand this change and I hate how it's making me feel. I need to go to him, to bring him back with me, to fuck him, to love him. "Alpha." This time the plea is meant for Grayson.

He nuzzles the side of my head. "I know, baby. I know. Luther's got him."

Luca is still screaming, the sound tearing at my heart as I hold my breath. An Omega in heat and distress is a terrible combination but Luther's purr silences the screams and I can finally relax. "Little Omega, why would you lock yourself in here? We've been preparing for this. Come on."

"You can't touch me! Hudson says you're going to jail!" He throws a leg out, intending to kick Luther away but fails miserably. My Alpha catches his ankle and drags him forward, Luca still struggling before his instincts make him give in. "You can't. You can't." His phone is still clutched in his hand and I realize that Hudson must have texted him at some point. Luca's face contorts, my little Omega hissing as his scent sweetens. He must be experiencing cramps every few minutes at this point, needing a knot and yet he's resisting for us.

Luther quickly dries him off and carries him to his nest, placing him on his back. I pull Grayson with me to kneel beside Luca, hoping my presence will calm him. His fingers curl into the hem of my shirt, his glassy eyes terrified as they meet mine.

"You have to let them help you, cupcake."

"No! Hudson will take them from us. No."

I shake my head, bowing to press my head to his. "He won't do that, cupcake." I swallow back the whine that's threatening to push forth as I choose to lie to Luca for the very first time in my life. "I promise he won't take our Alphas from us." The laws are very firm when it comes to Alphas fucking mated Omegas. They need the

permission of each and every last Alpha mated to that Omega. Without it, my Alphas will end up in jail or tied up in a legal process that will ruin my family.

I know that Luther and Grayson have this covered but I also know that I'm at risk of losing one or both of them at some point. I look up to see both of them staring at me, all of us sharing the same thought. I choose not to deal with what will happen in the future and focus on the here and now. Luca reaches out for relief, Luther stealing him first. The silence is overwhelming and heavy with a sadness I didn't expect.

Luca scratches at Luther's chest for a bite, angling his head to the side, showing off the side that Hudson claimed. Each time, Luther merely places a kiss to the skin, denying Luca of his one and only desire. It isn't until he starts screaming that Hudson is here, scratching at his neck like he did with Grayson, and that I realize why Luca is so fucking adamant about this bite.

He wants Hudson out of his head.

I watch, unable to do anything, my hands fisted on my knee as Luca succumbs to the madness of his heat. I thought this was going to be a beautiful progression into our new life and instead, I'm stuck here, unable to soothe the true cause of his pain. I thought bringing Luca here would protect him. I might have just brought him here to condemn him.

Luca's cries start to soften as he curls into Luther's chest, passing out almost immediately when Luther's knot swells inside of him. My Alpha sits up, allowing Luca to rest against him, his dark eyes tortured with the reality of our situation. "I won't bite him, Blake. I can't do that. Not without everyone's approval. We're already breaking the law and I can't foresee it going over well. However, a bite is an entirely different issue." His gaze falls on me.

"You can't ask that of me, Alpha. You know how much I want Luca but not at your

expense.”

He nods, offering me a small smile. "You won't be getting rid of me that easily, love. I take that as a yes?" I nod and he turns to my other Alpha. "Grayson?"

My beautiful Alpha shifts forward, running a hand through Luca's hair before responding. "Next time he asks, give him what he needs. I would be honored to have Luca as part of this pack. It'll be a hard road ahead, but he deserves more than what life has given him."

37

Luca

I come to, Grayson rocking into my ass, a name falling from my lips that shouldn't be there. The start of my heat has been horrendous, Hudson picking at the bond while I yell for a bite. No one has given me what I want but I'm done asking.

I push up on my hands and knees, fingers curling into a blanket as I survey my surroundings. Anxiety grabs a hold of me with the presence behind me, Grayson slowly pulling out of my ass and flipping me onto my back. "Hey, Luca. Look at my pretty little Omega." He helps me sit up, beaming at me despite how sore and disoriented I feel. His hair is pulled back in a loose ponytail, his broad shoulders flexing as he sits back and gives me more space.

"Maceo." It's the only word that comes out of my mouth and I immediately regret it.

Grayson finds it hilarious, though. "You're in luck. Your Alpha convinced him to stop through but be nice, Luca. I'm not sure he's ever shared a heat with anyone else."

I like the sound of that. I'll be his first. I look around again and sigh. "Blake?" Grayson doesn't answer immediately, a frown taking over my face as I twist around to see my Omega curled up with one of my plushies. He's covered in sweat and cum but smells so sweet, his pear scent almost thick enough that I can taste it on my tongue. "Blake," I murmur, finding words a little difficult even though my sanity is present.

Crawling over to my Omega, I plop down next to him and pepper him with kisses, Blake giggling beneath my assault. “Hey cupcake,” he offers, his eyes still closed. “Do you need another round?” I don’t like how slow his words are coming out so I push him back down, shaking my head. A small smile plays on his lips after sniffing the air. “Go get him, tiger.”

That’s the only invitation I need as I scramble to my feet and run into the kitchen area to find the man who’s been on my mind. My instincts are forefront and center even though I can see everything I’m doing and horrified by the way I make a beeline for Maceo’s pants. Forget niceties and greetings, I guess. Luther swipes me around my waist and pulls me into his chest. I squirm against him and then still when Luther gives me one of those no-nonsense glares.

“Maceo, I know what my Omegas want but are you okay with this? You came here, knowing what I was asking of you but you still have a minute to walk back out that door.” I’m not letting Maceo leave but finding a way out of Luther’s arms is futile. Scratching or biting will get me fucked but not by the Beta standing in front of me.

He looks between me and Luther, his gaze darting to my nest and falling on Blake. He smells unsure, his laidback stance tensing up until all I can smell is fear. “I—”

“Be straight with me, Maceo.”

“Yes?”

I wriggle out of Luther’s arms and drop to my knees, close enough to start undoing Maceo’s pants. He makes no move to stop me but his scent changes and hardens which only makes my need for him worse. Not soon enough, Maceo undoes the zipper so that I can slide his pants and boxers down his meaty thighs.

That’s when I catch onto Maceo’s hesitation.

It has nothing to do with not wanting to be here and everything to do with the Alpha cock I'm currently staring at, complete with a knot. "But... Beta," I push out even as I press my face into the little curls above his knot, sniffing his scent that's almost as rich as Luther's.

Maceo sifts a hand into my hair, allowing me to explore. His touch is gentle in contrast to the other three and yet still firm. I kiss down his length, enjoying the way his cock jumps beneath my touch, my tongue darting out to taste him. He tastes amazing and like just what I need. I suck the tip into my mouth, moaning as I sit there on my knees. My tongue swipes across his slit, lapping up the little beads of precum.

I could do this all day.

Maceo's thighs tremble as his pull in my hair strains, his control slipping. This is what I want. What I need. I continue playing with his cock, only sucking at the tip, occasionally, reaching up to squeeze his knot when he finally gives in. The Beta rips me off of him and sets me on the table, slick thickening between my thighs at the sudden change. "You asked for this, Luca," he growls before sliding into my ass.

I howl in pleasure as my body flops back onto the kitchen island, Maceo fucking into me hard and fast. He's just as wide as Luther, but not as long, his knot smaller than an Alpha's too but now I know why I slipped up the other day. Not that it matters. Maceo is the perfect present during my heat and I cling to him as he explodes in my ass, bringing me another orgasm. The haze clears just a little bit more as he stuffs his knot into me, the muscle expanding and stretching me out until the need dissipates.

I told Blake that this would be perfect.

38

Maceo

I sit on one of the stools, Luca wrapped around me as he sleeps soundly, my knot still stuffed inside of him. I've never once knotted someone, let alone fucked someone with the lights on. There are too many questions that bring up a past I would rather not talk about. However, Luther is staring at me, silently asking for an explanation. I don't want to give it to him. This is why it's so hard for me to concede to another Alpha.

Because biologically, I am one.

"It would have never mattered," I start. "But your Omegas needed me. Fuck, that's not right. We needed each other? I'm not sure. All I know is that I needed to be here. Here is where feels right but no one knows."

Luther shakes his head, gently running a hand down Luca's back. The Omega stirs and then falls back asleep. "You don't have to explain, Maceo. I was just surprised. I think we all were but it explains a few things."

I need him to know that I'm not challenging him, that I'm not here as a threat to his pack. "Luther, I'm not an Alpha, okay? I took all the tests when I was a kid and sure, I have the parts but nothing else. They let me choose and I didn't want that burden. I didn't want to be half of someone."

Luther stands and walks to my side, avoiding Luca's back. I've noticed them all

doing that where Luca is concerned so I'll keep it in mind. The Alpha bends down and presses his forehead to mine. "I don't need you to apologize for who you are or what you look like. You came for our Omegas because, despite this situation, they are ours. However you come, Alpha or Beta, I accept you. You already told me that you would not fight me on how I carry my pack. Your word is good enough."

His words take a weight off my shoulders. No one who has ever found out has said those words. They've ridiculed me for my size and my cock. They've told me that choosing to live as a Beta was the weak option, that I should have strived to be part of the designation that rules society. Never in my entire life has someone accepted me as I am.

And for Luca to not even blink as he let me fuck him? I can only hope that Grayson and Blake will look at me the same way.

I'm not sure what I expected but an orgy wasn't it. I thought everyone's attention would be on Luca but it's spread out, even Blake climbing onto my cock as he leans forward to swallow Luca into his mouth. I'm part of a sexual train, my entire body willing me to give in completely. Blake keeps whining, pushing back against me and I'm just kneeling behind him, confused about what he needs.

Grayson chuckles, Luca's head in his lap. "He likes it rough, Maceo. Give it to him."

The last time I saw Blake, he was in distress, pale from terror. He looked so fragile even though I know he's not. However, his Alphas know what he likes so I pull out and slam into the Omega, Blake's howl of pleasure vibrating around Luca's cock. A shockwave of pleasure spreads through me at the way Blake's ass tries to suck me in and something inside of me yearns to please the Omega.

My Omega.

I swallow nervously at the inclination, at my instincts yelling for me to accept these beautiful men past the walls I've built. For once in my life, I give in, Blake mewling beneath my touch as I latch onto his hips and pick up my pace, using him like a rag doll. God, he feels amazing.

Seconds later, Luca crawls from beneath Blake and over to Luther, chanting 'knot' over and over again. He's lost to the haze, Luther gladly gathering the Omega up in his arms before sliding into his ass. Grayson feeds his cock to Blake, the Omega preening between us as we take care of him. It almost feels like I'm part of something as we watch Luther and Luca together.

The size difference is astounding, the way he so beautifully stretches the Omega each time he thrusts inside. I reach around Blake's front and tug at his nipples, the Omega jerking between both of us. Duly noted. Grayson is grinning at my forwardness, his cheeks flushed when his eyes meet mine. I'm not expecting that and I have no idea if that's even something I'm interested in.

Stuffing that idea down and away, I refocus on Luca finding the relief he needs, the Omega tilting his neck to receive a bite. "Please," he pleads. It's just loud enough for us all to hear as my knot swells and I push inside of Blake. The Omega cries out, Grayson filling him at the same time. I gather Blake up in my arms, all of us turning to watch as Luther lays Luca into the nest, still connected. "Bite, please ." He angles his neck again, the side covered in healing bites from Hudson.

My breath catches in my throat as Luther drags two fingers down the sensitive skin before looking up. "I won't do this without the blessing from my pack." Blake and Grayson are quick to agree, Luther's gaze lingering on me. I already feel guilty enough after fucking both of his Omegas that this question seems out of place.

"Luther—"

“You are more part of this pack than you realize, Maceo.”

This bite will have legal implications none of us will be able to escape and yet it might be one of the most powerful protections to give Luca. “Bite him, Alpha.” The words surprise me but it feels right. If I’m part of this pack, Luther will be my Alpha. I will submit to him, maybe not in the traditional way but he is the leader. That won’t change.

Luther sinks his teeth into Luca’s neck, the Omega’s back arching forward as he screams through the pain. I have no idea how that feels but it seems to turn almost euphoric, Blake starts to swivel his hips on my knot seconds later. “I can feel my cupcake. He’s there. Alpha, he’s there .” Their scents mingle together and what was a moment I feel included in, now has me on the outside.

These four are connected. I can just barely feel Luca’s happiness but it is nothing compared to the bond that they now share.

Luther begins nursing the new bite, his instincts taking over as he wraps himself entirely around Luca. If any one of us move forward, he might see it as a threat. Then his eyes snap to me and I’m ready to be told that I’m no longer needed. The intensity in his gaze has me bowing my head, Luther responding with a purr that reverberates through the entire nest.

It feels like he’s saying we’re complete.

And even though I’ve only been here for a few hours, I could see it being an eternity.

39

Grayson

Two days later, Luca's heat finally breaks. We're worn out, tired, and hungry, having blown through the prepared foods. Having an extra body here wasn't something I'd prepared for, although I should have. And as wonderful as this experience was, I'll be glad for the three-month reprieve we'll get between heats. I pull out a few eggs and leftover bacon from the freezer, Luther fumbling with the coffee machine. Neither one of us has showered or even bothered to put on clothes, Luca and Blake's marks covering our entire body.

They're vicious little fiends but I'd want nothing less.

Even Maceo gave as good as he got, the Beta falling asleep between them. I'm almost jealous except for the way they both kept playing with his cock but not letting him come. Eventually, he just growled at them and they gave in, falling asleep curled up against him. I'm thankful for him because he didn't succumb to Luca's heat the way Luther and I did. He's the missing link we needed and I'm not sure I'll ever be able to thank him enough for removing Blake when he did.

My knot swells as I push into Luca, sighing with relief when the Omega stops squirming. Having him completely relax every time we knot him is a fucking magical thing. I'm not sure what would happen if he was still whining for more. Luther is passed out beside me, both of us at our wit's end as I glance over to see Blake trying to breathe. He gasps for air and then whines when it doesn't work, my Omega clutching at his chest for a reprieve.

Luther sits up, Luca snarling at him not to move. “Sweetheart, I have to take care of him.” He strokes Luca’s hair back, kissing his forehead but Luca just grabs onto his hair, not allowing either of us to move. We knew there would be a point where Blake would have to be removed from the nest but we didn’t think it would happen at the same time Luca’s territorial instincts kicked in. He needs his Alphas and Maceo is far enough away, that he isn’t caught up in this.

I’ve watched Luca treat Maceo as both an Alpha and a Beta in the last few hours and it’s been intriguing. I know it’ll be a conversation later as Maceo tells us how he identifies but it’s precisely that he is a Beta that will help.

Maceo moves in from the kitchen, carrying fruits and water, his attention falling on Blake who’s struggling to breathe. The tray is discarded as the Beta gathers Blake up in his arms and removes him from the nest. He lays our Omega on the ground, flattening him out as he tells him to breathe. I hold my breath, watching for several moments as Blake just clings to the Beta, eyes wide. And then he takes that sweet next breath, my entire body sagging with relief.

Luca is still snarling between us, Maceo waving at us to take care of Luca while he cares for Blake. If I wasn’t already attracted to Maceo before, I doubly am now, especially with the way he lays beside Blake and begins running his nose along the Omega’s cheek. Blake further calms, his fingers digging into Maceo’s chest as he curls into the man for comfort.

“Let them sleep, Gray,” Luther mumbles in my ear as he comes up behind me. He rocks his hips against mine and I moan, shaking my head. As much as I would enjoy his thick cock in my ass, I’m barely standing. He just chuckles and I have no idea how he has as much energy as he does. When I turn around to catch his expression, I realize he’s putting up a front. He has to. We let Detective Ward know that we would be unavailable for several days but this morning is the deadline. We have to show up at the station or someone will be sent to the condo and that can’t happen. No one can

step inside of here now that we have two Omegas to protect. It was bad enough with just Blake, but with Luca as well? I refuse to have anyone other than the pack inside of these walls.

“Did they call yet?” I ask Luther as I crack a few eggs into a bowl and start whisking.

“An hour ago. I have to be down at the station by noon. We have a few hours, but the longer I stay here, the harder it’s going to be to leave.”

I snort. “And yet, they’re going to see you leave.”

“Let me be selfish just this once, Gray. I need to see that they’re both okay. I need their kisses and their hugs and their touch. Don’t look at me like that. I know you’ll do a fantastic job taking care of them because I have no idea when I’m coming back. Tonight? Tomorrow? Next week? This shit is messy and we knew that before we started it. But I can’t leave them without feeling them against me, Gray.” He runs a hand through his hair before letting out a guttural groan.

I know how he feels because I felt the same way when Luca left school. I needed that last hug, that last kiss, that last everything to feel complete. It would feel like there was just time between us rather than an end.

My attention flits back to Maceo and our Omegas, Luca slowly sitting up as he wipes his eyes. I can tell he’s sore from how flushed his body is, the Omega leaning down to kiss Maceo’s cheek before he comes to us. He falls into my arms, rubbing his face all over my chest, coating me in his scent all over again. “Did you sleep well?”

“Mmm, everything hurts.”

“That’s what a good bath is for and food. Lots of food. Go say hi to your Alpha. He’s been waiting for you.” Luther will never admit to it, but he keeps checking to see if

Luca is awake so that he can nurse his newest bite. It's an Alpha's greatest honor to do so but we must tread carefully with Luca. He's still a little jumpy and unsure. Luca presses a kiss to my chest and then moves to Luther, standing in front of our Alpha.

I don't understand what he's waiting for until Luther pulls him into the embrace, Luca reciprocating. My Alpha presses his lips to Luca's bite, one arm winding around the Omega's back and the other moving lower so that his hand grabs Luca's thigh to pull him closer. It's an all-consuming embrace, Luca trembling in Luther's hold as he shows off his new claim.

The bond thrums with energy and then fear as Luca flinches. Luther immediately releases him, worry settling in his expression. "I have to nurse it, sweetheart. It'll be sore for a little while."

"No, I know. I just... does it always feel like this? This good?"

My heart constricts at the idea that it never felt good for Luca, that Hudson never doted on his Omega or gave him the pleasure he so deserved. Luther chuckles, the sound rumbling through his chest until it becomes a purr, Luca settling again. "It's supposed to feel like this," he murmurs.

"Keep doing it, please."

I'll never get tired of his 'please'.

Giving them some space, I move into the living room to check on Blake. He was doing fine last night when we went to bed after a little medicine, adamant that he was okay to stay in the nest. I nearly fought him on that before Maceo promised to remove him if things got worse. God, I could kiss the man. Maceo slowly stirs, curling Blake into his chest before realizing it's me.

“Morning,” he mumbles, the rumble of his sleep voice doing things to me that it shouldn’t. He glances down at Blake, pressing a soft kiss to the Omega’s head. “He’s breathing better. Slept through the whole night.”

“You didn’t have to, Maceo. I could have-”

He shakes his head, rubbing his cheek against the top of Blake’s head. “Is it weird that I feel protective of Blake? I don’t know why but seeing him like that, my heart felt like it was suffocating. With Luca, I want to give him the entire fucking world. With Blake, I want him to survive it. It doesn’t make any sense. I just-”

“No need to explain. You stepped up when most men wouldn’t have. You’re protecting us from an impossible fate and you’ll be here when everything falls apart because it will. Luther got the call an hour ago. You need showers and new clothes. Luca is going to pitch a fit when you both no longer smell like him so soon after his heat.”

I’m only happy that Luca’s bite is mostly healed so that he doesn’t suffer the same fate as he did from Hudson’s bite. Blake jostles away, those pretty eyes landing on me before he realizes whose lap he’s in. His cheeks turn a beautiful pink, my Omega chewing on his bottom lip in embarrassment. “Hello, babe. Did you sleep okay?”

He nods. “Maceo’s scent is like a lullaby. Like the best drug. It’s perfect.” It’s only a matter of time before Maceo becomes a permanent part of our little family but time is of the essence. Blake tilts his head to the side, his scent souring. “It’s today, isn’t it? Luther has to leave, doesn’t he?” I nod, feeling like I’ve betrayed my own family and knowing that our own choice is to see this through.

40

Luca

A thousand kisses and touches later, Luther finally leaves his bite alone to grab his own plate. We eat in happy silence as I look around the room, enjoying my mates in the same space. I never thought I'd have a moment like this—where I was okay being an Omega, okay submitting to an Alpha, and okay being the center of attention.

I finally have Blake with me.

I plop into Blake's lap, humming as I get lost in my bacon and eggs, letting time settle around us. Until something shifts and the bacon is no longer sitting right in my stomach. Curled up in Blake's lap isn't bringing the same excitement that it usually does and the tight smile on Grayson's lips is scaring me. I look around for my new Alpha and Maceo, confused when they aren't in the kitchen or my nest in the living room. My attention is still flighty since I woke up, unable to focus on one thing for too long. It's the only reason I didn't notice that they left the room.

"Where are they?" I ask. No one answers. I twist around in Blake's lap. "Where?!"

"Cupcake—"

My brows furrow as I train my ears, the sound of running water meeting them. Luther and Maceo are cleaning up? "Why are they washing me off? Washing us off?" The same panic from a few days ago comes back, that Luther doesn't want me, that Maceo thinks it was a mistake to stay. It's then that I can't feel the fierce warmth that

Luther brings through the bond. I can't feel my Alpha. "Why—why can't I feel him?"

Grayson lets out a little sigh, gently grabbing my face in his hands. "Luca, I need you to listen to me."

"No!"

"You have to, babe. Luther and Maceo have to be somewhere. They need to protect us, which means they have to meet some people—"

I tear out of his grip on my face and push off Blake's lap, jabbing at the Omega's chest. "You lied to me! You told me that everything would be fine. That we would be together. Here. I won't let him do anything to us."

Blake says nothing but he's crying. I know he lied to me for my own good. In that moment, I needed to hear that everything would work out because my heat and my health depended on it. I turn to head down the hall when Luther and Maceo emerge, dressed in suits and absent of my scent. "You can't leave. Either of you. I don't want that."

Luther's expression doesn't change except for the slight quiver of his bottom lip and the way his jaw pulls tight. "Sweetheart, I have to do this."

"They'll take you away from me." Tears stream down my face, a breath caught in my throat causing me to hiccup. They can't leave this house. Hudson will have them locked away forever. He'll find a way to take me back and I won't go. I refuse. I reach forward, Grayson catching my hand and bringing it to his chest. I don't understand why I can't touch my Alpha. I struggle against him, whining for what I can't possibly have.

Luther crouches in front of me, too far away. "This isn't goodbye. We're just going to

have a discussion but I can't bring your scent in there. Hudson will be there and he will be looking for any and everything to use against me. I know you want to touch me but you can't." My heart breaks as he stands and places a lone kiss on my forehead, doing the same to Grayson and Blake. I realize he can't hold them either because they all smell like me.

Maceo stops before me, weathering a small smile. "Just a little while, angel. Hold on for just a little while."

"You're coming back! You don't leave us here." I know Maceo is new to this and maybe even unsure about becoming part of this but I need him here.

He stands back, shocked before fixing his expression. "I'll be back, angel. Take care of your mates for me while we take out the trash, alright?" He presses a kiss on my forehead just like Luther did before the both of them exit the house and I crumple to my knees.

Maybe I'm not worth a happy ending. Not if after all those beautiful days together, Hudson can rip everything from me.

41

Luther

The process is pretty much what I'd expect, Detective Ward standing at the entrance to gather me and Maceo before dropping us off in an interrogation room. He sits across from us but doesn't speak, another officer entering the room and closing the door behind him. I mildly recognize this Alpha, someone I know is acquainted with Hudson and shouldn't be allowed to detain me due to conflicting interests.

Maceo lands a hand on my shoulder, squeezing lightly so that I don't make a scene.

My rights are read to me before the detective offers his name, Detective Peyton. He drops into a seat beside Detective Ward, placing a thick file in front of us. "Luther Keller, you are one hard man to understand. You have everything at your feet, a wonderful pack, a company, and a private condo but gave it up to steal another man's Omega?" He whistles, following it with a laugh.

I launch forward, Maceo's hand on my shoulder the only thing stopping me from swiping the detective's face.

"Touchy, are we? It's too bad that there's a file worth of evidence regarding Hudson's Omega and how you wrongfully detained him in your house. I'm aware that Hudson has sent a slew of texts and has called as well, asking for his Omega back."

I turn to look at Maceo, wondering how to respond. The investigation had been

ongoing and we were not required to speak with or contact Hudson. He nods, telling me that I can explain. “An ongoing investigation into the Alpha’s abuse placed his Omega in my custody. An order of protection was also filed a few days ago and was being assessed by the courts.”

Detective Peyton laughs, slapping the table as if it truly is funny. “Luther, you are a smart man. Without Luca’s testimony, there is nothing to those claims, not even with the medical records. It’s an open-and-shut case. You’re illegally holding onto another man’s Omega and an order of protection?” He opens the folder and points to the papers I signed off a few days ago. “These ones? They’re a joke. A judge would have never signed them.”

“Did they even make it to the judge?” I ask, trying to keep my voice level but it’s increasingly hard as I realize that Detective Peyton is not a man of the law. He works for money or someone else, maybe even the mayor but not for the good of the people.

“I don’t know what you’re insinuating, Luther Keller, but I don’t like it. The way I see it, you’ve gone out of your way to take something that isn’t yours. I also know that the Omega you stole went through a heat and while you’ve done a bang-up job cleaning yourself up, reports say that you took off for your Omega’s heat a few days ago. It wasn’t Blake’s which only leaves Hudson’s Omega.”

My Alpha bristles every time the detective disrespects Luca by calling him Hudson’s but I can’t react. It’ll only make this worse. As it is, Maceo has his work cut out for him.

“You’ve broken the law for your own gain, or maybe the gain of one of your pack. I’m not sure. Either way, your claim on that Omega has been revoked and you are required to return him to his Alpha by tomorrow. You’re going to jail, Luther Keller. I hope this was worth it.” A deviant grin spreads across Detective Peyton’s lips as he slams the folder closed and then exits the room, leaving Detective Ward to cuff me.

“I’m sorry-”

“Bullshit, Charles. Don’t start now. You know good and well Hudson should be behind bars for the shit he pulled and the Omega he abused but I guess your job is worth more than a life.” I growl at the detective as he gently pulls my arms behind my back and slaps the metal around my wrists. The reality of my situation is becoming too real and I almost wish that I had slathered myself in my mates’ scents before I left. “Maceo—”

“I got them, Alpha.”

“Promise me one thing, Maceo.”

“Anything.”

“Don’t push them away. You may not be ready to jump in head first but I trust you. Grayson trusts you and you are what they need. I have a feeling you might need them just as much.” I bow my head forward, Maceo leaning his head against mine before Detective Ward pushes me toward the door. Maceo briefly ran through the process so that I wouldn’t be blindsided.

I’ll spend a day or two in the local jail before they figure out where to put me and that’s the most crucial time for Maceo to work through not only the case but through my assets. Hudson will try me for everything and I need to have nothing for him to take. Nothing.

We pass through the main area, Hudson launching toward us. I should have known that he wouldn’t be held back, that everyone is following his version of events rather than the truth. His fist connects with my face, my instincts telling me to fight back, to prove to everyone here who is the strongest Alpha. However, that will only make it worse.

So, for the first time in my life, I concede.

I bare the brunt of the pain, clench my teeth, and bow my head. Everyone here will believe I am guilty with that one move but it might just save my life.

And then I close off the bond so that my mates don't suffer right along with me.

42

Maceo

The weight of the world rests on my shoulders as I exit the car and take the elevator up to the apartment. From what I just saw, we're looking at weeks or months without Luther in this room. I don't know if we'll be able to survive that. Hudson has been calling my phone for the last hour, demanding his Omega but he was smart enough not to be here when I arrived. We only have one day to figure out something but it doesn't look good.

Especially since all cases and orders of protection have been closed or rejected. They don't know Luther bit Luca but that'll come out in time and will be contested if I can't find out a way for the case to be dropped. I can't legally keep Luca from his Alpha.

The moment I step into the apartment, Grayson is there sitting in the middle of Luca's nest, both Omegas piled on top of each other, passed out. The smell of stressed Omega fills the room as I take a seat beside Blake, running my fingers through his hair before addressing Grayson. "It's not good. Someone's been paid off because Hudson's got a clean slate. Luther is being officially charged."

"He closed off the bond so I assumed it wasn't good. This is going to break them, Maceo. Luca wouldn't stop staring at the fucking door after you left and Blake's been sleeping since. I think he's going to have to go in for another checkup. I'm sure Luther mentioned it but it's his heart. Too much stress and," he doesn't finish the sentence, letting out a heavy breath. "How long?"

“There won’t be a sentencing for a while. My job is to make sure your assets are safe and prove to whoever is running the show that Hudson is a piece of shit.” I can’t help myself as I lie down and mold myself to Blake’s back, needing to feel him breathe. I still feel guilty about it but the fact that Grayson isn’t reacting helps. “Legally-”

“Fuck the legal bullshit, Maceo. We’re way past that. If Luther is the scapegoat, I need to know what to do.”

“They’ve ordered us to return Luca to his rightful Alpha. Right now, that’s either Luther or Hudson. Luther’s claim will be contested because it happened during a heat. However, if there were to be a claim outside of heat while Luca is clearheaded, they might see it differently. Luca can testify to it. It’s messy as shit and it’s going to land us all in hot water but there’s nothing against the law for another Alpha to bite a mated Omega. Many Omegas have Alphas that aren’t together and then form a pack.”

Grayson lets out a strained chuckle, “That’s an awful loophole. So, we can’t fuck him during a heat but I can bite him? That’s fucked up.”

“And yet, the one thing that might save him. Luca can choose which Alpha he wants to stay with if the claim is approved. So?” I glance up at Grayson, wondering if he’s ready to take a step like that. It’s going to be an uphill battle for a while but I’ll see it through for Luther.

For my Alpha.

For my Omegas.

A smile slowly creeps onto Grayson’s face, his eyes lighting up with the idea. “I’ve been waiting to bite him since I first met him. Beta or Omega, it’s never mattered. Luca was always mine. Ours. ” He raises an eyebrow, demanding that I finally admit to the truth.

“ Ours. ”

I stare down at Blake and then Luca, wondering if I'll ever see my bite on their beautiful skin. I'm not even sure if it would take but to see my claim on their shoulders beside Grayson and Luther's would be an honor. The guilt slowly ebbs away as I stop lying to myself. Luther has been more to me than just my client for years.

I think I've seen him as my Alpha for far longer than I've realized.

And now I'm falling for not just one but two Omegas.

So much for the lone wolf thing.

Luca yawns, bringing me back to reality, those glass eyes meeting mine. “Hey angel.” He scoots a little closer, Grayson's chuckles adding to the adorable moment. “How do you feel about another bite?” The way Luca all but glows tells me that we're going to be okay.