



Haze (Serpents of Chaos MC #2)

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Category: Romance

Description: Running into my childhood crush after thirteen years and accidentally hitting on him isn't my finest moment.

But Hayden isn't how I remember him.

Now he's Haze, the resident playboy of the Serpents of Chaos MC.

And the worst part?

I'm stuck with him protecting me.

I should distance myself before I get in too deep. Before I get hurt.

Hayden already broke my heart once, but Haze?

He just might ruin me.

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Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:34 am

Lu

Age Fifteen

It wasn't hard for me to slip away into the night. My parents are always too busy screaming at each other to take any notice of me. Aspen is waiting for me around the corner of our street, her glittery short dress hard to miss. Her brown hair is in a high ponytail—her trademark look.

She lifts the bottle of alcohol in her hand and grins when she sees me. "There you are. I was worried you weren't going to come. Damian's on his way to get us."

Damian is her much older boyfriend, one her older brother, Hayden, doesn't know about. All I know is that her relationship is on borrowed time because the second Hayden finds out, Damian will be buried six feet under.

Hayden is overprotective and not just of Aspen.

When he caught me at the movies on a date with Matt last month, he pulled him outside and sent him home with a broken nose.

"I just need to be home before sunrise," I say, pulling my lip gloss out of my crossover bag and squeezing some on my lips. "You look hot."

"So do you," she replies, taking in my tight jeans and new favorite top. It's silver, shaped in a V above my navel, and only has one strap holding it at the back. I can't wear a bra with it, but my breasts aren't that big, so it works for me.

When we pull up at the party, people are everywhere, and it's safe to say they are all much older than us.

A sliver of unease hits my stomach. I can defend myself since I've been training Muay Thai for two years now.

I begged and begged my parents to let me, and they finally relented as long as I find my way there and back.

It's one of the best things they have done for me.

When Hayden found out I was walking to and from the gym, he joined and started walking with me.

Since he got his license, he's been driving us there. He trains more than I do now.

"These are all college guys," I murmur to Aspen, who turns to me with mischief dancing in her brown eyes.

"They're hot, Lu. Don't worry, Damian knows them all. He'll look out for us."

That knot doesn't leave my stomach, and I have no faith in her new boyfriend. Still, I'm not leaving her alone here.

We come together, we leave together.

That's always been our thing. We might make some stupid decisions, but we always pull each other out, just like best friends should.

A drink is placed in my hand, but I only hold it and don't sip it. Aspen, however, starts skulling hers, sitting on Damian's lap with her arm around his neck.

“Who do we have here?” a preppy blond asks, sitting next to me. His blue eyes trail over my visible skin, and I suddenly wish I wore something else tonight.

“This is Lu, Aspen’s best friend.” Damian smirks, giving me a once-over.

“Ah yes, the one who made those delicious birthday cupcakes.”

I like to bake, sue me, and a lot of the time, Aspen helps herself to whatever I’ve made. She must have shared the cookie and cream ones I made for her last week.

Cold fingers trail over my collarbone. “I wonder what else is delicious.”

I slowly move his hand away.

“Simon, leave her alone,” Aspen snaps, lifting her head from Damian’s neck.

Damian and Simon then share a look, and he whispers something in Aspen’s ear. She stands and announces she’ll be right back.

“Aspen,” I warn, not wanting her to leave.

“I’ll be back in five, Lu.” She turns to Simon. “Look after her until I’m back.”

I’m going to kill her.

Damian flashes me a smirk, leaving with her.

She disappears down the hallway, I’m guessing to go and fuck her man. I stand and walk toward the kitchen, not wanting to be left alone with the friend . I’m going to give her ten minutes before I go and find her, so Damian better know how to make her come quickly.

“Not drinking tonight?” Simon asks me, following behind.

“Just taking it slow,” I lie. There is no way in hell I’m letting my guard down here.

“Hmm,” he murmurs, watching two drunk girls come into the room as he takes a long sip of his drink. One winks at him, gaining his attention. He must do the math in his head and realize his chances are higher of getting laid with one of them, so he bails on me.

I attempt to find Aspen, calling out her name as I try to retrace her steps. When I finally find her, she steps out of the bathroom with Damian, rubbing her nose where there’s a trace of white powder on it.

“What the fuck did you just do?” I ask her, gripping her upper arm and pulling her toward me.

Her eyes flicker with guilt, but when Damian tugs her back against his chest, she doesn’t fight him.

“Lu—”

“Leave her alone, Lu.” Damian scowls.

One thing about me—I’m calm. I’m chill. I’m upbeat.

Until...

I lose my temper.

He doesn’t see the punch coming, not until his nose cracks and blood pours from him.

“Lu!” Aspen screams, bending to her knees to try to help him stop the blood flow.

“We are leaving... now!” I tell her, trying to lift her.

But she fights me.

I pull out my phone and send Hayden a quick message, telling him I need him and where we are.

Aspen is too busy trying to help Damian to notice.

Hayden

Be there in five. Don’t move.

Relief fills me. I’ve never tried any drugs, and as far as I know, Aspen hasn’t either. Yeah, she drinks a lot more than me, but because my parents are alcoholics, it doesn’t appeal to me as much as it might to others our age.

“Come on, Aspen, we’re going home.”

“I’m not going anywhere,” she replies, standing back up with Damian. “I’m going to stay here tonight.”

I still. “We come together, we leave together.”

Her brow furrows, and her voice softens. “Not this time, Lu.”

When Hayden storms in, he’s not alone. No, he’s got a blonde on his arm, and it’s clear what I’d interrupted. He has lipstick on his neck, and the top button of his jeans is undone.

My chest suddenly hurts, and I absently rub it.

“What’s going on?” he asks, checking us both over to make sure we’re okay.

“You called him?” Aspen snaps, laughing without humor. “Fucking hell, Lu. And you wonder why I don’t tell you everything anymore.”

“Who the fuck is this?” Hayden asks Aspen, his fists clenching.

“This is my boyfriend,” Aspen admits, shifting on her feet. She’s close to her brother, and I know she doesn’t want him to find out about this. “I’m staying here tonight, Hayden. Take Lu home.”

Hayden looks over Damian’s bloodied nose, his expression giving nothing away.

“How old are you, fucker?”

“Nineteen.”

Hayden’s jaw tenses. “My sister is fifteen.”

“She’s old enough to make her own choices.”

Hayden stills and then punches him in the gut. Hard. Our coach would be proud. Or not, since technically, we aren’t allowed to fight outside the gym.

Damian drops, and Hayden kicks him in the ribs a few times. Aspen screams. Hayden ignores her and bends down to pick her up, throwing her over his shoulder.

“Luella, get in the car. Now.”

He’s the only one who calls me that.

The blonde follows behind us, staying quiet, but her presence is still felt.

Aspen is put in the back. “Gloria, go sit with her,” Hayden orders, and the blonde does as she’s told.

“She’s fine, Hayden,” she murmurs, running a pink fingernail across his bicep.

It makes me feel sick.

When the door closes, he pulls me closer to him with his warm hand on my nape. “What the fuck happened? What are you both even doing here? You’re smarter than this, Luella.”

I lick my suddenly dry lips. “She’s been dating him for a few weeks. He brought us to this party.” I open my mouth, then close it. “She was doing drugs in there with him. I didn’t know, Hayden. I had no idea.”

He walks away, turning his back on me, his hands gripping his nape. “Fuck.”

Yeah, that sums it up.

“You should have told me about him,” he snaps when he turns around, pinning me with his angry gaze.

“She’s my best friend,” I remind him.

He sighs, his chest rising and falling as he calms himself down. “I’m going to kill that fucker if he comes around her again. Get in, I’ll take you home.” He opens the passenger door for me, putting me in the front with him.

“Sorry we interrupted your night.”

I'm surprised he even checked his phone, considering what he was doing. I didn't think boys would stop having sex for anything, never mind a text message from the girl next door.

He gently slides his knuckles across my cheekbone. "Either of you need me, I'm there."

I slide into the seat and turn around to see Aspen zoned out and staring out the window. Gloria, however, has her narrowed eyes firmly on me.

Yeah, it's safe to say we aren't going to be friends anytime soon.

"Are you coming back to my house?" she asks Hayden as he pulls out onto the street.

His eyes dart to mine, and his throat works as he swallows. "No, I need to deal with this."

"But you didn't get to?—"

"We can discuss this another time," he cuts her off.

Didn't get to what?

Finish?

Come?

What didn't he get to do?

I've had a crush on Hayden for as long as I can remember. He's a boy who takes what he wants and isn't shy around girls.

He's never made a move on me.

I know he doesn't see me like that, so every time I'm in one of these situations, I hide my jealousy. I hide how much it fucking hurts to see or hear about him being with another girl.

We drop Gloria off. She slams the door. Hayden sighs but says nothing else.

Aspen is passed out by the time we get back to their house, the alcohol and whatever else she took taking its toll. We sneak her inside and tuck her in, and then he walks me to my front door.

"I'll sleep on the floor in her room," he assures me, tucking a curl behind my ear. "I'll keep an eye on her. Who knows what the fuck that dickhead gave her."

"I'm sorry," I whisper, feeling like the worst friend.

"Not on you, you didn't know. It's on her. She fucked up," he replies, dipping to kiss my forehead. His lips linger, and my eyes close of their own accord, just enjoying the feel of his mouth on my skin. "You did the right thing texting me. Get some sleep, baby."

He doesn't leave until I lock my door. Not only is he the most beautiful boy I've ever seen, he's also a gentleman.

Hayden Rhodes might not know it yet, but one day, he's going to be mine .

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LU

Thirteen Years Later

“Bones, who is that?” I ask, staring up at the stage.

I haven’t been able to take my eyes away from him—short brown hair, tall, muscular build, and a leather cut that says he’s a patched member of the Serpents of Chaos Motorcycle Club.

My gaze touches the ink on his arms and drops to the silver rings that cover his talented fingers.

He’s singing about love and loss, and I’m both saddened by his lyrics and turned on by the man himself.

He’s somehow familiar. I’m so drawn to him, I’m about to do something I rarely ever do—I’m going to make the first move.

“That’s Haze,” Bones replies, grinning. “He’s our treasurer and local heartthrob.”

“Haze, huh? I’m going home with him tonight,” I declare with a smirk. I’m tipsy enough to announce this to Bones instead of keeping it to myself like I should have.

Bones laughs and tips back the rest of his beer. “You’ll have to fight off a few to get there... unless you don’t mind sharing.”

My lips curve upward. “I’m an only child. I don’t share.”

I have another shot before I walk up to the stage.

Ora, my best friend and co-worker at the bakery I own, has disappeared with her man, War, leaving me to my own devices.

She’s the reason I’m here at this biker party in the first place.

I haven’t always been known for making the best decisions, but when I glance up into the most handsome face I’ve ever seen, and amber eyes look down at me, recognition hits me.

He’s familiar.

Could it be?

No, this isn’t him.

It’s just the eyes.

The song ends, and Haze puts down his guitar, standing in front of me. “Hello,” I purr, offering him my hand.

He stares down at it for a moment before taking it, his gaze not leaving mine.

Closing the space between us, I press my free palm against his chest and look up at him.

At five foot nothing, he towers over me, but as my soft body presses right up against his hard one, there’s no missing what I want from him.

“Want to get out of here?” I ask, and a muscle works in his jaw.

“How much have you had to drink?” he questions, tilting his head to the side as he takes me in. He licks his bottom lip, and I can see a flash of metal. How is that going to feel on my clit? I’m guessing fucking amazing.

Two women appear on either side of us, herding us in. “Haze, you told us we’d be in your bed tonight,” one pouts, batting her fake eyelashes.

Haze doesn’t look away from me. There’s tension between us, but it’s something more than just sexual. The way he’s looking at me is like he wants to both devour me and never lay his eyes on me again at the same time. “Go get some water. You don’t belong here, Luella.”

He turns his broad back on me and wraps his arms around the club girls.

Dismissed.

Fucking ouch.

And then it hits me.

I never told him my name.

Fuck.

No?

“Hayden?” I call out, and he stops in his tracks but doesn’t turn around.

It’s him.

He looks so different—his body is bigger, wider, taller

He never used to have any tattoos or piercings, and his hair was never this short.

He's a man now, no longer the sweet boy who played guitar for me through his window so I could fall asleep to something other than the sounds of my parents fighting.

But those eyes...

I knew I recognized them.

"Go home, Luella," he replies, turning his head to show me his profile. I watch in horror as he then starts to make out with both women right in front of me.

Like I mean nothing to him.

Like our past means nothing.

And I guess that's the truth.

We're both living in different worlds now, as different people, but he still rejected me again.

Some things never change.

I blink away the sudden rush of tears in my eyes.

The Hayden I knew, my Hayden, doesn't exist anymore. It has been thirteen years, so what did I expect? Hayden is gone, and now only Haze, the callous, tattooed, manwhore biker is left.

Bones was right. I guess one woman isn't enough for him.

Then again, I never was.

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LU

Here I am, but I never thought I'd be living in a biker clubhouse right next door to my childhood love.

After my business, Lu's Sweet Treats, was torched by some enemy biker club, Haze picked me up and brought me back here for my safety.

We mostly ignored each other in the car, just like we did the other times I've been around him, but the tension between us was thick.

After he rejected me so easily, he wouldn't let Blade, another MC brother and resident tech wizard, drive me home.

He insisted on it being him.

That pissed me off.

Apparently, free will isn't something women connected to the club are given.

But I'm not going to be stupid. I live at home alone, and I like breathing. I'm not going to die before I tick off my travel and concert bucket lists. So if staying here keeps me safe, well, and out of the hands of evil bikers, I'm going to stay here.

Even if it means seeing Haze, who, by the way, I was told is hardly here and stays at his own house. But guess what? He's been here every night since I moved in a week ago.

Every single night.

I was clearly lied to.

So I do what any mature woman with a petty streak and a big ego would do, I try to pretend he doesn't exist, and it doesn't hurt that a club whore named Daisy told him that she's pregnant with his child.

Yeah, that doesn't hurt at all.

It's not like I had our future children's names picked out since I was ten or anything.

Yeah, he does not exist to me.

Even when he walks around with nothing but a low-slung pair of jeans on, the top button undone like he is right now, he steps into the kitchen where I'm baking.

While my business is being rebuilt, I've decided to start a catering business working from the kitchen here at the clubhouse. I'm a woman who needs to stay busy, and my bakery has been my life for as long as I can remember.

Before I opened it, I was planning for it.

Before I started planning for it, I was dreaming about it.

When I was approved for a business loan and found the location with extremely cheap rent, I thought I'd died and gone to heaven. Without it, I'm a mess, but catering will keep me busy until I'm able to reopen my doors.

What I don't have time for is to sit around and salivate at the sexy abs and deep V Haze has going on, or that trail of hair to the center of it, which leads to a cock that's

apparently community property in this clubhouse.

“Luella, we need to talk,” Haze says, leaning back against the counter and studying me.

He’s still the most beautiful man I’ve ever laid my eyes on.

I don’t know what changed with him, but he’s softened toward me since we first saw each other again.

I’d love to be able to read his mind because fuck, his hot and cold has me confused.

My gaze lands on his tattoos, two full sleeves that also cover his hands, but his chest and abs are untouched.

I see music notes, skulls, and snakes all intertwined to turn his body into a piece of art.

It’s not that it needed the ink. His muscles are so sculpted and ripped that my mouth starts to water.

“It’s Lu. No one calls me Luella .”

His brow creases. “I’ve always called you Luella. Your name is too pretty to shorten.”

“That was back then. And this is now,” I remind him, whisking the cake mix in a big metal bowl. “Just like you used to be Hayden to me, and now you are Haze.”

Hurt ripples across his handsome face before he can mask it. I don’t want to hurt him. I just want him to leave me alone. He has a power over me that I don’t like, and I

don't want to be hurt. He's a weakness I do not need right now.

Hayden is protective but not an asshole. He never let his baby sister, Aspen, or me, by extension, date any boys. Anything we did, we had to do in secret.

My Hayden played me sweet songs, gave me rides to and from school and training, and made sure I ate. He knew my parents didn't care what I did, and even though he was only two years older, he stepped up to make sure I was cared for.

Haze is a playboy biker and has knocked up some woman who sleeps with everyone at the club.

As long as you're wearing a patch, you're in.

I'm going to make her a T-shirt that says that for Christmas.

But I suppose Hayden wasn't perfect, was he? He still hurt me in the end.

"I'm still Hayden," he rasps in a low tone, so quiet I barely make out the words. I see a flash of metal as his tongue swipes over his bottom lip. "And you're still my Luella."

His?

My hands freeze, and my throat burns with emotion. Can I forgive him? Maybe the two of us could try to repair our friendship. He's moving on with his life, and I need to move on with mine. He doesn't want me, and I need to accept that.

I leave the whisk in the bowl and turn around to give him my full attention.

"Okay, you're right, we do need to talk.

I'm living here now until it's safe for me to go back home, and we have to be around each other.

It doesn't need to be awkward. I'm sorry I flirted with you when I first saw you.

I didn't know it was you until you said my name. ”

And I definitely didn't know he had a baby on the way.

He absently runs his knuckles above his pecs, drawing my eyes there.

His body is perfection, packed with muscles but not too overdone.

The Serpents' tattoo stares at me from his bicep, and his abs deserve to be on the cover of a romance novel.

I narrow my eyes, trying to distract myself by looking toward the door.

The last thing he needs to see is me checking him out while I'm trying to cement some sort of truce between us.

“Don't apologize,” he rasps, my eyes going back to his as he crosses his arms over his wide chest. “When I saw you, it took me back. You were drunk... I shouldn't have...

fuck. I messed up, okay? I'm sorry for how I acted that night.

I never thought I'd see you again, and then you just walked into my clubhouse. I didn't know if...” he trails off.

He didn't know if what?

I want to ask him why. I want an explanation, but when he doesn't offer me one, I let it be.

"Can we start over?" I ask, stepping forward and offering him my hand. "It's nice to see you again, Haze. How long has it been?"

"Too long," he rumbles, taking my hand and pulling me against his hard, warm chest. His big arms come around me, but his hold is gentle. He takes a deep exhale, his thumb stroking my back in soothing circles. "Too fucking long."

I lift my head and look at him, his perfectly chiseled jaw, beautiful amber eyes framed in dark lashes, and high cheekbones.

I always thought he would make it. He had the looks and the talent for the music industry.

So when Ora told me that he'd signed with a record label, I wasn't surprised, just happy for him.

I always thought I'd be right there with him, along for the ride, but it seems life had other plans for us.

"Friends?" I ask, my voice gentle.

His throat bobs as he swallows. "Luella?—"

The moment is broken when Daisy steps inside, her tight red dress leaving nothing to the imagination. Her blue eyes narrow, her lips thinning. "Haze, we have that doctor's appointment."

My stomach knots, and suddenly, I feel sick.

His fingers tighten around me, and he takes a shaky breath. “I’ll be back,” he says to me, kissing the top of my head.

And then he walks away with her .

She turns around and smiles victoriously before they disappear.

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HAZE

I've never been a man that good things just happen to. I'm not lucky. Nothing falls into my lap, but this takes the fucking cake.

Luella has come back into my life—Luella, the girl I fell in love with, then fucked it all up with.

My childhood best friend.

And she's trying to friend zone me. I have to admit, that's not a place I've ever been in before.

Luella is now a beautiful woman. When I saw her at the clubhouse, I couldn't believe my eyes. And when she didn't recognize me...

She was drunk and hitting on me like I was any musician playing on stage, and it made me wonder how often she did that.

And why was she at the clubhouse?

Was she here just to fuck a biker?

Or did one of my brothers bring her here?

Was she a new club girl?

All the questions rushed through my mind at once.

I was pissed.

How could she not recognize me?

Had she forgotten me so quickly? The boy next door who shared his food with her so she ate enough, who took her to school and the gym and back so she didn't have to walk or get on the bus, and who played her song after song, night after night?

She looked me in the eye and didn't know who I was.

I was nothing to her, a lost memory, while she still haunted me every night in my dreams.

No, nothing ever fell into my lap.

Not even love.

My Luella did not belong at a biker party looking for a quick fuck. I was angry, and yeah, I was a dick. I never should have turned her down and walked off with those two women. I didn't fuck them. I couldn't, not after seeing her. I haven't fucked anyone since that night.

But then Daisy decided that I am the father of her unborn child. Could I be? Yes. I did fuck her. I wore protection—I never go without a condom—but I understand they aren't foolproof. However, Daisy is a club girl, and she fucks everyone .

I'm not being a dick, just stating a fact that we all know. Hell, we all see it with our own eyes. So even though she's pinning this on me, there is more than one brother sweating over this in the clubhouse right now.

But until we do all the testing, I'm going to keep my mouth shut and step up and be a man. Today, I'll get to see the sonogram, and then, as soon as we can, I'm going to ask for a paternity test.

I know this whole situation is going to make Luella put up even more of a wall between us, but even if the kid is mine, I'm not going to be with Daisy. I'll be there for my child in every way, but that's it.

Luella, on the other hand? She can try and friend zone me all she wants, but we both know the chemistry between us is off the charts like nothing we've ever experienced before.

And I've been with a lot of women.

For the first time, my soul craves someone.

Luella never left me.

And now she's here.

At the clubhouse.

Maybe I'm wrong.

For the first time ever, something I want has fallen into my lap. I need to play the long game, though.

I'm not going anywhere.

I'm in this for the long haul.

Luella might not know it, but I vow that she's going to be mine .

* * *

“You’re quiet,” Daisy muses from the passenger seat of my car. Even if she weren’t pregnant, I still wouldn’t put her on the back of my bike. Luella claimed that spot before she even walked through those doors. “Are you nervous about seeing the baby?”

My fingers tighten around the steering wheel. “Yeah, I guess.”

The last time I slept with Daisy was six weeks ago.

I was drunk, and she was there and more than willing.

She wasn’t the only woman I was with that night.

I’m ashamed to admit it to even myself, but one woman stopped chasing away my demons a long time ago.

I need the distraction, more sensation and outlet than any of them can provide, and my stamina is known throughout the club.

I can fuck all night long.

It usually takes at least three to keep up with me, and that’s not me bragging but me admitting I’m fucking messed up and use sex as a distraction.

Sex is the only time I get out of my head and just get to feel and forget.

It’s the only time I don’t have to worry about everyone.

When I don't have to be responsible. I'd never turn to drugs, so sex is my escape.

But I have a new addiction now, except all of my past exploits are coming back to bite me in the ass.

Does Luella see what a mess I am? How I lost my way after Aspen lost hers? Does she ever think about her?

"So, will I move into your house with you?" Daisy asks, pulling me from my thoughts. "The clubhouse might not be the best place to raise the baby."

I take a deep breath. "If the baby is mine, we will discuss it then."

She's not moving into my house.

Her head snaps to me like the chick from the exorcist. "I told you it's yours, Haze. You don't believe me?"

"I know at least four of my brothers who have been with you in the last two months, Daisy," I say, clearing my throat.

"It's yours," she snaps, tears pooling in her eyes.

She's been trying to lock down one of the men since she arrived here years ago. She recently had her eyes on War until he fell in love with Ora, and then she turned to me. I think she realized she'd never get a property cut, so she tried a different avenue.

I've done many fucked-up things in my life, but knocking up a club whore when the woman of my dreams is now back in my life would have to take the number one spot.

But baby or not, Luella is going to be mine .

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LU

After Haze leaves with his baby mama, I finish up in the kitchen and go to the bar to have a well-deserved afternoon drink.

My life was so much easier before Haze stormed back into it—I ran my bakery, casually hooked up with men now and again, and kept everything simple.

My emotions never ran high like this, and it's been such a long time since I haven't felt in control.

It's no secret that I can be a bit of a control freak outside of the bedroom, but being around Haze has me feeling like a fucking teenager again.

Back then, I had to watch him with the girls he dated—now it has escalated to watching him be with club whores, one of whom he's managed to knock up.

“What's a beautiful woman like you drinking alone for?

” Blade asks, pulling out the stool next to me and taking a seat.

He's wearing a white T-shirt with his leather cut over it, light jeans, and biker boots.

But the sexiest thing about him? He's wearing reading glasses.

He's like a real-life Clark Kent, nerdy and badass, and knowing he's extremely smart and the club's resident tech expert just adds to his allure.

Best of all?

As far as I can see, he's nothing like Haze.

"Just enjoying this place being empty for once," I tease, and he grins, his green eyes flickering with amusement.

He pours himself a glass of scotch and rests a muscled arm behind me on the bar.

Why don't I feel something more for this man?

When he touches me, I don't feel the spark that I do with Haze.

Maybe I could try? Perhaps that spark with Haze is nothing but a warning from my body, telling me to make better decisions and stay away from him.

Maybe I need calm.

Blade pushes an errant curl away from my face. Sparks don't fly, my pulse doesn't race, but I do feel relaxed. Serene. And right now, that's all I can hope for.

"How's the catering going?"

"Good," I reply, staring at him over my glass. "Keeping me busy, anyway."

Ora helps me out, even though War would prefer her to be resting all day. She's pregnant with their first child, and if I thought he was protective before, he's now taking it to a whole new level.

"That cake you made last night was incredible," he says, licking his lips, and I grin.

I'd made my famous chocolate cake because Ora mentioned she was craving a slice.

No one can say no to that cake. It's sweet, moist, and covered in delicious buttercream frosting.

Bones proposed to me when he'd tasted it.

Haze looked like he wanted to murder him with his bare hands.

"I'd offer you the last slice, but Ora might kill us both."

He grins. "As much as I'd love to have it, I think taking food away from a pregnant woman is a crime."

Ora steps into the room, perking up when she sees me. "There you are," she says, her flowing black maxi dress swirling around her ankles. She's wearing gold bangles on her wrist, and they jingle with every step. She stops in front of us and smiles at Blade. "Hello, Blade."

"Ora, you're looking beautiful today," he answers, winking at her.

"Flattery will get you everywhere." She smirks.

"Flattery will get him killed," War calls out, stalking up behind his woman and wrapping his arms around her. Like Ora, he's dressed in head-to-toe black—a T-shirt with his cut over it, faded jeans, and biker boots. He buries his face in her neck. "Fuck, I wish I didn't have to leave right now."

"You need to let her out of the bedroom sometimes, War," I tease, pulling her from his arms. "She was mine first, you know."

War is an imposing man, but he loves Ora, and he's always been good to me. "Well, you're in luck. I have to go to Viper's and check some shit out. So she's all yours."

I have learned that the Serpents of Chaos own several businesses, and Viper's is the most recently acquired one. Ora said they fix up bikes and cars and do some customs. It's Bones and Skull's baby, with both of the twins being certified mechanics.

"Plenty of me to go around." Ora laughs, her hands resting on her small bump. War kisses her deeply, dragging it out, making Blade chuckle from beside me.

"And that's my cue to leave." He kisses my temple and leaves me to be the third wheel. I'm about to pull them apart when I feel Haze entering the room, saying something to Blade in passing. Blade nods once, and I have to wonder what that is about.

I can always feel when Haze is near, even before I see him. It's like my body picks up on his energy. Is that meant to warn me? Or draw me in?

War finally leaves Ora alone, and she sits next to me on the stool. "You ready to go out for some lunch and shopping?"

"You know me, I was born to spend money. Who's babysitting us today?" I ask, ignoring Haze as he towers over us.

"I can take you," he offers, and I hesitantly lift my eyes to his.

He always was too good-looking for his own damn good. Those soulful amber eyes framed in thick, dark lashes peer down at me.

"I'm sure you have other things to do," I reply, forcing a smile. "Danger or one of the other prospects can take us."

Ora nods. “War told Danger to take us.” She studies Haze, leaning back against the bar and narrowing her eyes slightly. “Besides, I’m sure Daisy would prefer to have you around in case she needs you.”

God, I love Ora.

My best friend throwing shade on my behalf is only one of the reasons I love her.

I so wanted to say something like that, but I didn’t want to sound too bitchy or like I care. I’m not giving him that. I need to keep some of my pride, after all.

Ora’s bad side is not somewhere Haze would want to be, with her man being the VP and her dad being the president. Ora is biker royalty. She’s untouchable. She went from only having me to having this whole family, and she deserves all that and more.

Haze’s jaw clenches. “Daisy is a grown woman, and if she needs help, there are plenty of other men around.”

“Yeah,” Ora agrees, crossing her arms over her chest. “But she’s not carrying any of their babies, now is she?”

“She could be,” he mutters under his breath.

Interesting.

My best friend doesn’t let that comment slide.

Ora’s blue eyes widen. “So, the rumors are true... you don’t even know if the baby is yours.”

“She wasn’t just fucking me, Ora, and you all know that,” he says, clearing his throat.

He turns those pleading amber eyes onto me.

“I don’t want to have this conversation until I find out who the father is for sure, but yeah, I don’t know if it’s mine.

And we won’t until we get the paternity test done. ”

“Did you fuck her without protection?” Ora asks, sharing a look with me.

Haze rubs the back of his neck. I don’t know when she became a ballbuster, but I’m here for it. Being around these bikers has done wonders for her.

“No, I don’t fuck anyone without protection,” he admits, looking toward the door like he wants to escape this conversation.

“What’s going on here?” Lore asks, wrapping his arms around me from behind.

Lore is the resident fuck boy slash lover boy.

He’s good-looking and too charming for his own good, and he knows it.

He’s the kind of man who could talk you into an orgy and make you feel like it was your idea.

Dating-wise, I wouldn’t trust him, but as a friend, he’s good to have around.

Haze’s amber eyes narrow, his fists clenching.

Hayden always had a short fuse, and I can only imagine what he’s like now.

He was a good fighter, too, and I wonder if he kept up with any training after they

moved away.

Going by his ripped body, he definitely keeps fit.

I wouldn't expect any less. Hayden was always athletic, popular, talented, and charming.

Nothing has changed except he's now badass and in a biker club.

I can't help but be drawn to him. If he's in a room, my eyes follow. I can't help it. I've never had a long-term relationship before. I've had fun, but I never met anyone I wanted to spend the rest of my life with.

And I never let Hayden go.

Maybe that was always the real issue.

No one was him.

And even now, even with all the bullshit surrounding him, there still is no one else for me. How sad is that?

Ora needs to slap me and tell me to know my fucking worth because here I am, still pining after the same boy since the age of twelve.

Lore kisses my cheek, ignoring the sudden tension in the air and the daggers being thrown his way by his club brother. He's good at that. Nothing much gets to Lore. His leather cut rubs against my bare shoulders, and I melt into the soft material.

"Nothing. We're just heading out," I say, sharing a wide-eyed look with Ora, who simply smirks.

Rome, their president, calls out for Church, which is a club meeting all patched members must attend.

“Danger it is,” I mutter, grabbing Ora’s hand and steering her out.

I don’t know what game he’s playing.

But I don’t want to be a part of it.

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Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:34 am

HAZE

“You haven’t fucked me since she walked through those doors,” Daisy pouts, leaning against my doorframe. It’s been a few hours since Church finished, and I’m about to get in the shower and head over to my record label. I’m recording my first album, and most of the songs are about Luella.

“I need your cock, Haze.” She rubs her thighs together and licks her lips. “Let me relieve some of your tension. You don’t want me to fuck someone else while I’m pregnant with your child, do you?”

I grit my teeth because if she were carrying my child, I probably wouldn’t want her to, but my gut is telling me that isn’t the case. Even if it is my child, I’m not going to be with her. It will just mean we’d need to work out a healthy co-parenting arrangement.

“I’m sorry, Daisy, but we’re not going to be fucking again,” I say, being honest with her. “You’ll be taken care of no matter what, but we’re done.”

She steps farther into my bedroom and pulls off her top.

She’s not wearing a bra, and her big tits sway as she takes a step closer.

Yeah, my cock twitches because it’s been neglected since Luella came back into my life, but I’m not tempted by her at all.

There’s only one woman I want, the one who had my heart long before I was a biker.

“Daisy—”

I’m about to tell her to redress and get out of my room when Luella walks past my door, pausing when she sees Daisy standing there half naked.

Fuck.

I can’t catch a damn break.

I don’t know what I did to deserve all this bad karma, but it’s like the world is out to get me.

“At least close the fucking door, Haze. This isn’t a sex club,” she calls out, her eyes flickering with pain before she masks it.

Fuck.

“Luella,” I holler after her, but she’s gone.

“Out, Daisy, and don’t try any of this bullshit again,” I bark, picking up her top and handing it to her.

“Fine, I’ll just go and see what one of the other men is doing,” she purrs, but I don’t miss the anger written across her expression.

If she’s waiting for jealousy, she’s not going to get it. She can’t think I’m going to get possessive about her now.

When she’s gone, I lock my door and take a quick shower before finding Luella playing pool with the twins.

She sinks two balls while Bones is checking out her ass as she bends over to play her shots, and I send him a look that tells him he's about to get a fist to the face if he doesn't stop looking at what's mine .

He lifts his hands in submission, blue eyes dancing with humor. His twin, Skull, sits there and studies us over the rim of his beer. Bones is always playing around, and Skull is always watching quietly. That's how I tell those fuckers apart.

“Can I talk to you?” I ask her when she raises those beautiful green eyes to me.

My mind roams back to when we were teens, and I swallow hard at the memory. I'd allowed myself one moment of weakness before I left and gave her her first kiss.

I've never forgotten it—one single taste of heaven. She tasted like peaches, and her lips were so soft and plump.

I've never had a long-term relationship, and I never even thought to settle down. And I know the reason is now staring right at me.

There's never been room in my heart for anyone else but her .

“We have nothing to talk about, Haze,” she replies but steps away from the twins.

I lift her with my hands on her hips and sit her on top of the bar, stepping in between her thighs.

She's only a little thing at five foot nothing, especially compared to my six foot two, but she sure is a little spitfire.

The worst thing someone could do is underestimate Luella Ford.

Lowering my voice so no one else can hear, I say, “I didn’t fuck her. She took her top off and?—”

“You don’t owe me any explanations,” she replies in an emotionless tone. “You’re free to do whatever you want, Haze.”

“I know, but?—”

“You know we said we would try to be friends again, but maybe it’s better if we just have some space from each other,” she continues, her teeth raking across her lower lip.

Some things never change. She never used to let me get a word in when we were kids, either.

Gently but firmly gripping her chin, I bring those eyes to me. “Look at me. We’ve had thirteen years of space, Luella. You don’t need more.”

“Don’t tell me what I need, Haze. Because you have no fucking idea.”

Her eyes turn hooded as my thumb caresses her throat, feeling her racing pulse.

“What happened back then was messed up. Aspen...” I trail off, not wanting to get into everything that went down with my sister.

“I fucked up, baby. And I only recently realized just how much. We were only kids back then, but?—”

“You took your sister’s side, and I get it,” she replies, not looking away from me. “But what happened back then doesn’t answer why you were such an asshole when you saw me here, and now you’ve suddenly changed your tune. What changed for

you?”

I swallow hard. She wants it all out there in the open, and if that’s what she needs, I’ll give it to her.

“I was fucking shocked to see you. You’re the last person I thought I’d see at one of our biker parties.

You know the women who show up are just here to fuck the men, so when I got over being so fucking surprised to see you after all these years, it hit me why you’d be here.

Either you were fucking one of my brothers, or you were a club girl, and neither of those options worked for me.

Then to top it off, you didn’t fucking remember me,” I explain, my hold on her tightening.

“You’re my one who got away. No one has compared to you, Luella, and they never will.

You’ve haunted my dreams, and the memories hurt, but it was a good pain because that was all I had of you.

So I’d welcome it. But you didn’t even fucking recognize me. ”

“You look different, Hayden, and I didn’t expect to ever see you again, either,” she admits, her voice gentling, losing its defensive tone. “You were a boy the last time I saw you... and now you’re a man. A big biker covered in tattoos. The you I had in my head was still that boy I used to know.”

She called me Hayden again, and I like that more than I should.

I twirl one of her curls around my finger. “I have a meeting with my record label right now, but when I get back, you and I are going to talk some more.”

“I heard you were getting a deal,” she replies in a wistful voice. “Just like you always dreamed.”

“Like we always dreamed,” I reply, tracing her lower lip with my thumb. She always had the prettiest lips—soft, plump, and juicy. “And you got your bakery like you always wanted.”

Her shoulders sag. “I had my bakery.”

“You’ll get it back, and it will be better than ever,” I promise, kissing her temple.

She doesn’t push me away, and I’m taking that as progress. I’m reluctant to leave her, even to meet with my label.

I don’t want to let her out of my sight. It’s so surreal having her right in front of me. Everything might have changed, but the urge to be near her and protect her still remains.

I only want good things to happen to Luella, and the fact that she lost her pride and joy—her bakery—because of her connection to our MC pisses me the fuck off.

But it did bring her here, where she’s forced to be around me every day, which is the only silver lining.

I usually stay at my own house, which is about a fifteen-minute ride from here, but if she’s here, I’m here.

Don't think I haven't missed Lore and Blade sniffing around.

I can't blame them—Luella is beautiful inside and out.

But that doesn't mean I won't kick their asses.

However, I'm not going to give them the chance.

So that's why I haven't been home since the day she moved in, and I asked Prez to put her room right next to mine.

Since I claimed her, I get to call all the shots when it comes to her unless our president overrules it.

The tension between us is thick, and I know she wants me just as badly as I want her, but she's quite simply stubborn.

And proud.

She's not about to let go of the fact that Daisy currently has a hold on me with the baby situation, and I understand that. It would fucking kill me if she were pregnant with another man's baby, not that it would be a deal-breaker for me, but it would hurt like hell.

"Either fuck her and let us watch, or let her come and play her shot!" Bones' words cut across the room.

I'm going to kill that bastard.

Luella's lips twitch, and I lift her, holding her to me before sliding her down my body until she's back on the floor.

I want to moan at having her perky tits pressing against me.

They're a perfect handful, and I can't wait to get my mouth on them.

I know she feels my hard cock when her eyes widen, and she starts to nibble on her lower lip.

"I'll be back," I rasp, reluctantly letting go of her. "Unless you want to come with me? Whenever we used to dream about these moments, you were always meant to be there."

Her green eyes widen in surprise, but she shakes her head. "No, I don't think that's a good idea. This is about you, Haze. Enjoy it."

I knew she'd turn me down, but I thought I'd try my luck anyway.

I might have made a mess of things, but it's time for me to sort out my shit.

And number one on that list is Luella.

Second is my record deal.

And the third is praying that the only kids I father will be Luella's.

I was her first kiss, and if I have my way, I'm also going to be her last.

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Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:34 am

LU

My panties are wet.

His touch and his deep, gravelly voice have that effect, and feeling his hard cock made me want to forget about everything else and get down on my knees for him. He felt big . And so fucking hard.

Instead, I finish the pool game with the twins, reminding myself why going there with him is a terrible idea.

He's a dick.

He might have knocked up a club girl.

And he's a whore.

All the more experience to eat me with.

Fuck, sometimes my internal voice needs to shut up. "So, what's going on with you and Haze?" Bones asks, taking a sip from his beer bottle while Skull plays his shot.

"Nothing," I reply, pursing my lips. The whole clubhouse doesn't need to know our twisted back story, especially not Bones.

He and Lore have the biggest mouths in the clubhouse.

I might have only been here for a short while, but even I know that.

Now Skull, that man looks like he can keep a secret.

In fact, he doesn't speak much at all, letting Bones carry the conversation.

If there was a good twin and an evil twin, I couldn't tell you who was who because it's usually the quiet ones you need to look out for.

But Bones has a mischievous side that must get him into a lot of trouble.

"Nothing? Then why did he claim you to the club?" he replies, smirking. He rakes a hand through his shoulder-length blond hair. "He's made you off-limits. You belong to not just the Serpents but especially to Haze."

Skull's lip twitches, but he stays quiet. Is this amusing to him? Maybe he is the evil twin.

"He did what?" I snap, my brow creasing.

"Yeah, since that first night at the party."

The night he rejected me and kissed those club girls in front of me?

No fucking way.

That bastard.

Bones rubs his chin thoughtfully. "Yeah, but now he's knocked up a club whore, so I'm curious about how you're both going to handle that."

“Maybe he should claim her,” I toss back, tapping my black nails on the table. “Does Ora know about this?”

“I don’t know, but War sure as fuck does.”

“It should be against the biker rules to claim a woman without her consent.”

They both laugh.

Laugh.

Assholes, the lot of them.

“Look, Haze doesn’t usually give a fuck about women for more than a night, so you obviously mean something to him. Just roll with it,” Bones says, playing his shot and sinking the last ball. They both put their cues away before coming to stand in front of me.

“Just roll with it ? That’s your advice?” I smirk.

He cradles my jaw with his strong hand. “Yes, Lu. That’s my advice. You’re his, and that holds weight here. I think before you walked through those doors, he was just living but not feeling anything. He was numb. You’ve changed something in him.”

I swallow, his words hitting me right in the gut.

His eyes twinkle suggestively as he lowers his voice and whispers in my ear, “I should have fucked you before he laid the claim.”

Then he swaggers away.

And I'm wet again.

Skull sits next to me, studying me. Ora told me her trick of telling them apart is one little curl of hair that Bones has on his forehead.

It's cute. Today, Skull has a black bandana on, too, containing his hair, while Bones' is wildly free.

If that doesn't sum the two of them up, I don't know what does.

"I should finish up in the kitchen," I say, breaking the comfortable silence. We're doing a charity event next weekend, and Ora and I will be doing all the catering for it.

"You work hard," he muses.

"I do. I need to train. That usually gets my energy out, but I haven't gone to the gym since I moved in here," I admit.

"Why don't you use our gym?" he suggests, standing up and offering me his hand. "I'll train with you. You do Muay Thai, right? Same as Haze."

"Yeah. He still trains?" I ask, surprised.

Skull nods, leading me down the hallway and out to the gym with a weight section and a big ring in the middle.

"Yeah, he does. He taught a lot of us what he's learned along the way too.

When he's not playing his guitar, he's in here a fair bit, punching the shit out of one of the bags.

” He pauses, smirking. “Or out of one of the brothers.”

This is the most Skull has ever spoken to me, and it’s the first time he’s ever touched me. He lets go to throw me a pair of gloves.

He pulls off his cut and T-shirt, leaving him in a pair of slightly loose jeans. And his body—he has no visible tattoos, just rippling muscles, at least I think that until he turns around, where the big Serpents’ emblem is covering his back. “Come on then, show me what you got.”

I don’t know how I’m meant to concentrate with him in nothing but jeans and bare feet, a six-pack, and a sexy V staring right at me. I pull off my oversized T-shirt, leaving me in my leggings and sports bra.

Skull puts some gloves on and brings his arms into guard, making his biceps bulge, and spreads his feet into the correct stance.

Fucking hell, he’s incredible.

“You hit me, I’ll just block,” he murmurs, stretching his neck from side to side.

With a grin, I come at him with a few jabs and crosses, and when I throw in a right kick, he blocks it with his gloves. He’s quick. I don’t know why I didn’t figure out that I’d find some good sparring partners here, but my stay here just became much more enjoyable.

An hour later, I’m sweaty and exhausted. When I hear whistling, I turn around to see Bones, Lore, and Danger watching us. I was so in the zone I didn’t even notice them.

“Why is it always the little ones who know how to fight?” Bones asks, his mouth open.

“Who knew you were so badass,” Lore calls across the gym, leaning back against one of the boxing bags with his arms crossed over his broad chest, a lopsided grin playing on his lips. “Next time a woman gets in my face, I’m calling you to protect me.”

“I’m not going to be your personal security guard, Lore.” I smirk, sliding through the ropes and jumping down from the ring. “You should be more selective where you put your dick.”

He laughs, his violet eyes crinkling at the corners. “Ah, come now, Cupcake, don’t be like that. You can protect my virtue like my own warrior princess.”

“That was hot,” Bones adds, giving me a slow once-over. He shares a look with his twin. “Haze is one lucky motherfucker.”

I roll my eyes.

“You need me to hold pads again, you know where to find me,” Skull says, lifting his chin at me before grabbing a towel, along with his shirt and cut, and leaving the gym. I watch his back muscles flex as he leaves, his tattoo staring at me.

Bones, Lore, and Danger all start to undress, Lore wrapping his hands as they get ready to spar with each other.

I try my best not to look, but it’s hard, and at the end of the day, I am single.

They are all ripped to perfection, so much so that I don’t know which one to linger on.

Lore is covered in ink and quite broad, while Danger is lankier but still muscular.

His deep dimples should be illegal. Bones looks exactly like Skull, just a hell of a lot

cockier.

My mouth is suddenly very dry. My pussy, on the other hand...

Lore comes over with his gloves on and his hair falling out of its man bun. "Can you fix this for me, Cupcake?"

And then he kneels in front of me.

Kneels.

Swallowing hard, I run my fingers through his thick, dark hair, and instead of putting it back in a bun, I plait it into a braid so it won't fall into his face when he's fighting.

Of course, this is the position Haze catches me in, my fingers in Lore's hair as he's on his knees in front of me, shirtless and in nothing but a pair of shorts. To top it off, I look sweaty and disheveled.

"What the fuck," Haze barks, storming toward us just as I tie Lore's braid and tap his bare shoulder to let him know I'm done. He stands up, flashing a smirk in Haze's direction. For men who are connected by loyalty, they really do enjoy riling each other up.

Haze is glaring at Lore, looking like he wants to strangle him. He comes up behind me, hands on my hips, his front pressed to my back. His stance is rigid. "Did you miss Church when I claimed her at the table?"

Lore strokes his beard. "No, brother. I was there."

"Good," Haze rumbles, his fingers tightening. "Keep your fucking hands off her, Lore."

“I believe she had her hands on me,” Lore replies, smirking. He’s such a shit-stirrer.

Haze goes to move around me, but I stop him by moving with him. “She is right here. Stop it, both of you. I was just sorting out his hair, and Haze, we aren’t even together. What is this claiming shit all about?”

“You already belonged to the club, Luella,” Haze mutters, his thumbs running circles over the dimples on my lower back.

“Just because I’m friends with Ora?”

“Yes,” they both answer at the same time.

“So I belong to the Serpents of Chaos MC?” I clarify, shaking my head in disbelief.

“You’re club property, darlin’.” Lore grins, flashing his straight white teeth. “You’re under our protection. That’s why you’re here now, gracing us with your presence.”

“Oh, so I belong to all of you then. So I can fuck any of the club brothers?”

I know that’s not what he meant. He claimed me as his, as in, off-limits to the other members.

But I want to push him.

It’s been me doing the chasing for what feels like my whole life, and now I want to be chased.

“Luella,” Haze warns, turning me around to face him. His hand moves to the side of my neck. “You’re mine . You’ve always been mine . Take however long you need to catch up, baby, but it doesn’t change the fact.”

“I don’t belong to any man,” I fire back. “Last I checked, there’s no ring on my finger.” I flash him my bare hand. “No property cut on my back, and no baby in my stomach. You saved that for someone else, didn’t you?”

His amber eyes flick with anger, regret, and determination. It’s the last one that sets me on edge. “I fucked Daisy before you came back into my life. Throw it at me all you want, I can take it, but you’ll be doing it while staying the fuck away from other men.”

Okay, that was hot .

Not that I’d let him know.

I go up on my tiptoes and point a finger in his face. “You’re delusional, Haze. That young girl who was obsessed with you, the one who worshiped you and put you on a pedestal higher than she could ever reach, is gone.”

“I don’t want the girl. I want the woman,” he fires back, leaning down to press a soft, chaste, unexpected kiss against my mouth. “And I want my best friend back.”

With that parting shot hitting its mark, he leaves the gym.

Fuck.

My shoulders slump.

I want my best friend back too.

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Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:34 am

HAZE

Age Eighteen

“Where was she?” I ask my mom, frowning at my now passed-out sister.

She’d gone missing again. I’ve lost count of the number of nights we’ve spent out looking for her.

Aspen is a mess. She’s dropped out of school, and all she does is party and take drugs.

She’s ruined her friendship with Luella, who was once her favorite person in the world.

It’s not only our heart she’s been breaking by taking this path, but every time Luella sees Aspen, her face no longer lights up. Now it drops.

“Passed out at a party.” Mom sighs, sitting and covering her face with her hands.

It’s been a year of this, and it’s broken her.

Her marriage to my father didn’t survive it either.

He just moved out, leaving us to deal with everything on our own.

“Your grandparents have offered us their investment house if we want to move. I

think it's a good idea.

We need to get her away from here, from these people she's surrounded herself with.
”

My first thought is Luella.

I don't want to leave her.

Her parents—if I can even call them that—don't give a shit about her.

Luella looks after herself, hiding under the covers while they drink and fight.

She's been raising herself for as long as I've known her.

I bring her food, drive her to school and the gym, and make sure she's okay.

Over the years, she's grown into the most beautiful girl, inside and out.

Smart, sweet, and hardworking—she studies hard and loves to bake.

And she's mine .

I've always known it, even when I didn't want to accept it.

My girl's not ready for me yet, but when she is, I'll be there.

At least, I thought I would be.

“I don't want to leave Rest Falls,” I quietly admit, swallowing hard.

“Hayden, she has marks on her arms,” Mom whispers, tears dropping down her cheeks.

Aspen’s drug use went from alcohol and weed to hard-core drugs within a few months.

She’s slipping through our fingers, and we all know it.

“If we don’t do something now, we’re going to lose her forever.

There’s a rehab center there. It could be a fresh start for us. We need this. Aspen needs this.”

“Fuck,” I grit out, standing up from the couch and starting to pace.

I’m the man of the house now, and I need to step up and look after my mother and sister.

But Luella.

“Okay, I guess we don’t have a choice,” I mutter, and my mother cries harder.

To save my sister, I’m going to have to leave my heart behind.

* * *

Present

Luella’s sitting at the bar, laughing with Ora and Xanthe, their other friend. Her curly hair tumbles around her shoulders, and her lips are painted a soft pink. She’s beautiful. She always has been. My little rose might have thorns now, but I know her

deep down to her soul.

No longer the girl I knew—she's all woman now.

And she's mine .

“You not fucking her yet?” War asks, smirking from beside me. We're on the other side of the room playing poker.

“She's more likely to stab me than let me in her pussy,” I mutter.

He throws his head back and laughs. “Fucking hell, Haze. Never knew there was a woman alive who didn't want to fall into bed with you.” He pauses, scowling. “Besides Ora, of course.”

If only he knew.

I'd give up every other fucking woman I've ever been with just to have Luella.

“She'll come around,” I reply, dragging my eyes back to her. There's no fighting what we have. Trust me, I've fucking tried. I wanted to stay away from her, but I couldn't. And when I didn't come for her—she found me.

No one can tell me that fate doesn't exist.

What we share is a once-in-a-lifetime type of connection. And I'd never say that out loud to War, but I am a fucking songwriter, and you best believe she's been my muse for as long as I can remember. I don't care what I have to do, I'm not letting her slip through my fingers again.

“How's the bakery rebuild going?” Angel asks, leaning back in his chair. The scar

that runs along his face might scare some, but I know how he got it, and it's a mark he should wear with pride.

“Good. I'm paying extra to have it done faster,” I admit. “Ora got Lu to design it exactly how she wants it, and I'm going to make sure it happens. Whatever insurance doesn't cover, I'm putting in the rest.”

It's going to be even better than before her dream bakery. The kitchen is going to be ten times better than it was. No expense will be spared.

Scorp makes a whipping noise, and the men all laugh. It's not like War can talk, but I don't point that out to our VP.

“We still haven't caught the fuckers who did it,” War reminds us, but we all know it's the Isle of Insanity MC.

They've been quiet, and it's making us nervous.

After losing a few of their members, they will be regrouping, but that doesn't mean they won't come back.

It's why the women can't go anywhere alone for now.

Until then, we're making our own plans. We've increased the amount of guns we hold and are working on making some new allies.

It's risky business to get the mafia involved, but we want the Serpents of Chaos MC to be untouchable.

“When does Curse get out?” I ask, changing the subject.

Curse is a patched member of our club. He's been locked up for three years but is due to be released soon.

Curse is a tattoo artist and a spooky motherfucker.

He knows shit. He sees through people. Sometimes, I wonder if he can read minds.

Shame he didn't see himself being locked up on a weapons charge.

"Next month. Suit is working on it," War replies, grinning. "We'll have to throw him a party... he's going to want some pussy."

War would know.

When he got out, he went to a club and straight into Ora's arms.

"Can't wait to have him back." Scorp grins, grabbing the neck of his beer bottle and taking a long drink.

It's not often our club doctor is here, but when he is, the man likes to let loose.

His skin has gotten tanner from all the hours he spends surfing.

I don't know how he fits it in with his schedule, but I suppose living by the beach helps.

My eyes snap back to Luella, and I frown when I see Lore move up next to her, his arm firmly around her chest, resting just above one of her juicy tits. "He's really fucking pushing it," I mutter, and War follows my line of sight and grunts.

"Almost put that fucker down myself," War mutters under his breath, then darts his

eyes over to Scorp, the man Prez wanted his daughter to be with for a period of time there.

Scorp winces and lifts his hands. “I didn’t touch your old lady.”

“Only thing keeping you breathing.”

“Fuck, everyone is getting taken down one by one.” Angel smirks, shaking his head.

“Put a fucking bullet in me before I become as pussy whipped as you two.”

Angel says something else, but his words barely register because I’m too busy wondering why Lore is still standing so fucking close to her.

When he kisses her jaw, I’ve had enough. Standing up, my chair flies backward and falls over as I stalk toward her. The smug bastard just smirks. We’re all good fighters. It’s a part of being in the MC, but I’ve trained longer than him.

Luella’s eyes widen as she sees me approaching, and I can only imagine what my expression looks like. I’ve never been jealous once in the time we’ve been apart, but the second she’s back in my life, I want to punch every fucker who looks at her.

“Lore, unless you want to get in the ring right now, you’ll get your fucking hands off Luella,” I snap, pulling her away from him and next to me.

Ora looks up at me with narrowed blue eyes. I know she’s not my biggest fan, but she doesn’t know me. She has no reason to be protective over my woman.

Luella was mine before she even knew her.

“You guys want to pull your dicks out and measure?” Ora smirks, having a silent conversation with Luella with their eyes. Ora suddenly laughs like a joke was told

that only she can understand.

Lore crosses his arms over his chest. “I’m just friends with her, Haze. No reason to resort to violence. Is she your old lady yet?”

At the same time Luella says, “No,” I mutter, “Working on it.”

“Well, you better work a little harder,” she whispers under her breath.

My hand trails up Luella’s back under her soft curls to rest on the back of her neck. It’s a possessive hold, but she doesn’t push me away, so there’s that.

The truth is that she is not wrong.

I need to make my move with her.

I just don’t know where to fucking start.

Is she ready to hear my truth? There’s so much unsaid between us.

Or is it just going to make her run?

Only one way to find out.

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LU

Haze is fucking unbelievable.

He holds me like I'm his, and the dangerous glint in his eyes as he looks at Lore is something I dreamed about as a teen, but we aren't together.

And he might be having a baby, according to him.

Well, I might be pissed about that.

Those are consequences of his manwhore actions.

But then he lowers his face to mine, and I forget everyone standing around us. His lips brush the shell of my ear, and a shiver runs down my spine, not to mention the zap straight to my clit. "Come and sit on my lap while I finish my last game. And then I'll take you to bed."

Bed?

My pussy, which has been recently neglected, jumps at the idea, but my head and heart are a little more wary.

"You think you could concentrate with me sitting on your lap, Haze?" I flirt, unable to help myself.

He lifts his face to look into my eyes, the silver of his rings cold on my skin, and then

he does something totally unfair.

He slowly smiles.

He fucking smiles, and the dimple on his right cheek makes an appearance at the same time his amber eyes light up.

Fuck.

“Probably not, but I’d be having a hell of a lot more fun,” he replies, searching my eyes before placing a soft kiss on the corner of my mouth. “Stop fighting me, Luella.” His hands slide down my body until they land on my hips.

Something shifts between us, and I think it’s me acknowledging that he still has his hold on me, and I will likely always have feelings for Haze. I always thought he was the man I’d end up with. In my head, he was my end game, but that was just the mind of a foolish girl.

Maybe I could fuck him and get him out of my system?

My eyes snap to Ora, who raises her brows.

Not a good idea , she says.

No, but it would be fun. And I’m horny.

A club full of men with no complications, why not?

“You think he would allow that?” I say out loud, nodding to the man still watching me.

Ora's lip twitches, and we share a laugh. "No, probably not."

"Want to share that with the rest of us?" Haze asks, pulling me up against his body. I feel his cock pressed against me, and it's hard as steel.

I stop laughing and swallow thickly. "No, not really."

If we did, we wouldn't be using our best friend telepathy.

He smirks and is about to say something else when Daisy wanders in, scanning the crowd before her eyes land on Haze.

"There you are," she purrs, ignoring me completely and brushing up against him. "I haven't been feeling well. I can't keep anything down."

"You took something down your throat this morning." Lore smirks, his lip twitching. "Quite easily, it looked like."

I wonder if that bothers Haze. She's carrying his baby, and she's still fucking the other men. How does that sit with him? I keep my eyes on his face, but he doesn't give anything away—no twitch, no narrowing of his eyes, nothing.

He's a master of control, and I want to break that.

Daisy cuts her eyes to Lore, frowning. "Watching my every move, Lore?"

"Hardly, you left the door wide open."

Who was she with? I share another look with Ora, who arches her brow in response. Yeah, we're nosy, but we admit it too.

“Well, a woman has needs.” She smirks, licking her lips as she stares up at Haze. “Will you come and lay down with me? I need to rest, and I don’t want to be alone.” She places both hands on her flat stomach.

“Daisy, if you need to go and rest, then go do it,” Haze replies gently but firmly. His hands tighten on my hips when I try to move away. “As you can see, I’m busy with my woman.”

Daisy finally looks down at me, pursing her lips. “Your woman? What the fuck, Haze? I’m pregnant with your child, and you’re out here dating? You’re not going to have time for anyone else other than me and your child.”

“We’ll discuss all of this when we get the paternity test,” Haze replies calmly while possessively moving his big hand so it’s splaying across my lower stomach.

How toxic is this?

I look over at Ora, whose blue eyes are wide as they flicker between Haze and Daisy.

“Bet there are a few men around here hoping you don’t do that test,” Lore mutters, rubbing the back of his neck.

“Like you?” I tease.

He smirks and clears his throat. “The timeline doesn’t match up for me, plus the last time we fucked...” He laughs under his breath. “Let’s just say you can’t get pregnant that way.”

Daisy hasn’t taken her eyes off Haze, and I’d rather be anywhere else right now. This is his messed-up situation, and somehow, I’m getting dragged into it.

I wish I could be that nice woman, the one who could accept the man she's always loved having a baby with another person, but unfortunately, I don't think that's me. Daisy will be connected to him forever. And she lives here in the damn clubhouse. Therefore, she's not going anywhere.

"You're not going to come take care of me? You're about to make it big. You'll have to pay me child support, you know that, right?" she snaps, her nose wrinkling. She throws her hands in the air. "I don't know why I thought you would be a good father, Haze!"

Okay, now that shit annoys me.

"I'm sure you can understand why he doesn't want to get invested when he's not sure if the child is his," I comment, unable to keep my mouth shut.

It's a problem of mine. "Maybe next time, keep it to like two different men in a week or something, have a fucking schedule so you know who might be knocking you up."

Ora clears her throat, trying not to laugh.

And failing.

Daisy scowls in my direction. "And who are you to say anything? You aren't an old lady. You're no one."

"She's claimed," Haze says, his fingers rubbing soothing circles on my stomach. "By me. She's mine. You don't speak to her that way, Daisy."

"No, you don't," Ora seethes, stepping closer to Daisy. "That's my best friend you're speaking to, and if you think I won't get your ass kicked out of here, you have another thing coming."

“The men won’t want me to leave,” Daisy replies, smiling now.

If she weren’t pregnant, I’d be tempted to slap that smug look right off her face.

Ora tilts her head to the side, stroking her own pregnant belly.

“You might have a purpose here, but if you think for a second you’re not replaceable, you’re more stupid than you look.

I can’t wait until you do the paternity test, so then we can resolve this once and for all.

” Ora’s eyes snap to Haze’s. “And then you become the problem of whoever was dumb enough not to pull out.”

Ouch.

Daisy storms off, but not before looking back and throwing Haze an angry look. Haze ignores her and tucks an untamed curl back behind my ear, whispering into it, “You never did like anyone speaking badly about me, did you, Luella?”

His words bring me back to reality faster than anything else.

He’s right. No one could ever say a bad word about Hayden in my presence.

But that was before he left and cut me off.

He didn’t even bother to keep in touch. No letters, text messages, nothing .

He had gone from being my favorite person to us having no contact.

“If only you had the same loyalty to me,” I murmur, stepping out of his embrace.

I walk away, and he lets me.

Having so much history with him hurts.

We should have had a much different life together.

We could have had that life.

Instead, he might be about to have a baby.

And as for me?

I can't seem to live with or without him.

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HAZE

“Can we talk?” I ask later that night, and Luella nods, opening her door for me to enter.

I’ve been handling all of this wrong. To move forward, we need to talk about our past, and ignoring it isn’t fucking working.

I’m not someone who likes to talk about how they feel.

I don’t know any bikers in our clubhouse who do, but if I want Luella, I’m going to have to give her something.

Right now, I’m putting myself out of my comfort zone, forcing myself to have an honest conversation.

Communication is key, right? I heard Ora say that once.

I’d rather communicate how I feel about her by laying her back on the bed and tasting her pussy until she screams my name and figures out she’s mine , but maybe I can do that afterward.

I haven’t fucked anyone since I saw her at that clubhouse party, and for someone who usually fucks multiple women every night, it’s been a big change for me.

But she’s worth it, and I’m going to prove that.

Sex chases away my demons, and without it, I have to face them. A big part of that is having to accept the reality about my sister, Aspen. I haven't mentioned her to Luella since we reconnected, and neither has she.

My sister has been the elephant in the room between us, and I think it's time we both said our peace.

Luella sits on the bed, perched right on the edge, looking uncomfortable as hell. I take the chair next to the bed.

"Why don't you ever ask about Aspen?" I start, licking my suddenly dry lips. Her green eyes widen at my question, and she starts to wring her hands together.

"I mean, what is there to say? We were best friends until we weren't. And then you moved away. I haven't seen or heard from her since."

I suppose for her, it was that simple.

She got to walk away from her childhood best friend, but as her brother, I didn't have that luxury.

"Aspen had started taking hard-core drugs, which I'm guessing you knew about.

I don't know if you knew how bad it had gotten, though, because she had turned her back on you by then.

But my mom found her with track marks on her arm.

That's why we moved away," I explain. "You know she tried to blame you, saying you got her into the drugs."

Her brows furrow. "I've never done any of those drugs in my life, not back then and definitely not now."

"I know."

But back then, I did wonder. The two of them did everything together, so why not this?

"I didn't want to move," I continue. "I didn't want to leave you, but..."

I take her hand and rest it on my thigh, caressing her knuckles with my thumb.

"We moved and got her into rehab. But over the years, things never got any better. She was in and out of rehab and would go missing. I love my sister, but she made our lives harder. And then Mom died, and it was all on me."

"I didn't know your mom had passed. I'm so sorry," she whispers, looking down at our hands. "How is Aspen now?"

"She's in and out of rehab," I admit, swallowing hard. "She comes and stays at my house sometimes. She was there a few weeks ago but disappeared again."

Luella stays silent, processing.

The thing is, back then, Aspen blamed Luella for anything and everything. She suddenly had a real chip on her shoulder about her friend and told me Luella was the one who got her addicted, and that if it weren't for Luella, things would be different.

I know now that it was all lies. I don't know why, but she had become Aspen's scapegoat to take any responsibility for her getting in with the wrong crowd.

It was easier for me back then to let go of Luella and have a fresh start with my mother and sister in the hope that things would get better.

They didn't.

And I lost the girl I love in the process.

"Trying to help her consumed me for a long time," I confess, leaning forward and resting my elbows on my thighs. "If I'm being honest, it still does. But I never forgot you, baby girl. Never."

"That might be true, but you also didn't do anything about it, did you, Haze?"

Instead, you've been here fucking anything that walks and living your best life.

You never wanted me. If you did, you would have come and got me.

"She takes a deep, shaky breath. "I'm sorry about Aspen and your mom.

I'm sorry your sister still hurts you with her choices.

Trust me, I never thought that she'd..." she trails off, and although I want to correct her, I let her speak.

I did want her—more than anything.

"But if it were up to me, Haze, I would have been there for you through all of that."

"I know," I rasp, moving off the chair and sitting next to her on the bed.

And I know she must have been on her own.

Her parents were useless, and she was an only child.

I left her alone to figure life out at only sixteen and looking back, that kills me.

It's why I made sure she got her bakery.

I had to know that at least one of her dreams had come true.

I tried to make it up to her.

“Why do you think I stayed away, Luella? I was a mess. I'm still a fucking mess...

” With a deep sigh, I cup her cheek and lift her chin so she has no choice but to look at me.

“You deserved better. You had your bakery, and you had a good, safe life. But the second you walked into this clubhouse, into my world, all that changed. You're mine .

You've always been mine , and nothing is ever going to change that. ”

Before she can stop me, I lean forward to press a soft kiss to her mouth. When she doesn't push me away, I deepen the kiss, groaning when I get my first taste of her in thirteen fucking years.

I was the first person to kiss Luella, and now I'm going to be the last.

Her hands hold onto my shoulders as she kisses me back, her tongue dancing with mine. She tastes just like I remember, like fucking sweet peaches.

For the first time in a long time, I feel a sense of hope.

Maybe there is a happy ending for a man like me.

I've had plenty of women—lust comes easy when you wear a patch—but none of them have ever felt like this. This is something else entirely, something I could spend my whole life chasing and never find again.

Sex has always been a distraction for me, but Luella is so much more than just that. She's fucking everything. There's a pull to this woman, a tether, something deeper than just history connecting us.

And it terrifies me.

I'm not the boy she once knew. She needs to get to know the man I want to be for her. I need to stop fucking up and just take what's always been mine .

Luella straddles me, not breaking our kiss, and my hands cup the globes of her ass.

I've been wanting to do that for so fucking long.

I adjust her so she can feel my hard cock sliding against her pussy, the material of our clothing doing nothing to hide the heat.

She slowly starts to ride me, and I feel like a teenager all over again.

“Fuck,” I grit out, pulling down her top and admiring her tits in her black lace bra.

She pushes into my touch, seeking more, so I slide the cups down and suck on her sweet pink nipples until she's squirming.

“Haze,” she moans.

Unable to take it any longer, I pull off her top and bra completely, taking her in. “You are so fucking beautiful.”

I don’t think I’ve ever been this hard in my life.

Lifting her off my lap, I lay her back on the bed and slide her pink sweatpants down her legs. Kneeling in front of the bed, I spread her creamy thighs and run my nose over her black panties, breathing her in. Sliding the scrap of lace to the side, I don’t waste any time, needing to taste her.

“Haze,” she whimpers as I begin to lick her pussy until her legs start to shake. I could do this for hours. She’s so fucking sweet that I hum between licks.

I make sure I put my tongue ring to work, gliding the metal ball over her clit. “Be a good girl for me and come all over my tongue.”

“Yes,” she moans, keeping her gaze locked on me.

“That’s it... look at me when you scream my name.”

A few seconds later, she’s coming all over my face, calling out my name, and I lap it all up, enjoying every second of it. “You’re so fucking pretty when you come for me, Luella.”

I’m about to fuck her and show her she’s mine when a sudden knock at the door has me pulling her under me, shielding her naked body with mine.

“Lu, get ready, we’re going out!” Lore, the bastard, calls out. He knocks again.

“Wear whatever you want. I’m in the mood for a fight.”

My head snaps from the door to her, my eyes narrowing at the amusement in hers.

I'm about to tell Lore she's not fucking going anywhere when he adds, "You said you wanted to get laid, so you better hurry up before all the good dicks are taken."

Motherfucker.

My jaw clenches, and her amusement fades when she takes in my expression. "You were going to go out and fuck someone?"

"I was going to the club to have a night out." She smirks, raking her teeth over her bottom lip. "Lore and the twins said they'd come."

"Lu—"

She lifts her hand. "I don't see a ring on this finger, Haze. I can do what I want, just as you've been doing what you want."

Goddammit!

That fire in her makes me even harder.

I raise my voice to call out to Lore, my soon-to-be-dead brother. "She's already found the best dick."

There's a long pause and then a deep laugh. "Lu, yell out now if you need to be saved!"

I arch my brow, silently daring her.

She just smiles widely.

And fuck if it doesn't light up my life.

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LU

The dark expression that crossed his face shouldn't be so hot, nor should his voice's deep, gravelly, dangerously calm tone.

Jealous Haze is hot as hell.

And the best part of this whole thing? Lore must have known Haze was in here because I never once said I wanted to go out trolling for dick. I mean, why would I? There is plenty around right here. Lore was just stirring up shit, and I love him for it.

We didn't get back to fucking after that.

Instead, we did something we should have done a long time ago.

We spoke about everything. I told him how my life was after he left, and he told me the same.

It seems we both were dealt pretty shitty hands, him trying to help Aspen with his mother and being the man of the house and me trying not to let my parents' toxic relationship with alcohol affect me.

I continued to train at the gym after he left, and that's what got me through.

That and baking.

It actually felt like old times.

We never spoke about Daisy, which is probably why we never argued.

I fell asleep in his arms and woke up to him playing on his guitar and singing “Iris” by the Goo Goo Dolls. He would always play this song for me.

It was our song.

Home.

I felt like I was home, and in this moment, I know that, to me, home is a person.

“I missed this,” I say, grinning at him as I rub my eyes and sit up in bed.

He looks over at me from the chair, his amber eyes smiling as he continues to play, his silver rings glinting in the sunlight.

He’s not wearing a shirt, and my gaze lingers on what I can see of his smooth chest and taut abs.

I know my group chat with Ora and Xanthe is going off right now, but I don’t even look at my phone as I live in the moment. When the song is over, he puts down his guitar, and I can’t help but feel emotional. My guard is down, and I don’t know if I like it.

Haze sits on the edge of the bed and leans forward to plant a soft kiss on my forehead. The air between us feels clearer now, the past less heavy.

“You’ve never had an old lady?” I ask as he slides back into the bed and sits against the wooden headboard. I rest my head on his warm chest, and he plays with my hair, gently wrapping my curls around his fingers before letting them spring free, just like he used to when we were kids.

“No, there was only ever one woman for me,” he rasps, his other hand stroking down my back. “I’ve always known that.”

“That’s not what I’ve been hearing,” I mutter, unable to help myself. Haze has made a reputation for himself as the biker who needs more than one woman in his bed. One club girl isn’t enough—the more, the merrier with him.

His fingers still, and I instantly regret my words, no matter how true they are. It’s been so long since I felt cared for by someone, and I want his fingers to continue to comfort me. And then maybe his tongue can do that trick he does with his piercing again.

“I haven’t slept with anyone since you walked back into my life,” he says, continuing to rub my back.

My shoulders relax, and I close my eyes again.

“Yeah, I kissed those club girls when I first saw you, but that’s been it.

And yes, I know I was an asshole. If I’m being honest, I was scared.

I freaked out and tried to push you away.

I always knew I couldn’t give you what you deserved.

After walking away from you the first time, I knew I couldn’t do it again. Everything was going to change.”

I get he’s a confused mess because I feel the same way. At least, now I do.

“We should get up. I wanted to make breakfast for Ora. She said she was craving

some soufflé pancakes,” I say, forcing myself to sit up.

I glance down at his cock, which is tented against his boxer shorts, reminding me that he made me come last night, but I didn’t return the favor.

He’s huge. And I’m curious. While I’m glad we didn’t have sex—we should probably take our time with that—I still find myself wanting to have a little taste.

He said he hasn’t been with anyone in weeks.

Do I believe him? Hayden was always honest, and I would like to think that hasn’t changed.

“Keep staring at me like that, Luella, and you won’t be leaving this room until lunchtime,” he growls, watching my every reaction.

I reach forward and stroke him through the material before sliding down his boxer shorts.

His cock stands proud, so fucking big and slightly curved, with a glint of metal pierced through the head.

“Holy shit,” I whisper, running my finger over it.

He bucks and makes a sound in the back of his throat. Straddling his legs, I tease him by licking and sucking everywhere but where he wants me. His hand threads through my hair but doesn’t push me down.

“Fuck, take me down your throat, Luella. Now . I need you.”

My tongue tastes his head, and he moans. The growling sounds he makes are so

fucking sexy. I use my best moves, sucking him into my mouth and taking him as deep as I can. There's no way I can take all of him, but I try my best, my eyes fluttering closed.

Haze grips my throat, lifting my face to look at him. "No, don't look away. Keep those eyes on me. You look so fucking sexy being such a good girl for me."

Holy shit.

I'll be his good girl whenever he wants if he speaks to me like that.

He's in control, so commanding, and I fucking love it.

My mouth continues to work its magic, sucking him deep and hard.

"Fuck, baby, just like that." His voice is low, his breathing ragged. Yeah, he's close. He breaks our eye contact as he loses control, his head falling back, exposing his throat.

"Luella," he growls. "I'm going to come, and you're going to swallow every drop for me, aren't you?"

Hell yes, I am.

His hand tightens in my hair as he starts to orgasm, the pleasure on his face something I want to witness over and over again. I swallow each drop, then lick him clean while he watches me.

"Fucking made for me," he rasps, lifting me and laying back. "Now take all your clothes off and sit on my face. You're the only thing I want for breakfast, and I'm suddenly fucking starving."

You know what?

Everyone can feed themselves.

HAZE

We're all sitting around the table, waiting for Prez to join us. Bones keeps staring at me out of the corner of his eye, his brow furrowed.

"What?" I ask him.

"Why do you look so relaxed and so... happy?" he asks, sounding confused. "I don't think I've ever seen you smile in Church before."

He's right. I am happy and relaxed, almost like a weight has been lifted off my shoulders. I left Luella asleep, passed out after another two orgasms, naked underneath the sheets. I hope this meeting doesn't take long because if I'm lucky, I might be able to catch her before she gets up.

"It's because he got laid last night." Lore smirks, leaning back in his chair and tapping his knuckles against the wooden table. "Lu makes some sweet noises when she comes."

I stand up, pushing my chair back. "Don't fucking push me, Lore."

"What? The walls are thin," he replies, his violet eyes dancing with amusement.

"You hurt Lu, and we're going to have a problem, Haze," War states, watching me through narrowed, dark eyes. "If Lu's upset, Ora will be upset, and she doesn't need that shit right now."

“What happens between me and Luella is our business,” I reply, my jaw tensing as I slowly sit back down. “And it’s been a long time coming. You all know this. I claimed her the second she got here.”

But she was mine long before that.

Blade crosses his arms over his chest. I know he wants Luella, but he’s not going to fucking get her. And if he tries, I’m going to beat the shit out of him.

“And what are you going to do with Daisy?” Bones asks, sharing a look with Skull.

Ghost and Angel watch on silently, not contributing to whatever this little ambush is.

“He’s hoping to make her one of your problems,” Lore adds, smirking as he glances around the table. “Who else fucked her around that time?”

“We fucked her, but I don’t know when exactly,” Bones admits, wincing. He looks up at the ceiling. “Lord, please don’t make that baby ours. I promise I’ll be a good boy.”

I don’t miss the fact he said ours, not his. Because even if he knocked Daisy up, the child would still be Skull’s too.

“Praying’s not going to help you now,” Blade mutters, stretching his neck from side to side. “What’s the holdup on the paternity test? You know they can do them early now.”

“She said we have to wait until next month.” I shrug, not wanting to get into it in front of everyone.

“Did you speak to Scorp?” Ghost asks, running his hand through his dark beard. “I

bet he can make it happen.” The evil glint in his steel-gray eyes makes me think he wouldn’t be giving Daisy a choice.

“Or ask Prez.” Skull smirks, sharing another glance with his brother. “Didn’t you pull that off for him?”

“Yeah, but we can’t offer the baby a drink and then steal his glass.” Bones laughs.

Angel stares at him with a bored yet judgmental expression.

“I haven’t spoken to Scorp,” I admit, rubbing the back of my neck. “But if he can get it done sooner, that would be better.”

“Yeah, better not get too attached to Lu in case she dumps your ass when Daisy pushes out an amber-eyed baby,” Lore says in a too-fucking-cheerful tone. “Wait, if that happens, you can’t still hold your claim over her, right? I think it should become void. You should let Blade here have a turn.”

“He always did like a harem,” Bones adds, laughing some more.

“Luella. Is. Mine ,” I growl, slamming my fists down on the wooden table. “Baby or no fucking baby. And you all need to mind your own fucking business. I claimed her at this very table. So if anyone tries anything...” I stare Blade down.

Everyone goes silent, the air tense.

And then Prez steps into the room, taking in all of us. “What the fuck is going on now? Don’t tell me you fuckers knocked someone else up?”

“Fucking hope not.” Lore smirks, leaning on his elbows. “We’re just having a friendly discussion about Lu and Haze.”

Prez takes a seat, his hulking presence reminding us why he's the president.

“Let's save Haze's shit show of a love life for later.

There are a few things to discuss. One is that Curse is getting out soon.

Rune has contacted me and wants to transfer from our Dawson Chapter so he can be with his brother. Anyone have a problem with that?”

Rune is Curse's younger brother. The two of them have a fucked-up history and, at one stage, wanted to kill each other. It's good that they've put that behind them. They are known for being extremely talented tattoo artists, so I guess some new ink will be coming our way.

No one objects.

“Good. Now, Insanity MC has been laying low, but that doesn't mean we get to forget that they are a threat. Sarah went back home, but Pippa tried to get into Strike last night.”

Pippa was Ora's old neighbor and someone Ghost fucked. She was trying to use him but failed because Ghost never goes back for seconds. Sarah was War's now ex-wife, and the two of them worked with Insanity MC to try and bring us down.

“Hope you kicked her ass out,” War grunts, cracking his knuckles. “I still don't want Ora going anywhere without a bodyguard. I say we keep the women on lockdown.”

“Ora's going to forever be on lockdown with you,” Bones mutters, and Skull smirks.

Prez nods, clasping his hands together like an evil mastermind. “Lu can stay here as long as she needs. Ghost, I know you wanted Xanthe to stay here, but she wanted to

go. She's always welcome if she changes her mind."

Pretty much all our heads snap to Ghost. Xanthe?

Why does he care what she's doing? He doesn't give a shit about women.

Even on the rare occasions I've seen him with one, he always looks like he's struggling just to let them near his dick.

And I know he doesn't like them touching him.

Xanthe's a sweet girl and a teacher. Ghost would destroy her with his level of crazy.

"Xanthe will be safe," is all he says.

Okaaay then.

"What?" Ghost barks when we keep staring at him.

"Nothing," we all reply in unison.

"Anything else?" Prez asks, changing the subject as he scans every face.

"When are we patching the prospects in?" War asks. We currently have four. Danger and Omen started together, and a few months later, we took on Patch and Romeo.

"Next weekend for Danger and Omen." Prez grins, blue eyes alight with mischief. "Let's throw them a party they won't forget."

"Ora and Lu want a pole installed so they can dance on it," Lore adds, his shoulders shaking with repressed laughter. "I said I'd sort that for them this week."

Prez suddenly looks unwell, but then he turns to War. “Good luck with that.”

“Ora can dance on it when no one else is around,” War grumbles, a muscle working in his jaw. “And that’s after she has the baby.”

The thought of Luella dancing on a pole in front of the men has me wanting to commit murder. Now, if she wants to put on a show for me and me alone, that’s different. And now I’m hard.

“Why don’t we put it in the room next to the bar? There’s nothing in it except a couch.”

The sex couch, as it were. Everyone goes into that room to fuck. There’s even a big mirror hanging on the wall, not by coincidence, I bet. “Then we can close the door if we want some privacy, or if it’s a party, there’s plenty of room to fit people in.”

Prez tilts his head to the side, considering, and then he nods. “Perfect. Then we don’t have to see shit we don’t want to fucking see.” He looks at War when he says the words.

“The sex-couch room is now known as the pole room.” Bones sighs with happiness and a big smile. “See, this right here is why I joined this club.”

The second the meeting is over, I’m out of there.

I’ve got the woman of my dreams waiting for me.

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Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:34 am

LU

I'm in the kitchen when Haze finds me, interrupting my flashbacks of this morning.

A man has never made me come so fast before.

It's unusual that I finish at all sometimes, but it's like Haze already knew my body somehow.

I know I shouldn't be thinking about how he got to be so fucking good with his mouth, but the thought did cross my mind.

Still, I get to benefit from his experience now. Fuck everyone else.

Well, he kind of already did that, didn't he?

We still haven't gone all the way. I can't help but hope the finale happens later tonight.

His hands grip my hips from behind, his face buried into my neck. "I was hoping you'd still be in bed."

"I'm making lunch for everyone," I reply, leaning back into him. He kisses my neck, and a soft whimper escapes my mouth. "Are you hungry?"

"Ravenous," he rasps, gently pushing my hair to one shoulder and running his nose up the column of my neck. I'm about to spin around and jump him when I hear a

throat clearing.

When Haze turns us around, Daisy is standing there, her narrowed eyes pinned on us.

“Haze, we need to talk. Now .”

Haze sighs, still not letting go of me. In fact, he pulls me even closer. “Whatever you have to say, you can say it in front of Luella.”

Well, that’s new.

Her bright pink lips tighten. “This baby has nothing to do with her.”

“If the baby is mine, it does. And I actually did want to speak to you.”

“Yeah?” she asks, perking up.

“Yeah, when did you say you were doing the paternity test? I sent Scorp a message this morning, and he said he could get it done this week for us. All we need is some blood from you and a cheek swab from me. It’s non-invasive and completely safe for the baby,” he says, and her face drops.

I almost feel bad for her. “Since you’re further than seven weeks, we can do it now. ”

“I’ve decided I’m not going to do the test until the baby is born,” she replies with a smirk, lifting her chin.

Instantly, the temperature in the room drops. “Why, Daisy? You obviously have something to hide if you don’t want everyone knowing the truth. You owe it to your child to find out who the father is.”

She steps forward, resting her hand on the back of the chair at the head of the table.

“I’ve told you who the father is, Haze. And if you want to be a part of our child’s life, you better stop fucking around and pay some attention to its mother.

” With that parting shot, she spins around and disappears like the witch she is.

“Fuck,” Haze grits out, hand moving to the back of my nape. “I’m not going to let her control me. If she wanted to prove the baby is mine, she would.”

I go quiet.

I don’t know what the right answer is here, only my own selfish one.

I don’t want him to cater to her every need while she holds this baby over him, either.

But what happens if it is his? Is this something I can pass off as a future problem? Because it’s not just a problem, it’s kind of a deal-breaker. I thought we would find out soon, and then we could all quit living in limbo.

And then, a thought occurs to me.

His piercing would make it easy to break a condom, wouldn’t it?

Deep inside, I must have thought that Daisy’s baby wasn’t his, but now the fear is real.

But she did fuck around, so I don’t know if all of the men are using protection or what. I don’t know how this all became my problem, but I’m annoyed that it has.

“What are you going to do?” I ask him as he cups my face and forces me to look him in the eye. “I don’t know if it’s a good idea for me to be with you, waiting for everything to hit the fan.”

His amber eyes scan mine. “There’s a small chance the baby is mine. Would it be so bad if I came with a child?”

“How would you feel if I got pregnant with someone else’s baby?” I fire back.

His jaw tenses. “This was before we reconnected, Luella,” he reminds me. His tone is gentle, but I don’t miss the storm brewing in his eyes.

“Yes, and we didn’t reconnect until I stumbled upon you because you never bothered to come and find me, did you, Haze?” The words are out before I can stop them, but once they are out there, I realize how very true they are.

He was happy never to see me again.

He let me go.

He didn’t care where I was or who I was with.

He had moved on.

He grips my face tighter. “I told you why, Luella. I was letting you live a normal life. I didn’t deserve you. I knew it then, and I still know it now, but I’m too much of a selfish bastard to let you go. Your normal life left you the second you walked into this clubhouse.”

“I was meant to be having your children. I’ve had their names picked out since I was twelve,” I admit in a moment of vulnerability.

His eyes soften, and he leans forward to press his lips to my forehead. “And you will. What are the names you chose?”

“Lola for a girl, and Silas for a boy.”

“Beautiful. Save the names. You’ll need them.”

I want to scream.

I want to walk out.

I want to kiss him.

I want us to go back in time and change everything that led us to this moment.

“If you came here with a child already, I would have loved them even if they weren’t mine because they’d be yours.” His lips tighten. “If you came here and got pregnant by one of my brothers,” he lowers his voice, “... I’d have to kill them.”

“And that’s how I feel about Daisy!”

“Daisy is no one. No one else I fucked meant anything, Luella. They were faceless bodies who distracted me from my own shit. I tried to use women to fill a void, a void that no one but you can fill.”

“Daisy isn’t no one, Haze. You’re about to have a child that’s half her. Half her features, half her traits, half her genetics. That’s not no one.”

Our eyes connect and hold, and so much passes through his.

Loss.

Guilt.

Hope.

Fear.

Deep inside, he's just as scared as I am. But he's scared that I'm going to run. That I'm not going to accept him.

"It will be okay," he promises me, and I bury my face in his chest and wrap my arms around him. "You're the only one I want to be with, Luella. You're mine . You have always been."

"I'm afraid," I admit.

"I'm here, and I'm not going anywhere, okay? I'm going to be so good to you."

"Lu! Is lunch ready? I've been dreaming about having those meatballs in my mouth," Lore calls out, stopping when he sees us embracing. "Haze, stop distracting her."

"You need your own fucking woman, Lore," Haze grumbles, letting me go and looking around the kitchen. "I have to go to the studio tonight, but I'm free now if you need any help?"

Luella smiles and shakes her head. "I've got it under control. You can sit here and keep me company, though?"

Haze nods, grinning. "I'm not completely useless in the kitchen, you know? But I get it if you only prefer one chef in here. Can I get you something to drink?"

"I'll take a beer," Lore says, pulling out a chair and sitting. He doesn't look like he's going anywhere anytime soon. He either can't read a room or doesn't care, and I'm pretty sure it's the latter.

“I’ll have a vodka and cranberry juice, please,” I order.

Haze clips the back of Lore’s head as he leaves the kitchen, and Lore cuts his violet eyes to me. “You naughty little cupcake. Everyone is waiting to hear about what happened last night in the group chat.”

My brows furrow as I start chopping some onions. “How would you know what happens in the group chat?”

I pause and look over at him when he stays quiet, only to see him smirking. “I got an honorary add. Something about me being a gossip.”

I slide my phone out of my jeans pocket and check the chat titled ‘Baddies.’ Lo and behold, Lore has been added to the group by Ora, and there’s a picture of his ripped abs for his profile. I scroll through to see what I’ve missed.

Ora

Lore said Haze is in your room. OMG!

Xanthe

It’s about time!

Ora

I just walked past your room because I’m nosey. Damn, girl. What is he doing to you in there?

Xanthe

Ora! Boundaries.

Ora

I just wanted to make sure she was okay! I knew they were going to give in to all that sexual tension at some point.

Ora

By the way, Daisy walked past. She looks pissed!

Ora added Lore to the chat.

Xanthe

Oh boy. What happened to this being a no-penis zone?

Lore

Hey! You love penis. I've seen what you read.

Ora

I told you not to touch my Kindle!

Xanthe

Hahaha.

Lore

Xanthe, why aren't you staying at the clubhouse?

Xanthe

I don't think I need to. No one is going to come after me. Not like I'm an old lady.

Ora

Maybe we just want you here.

Lore

I know someone who does.

Ora

WHO?

Xanthe

Yeah, who?

I look up at Lore. "One of the men has a thing for Xanthe?"

Lore leans back and crosses his arms behind his head. "I believe so. But I'm not saying anything. We have to let this play out, I think."

I type out a quick message and hit send.

Lu

Yes, I spent the night with him. We didn't go all the way. Now I'm cooking you lunch, Ora!

Sliding my phone back into my pocket, I get started on cooking. With so many people in the clubhouse, it's basically like catering. Haze brings me my drink, kisses me, and sits next to Lore with his notebook and pen in his hand. Writing songs. He never went anywhere without a notebook.

At Ora's and Lore's request, once the spaghetti and meatballs, garlic bread, and salad are ready, I call everyone in.

Ora comes back from her doctor's appointment and gives me a warm hug. "Thank you, it smells so good."

"Sorry I missed breakfast," I say, clearing my throat.

She laughs and winks at me. "I'm not. I want all the details. And you don't need to fuss over me, Lu. I appreciate it, but I'm a big girl, and I can manage."

"Well, I'm not pregnant and don't have a job to go to. The catering has died down a little now that the wedding season is over. So please, put me to work." I grin, about to grab a plate, when Haze says, "This is yours, Luella."

He plates my food and places it in front of me. "Do you want another drink?"

I nod slowly. "Yes, please."

Ora and I share a look.

Haze is trying.

He is all in.

Now I need to decide if I do the same.

HAZE

My leather boots hit the gravel when I slide off my Harley.

I spent hours recording new songs, the words just flowing.

My muse is back, and I feel more alive than ever.

She opens her door in a cute nightdress, one I've seen her wear before with a picture of Sailor Moon on the material. She looks fucking adorable.

"Haze," she murmurs, opening the door wider. "I wasn't sure what time you were going to be done."

Locking the door behind me, I slide off my boots and socks.

Removing my cut, I carefully rest it on the back of the chair and then grip my T-shirt at the back of my neck to tug it off.

I enjoy the way her gaze lingers on my chest and abs, but I like it even more when she lifts those beautiful emerald eyes to look at me.

Something clicks into place.

She stands and starts to let her hands roam.

"We can just sleep tonight," I rasp, swallowing hard. I want her more than anything,

but I don't want her to feel pressured. I'm happy just to have her in my arms. And fuck, I truly mean that.

Who am I?

I've gone from multiple women in my bed and still feeling unsatisfied to being content with just this one beautiful woman in my arms.

All I know is that for the first time in a long time, I can breathe again. I wasn't just going through the motions to make it through the day.

Life is good, and I'm living it.

Luella smiles and rakes her teeth over her bottom lip as she starts to unbuckle my belt, slowly pulling the leather through the straps.

My whole body goes rigid, and I hold my breath as she undoes my button and slides down the zipper.

When she pulls my cock out and lowers herself onto her knees, I'm sure this must be a dream.

"Luella," I whisper, threading my hand into her hair. I hiss when her tongue licks the head of my cock. "Yes, just like that. Look how well you take me into that hot little mouth."

She continues to lick and tease me until I can't take anymore. I lift her nightie off her to find her bare underneath. Picking her up in my arms, I lay her back on the white sheets and admire her.

"Beautiful," I rasp, running my hands up her legs and spreading her thighs. I kiss her

deeply, then start to press open-mouth kisses down her body until I reach her pussy. “I just need a little taste before I fuck you.”

Moaning at her sweetness, a little taste turns into one orgasm. I get her to the edge for a second one, then settle between her, my hard cock at her wet entrance. “Once we do this, you are mine . There’s no going back.”

“I’ve always been yours,” she replies in a low, husky tone, sliding her pussy against the head of my dick. I pull in a sharp breath as I slide in slowly, our eyes connecting and holding. “Fuuuccckkk.”

She’s fucking made for me.

I always knew it, and how perfect she feels only confirms it.

I usually never do missionary, but now it might be my fucking favorite because I get to look into those expressive green eyes and see every reaction play through them.

“Yes, you have,” I rumble, kissing her. My hands cup her jaw to position her just how I want her as I drive inside. “You feel so fucking good, Luella. Just like I knew you would.”

And fucking with no condom? I’ve never done that before. And it feels fucking amazing having nothing between us.

“Haze—”

“That’s right, beg for this cock,” I moan, sucking on the side of her neck. I pull back to watch myself slide in and out of her wet heat. “Fuck, look what you do to me.”

“Haze,” she pleads, lifting her hips to meet me thrust for thrust.

“What do you need, baby?” I ask, taking her deep and slow. She’s so fucking wet, and I don’t remember sex ever being this good. “Use your words.”

“More. I need more.”

I wanted to take my time and savor her, but it looks like she has other plans.

Bracing myself up on my arms above her, I start a faster rhythm. Her moans soon grow louder. “That’s right, come all over my cock. Give me what I want.”

“Fuck,” she screams, digging her nails into my thighs.

I draw her orgasm out until I’ve wrung every last wave of pleasure from her, and then pull out and go down on her again, licking her clean.

Her thighs tremble as she’s on the verge of coming again.

She lifts my face from her pussy by pulling at my short hair to look into my eyes.

Her face is full of hunger and heat. I think it’s the single most erotic moment of my life.

I slowly lick my tongue out over her clit with the metal ball of my piercing, not looking away from her.

“Your mouth... just like that,” she murmurs, her tongue brushing over her lower lip. She lets go of my hair, and I continue to devour her until she screams my name.

Laying back on the bed, I lift her on top of me to straddle me. She lowers herself fast and hard, her hands leaning backward to grip my thighs. Her head falls back, exposing her graceful neck.

I've never seen anything so fucking beautiful.

She's uninhibited, taking what she needs from me.

Rising, I play with her nipples sucking and gently biting. "Yes, fuck me, Luella."

She rolls her hips, working them faster and harder. She is so fucking sexy right now, and I can't get enough. I'll never get enough.

"You're so fucking wet," I growl, laying back down and playing with her clit. She comes instantly, her thighs shaking, my name a soft moan on her lips.

Rolling Luella onto her back, I fuck her hard and fast until I join her. Bracing myself on my arms, I kiss her deeply, my tongue slowly playing with hers.

She runs her fingers through my hair, then gasps when I start to move again. "How are you still hard?"

"How can I not be hard when I finally have you where I want you," I rasp, kissing down her neck while I fuck her slowly and deeply, taking my time and kissing every inch of her I can.

Sex has never been like this for me.

This is the first time I've ever made love to someone.

"Give me one more, baby," I growl, my tone low and deep. "You know you're mine now, don't you?"

She nods.

“Use your words, Luella.”

“I’m yours !” she calls out, her voice a sweet song.

We come together this time, and it’s perfect.

Intense.

I’m never giving this up, and I will fight like hell to keep it.

“We didn’t use protection,” she whispers, sighing as I tuck her against my chest.

“I know you’re on the pill. And I’m clean. I did a test a few weeks ago, and I haven’t been with anyone since,” I tell her, tracing lazy circles on her back. “I don’t want anything between us.”

“That’s how you got into that mess with Daisy in the first place,” she mutters, and I go rigid.

“You’re the first person I’ve ever fucked without protection, Luella. I even fucking double wrap because of my piercing.”

She goes quiet, and I pick her up and carry her into the shower.

I don’t want her to overthink right now.

Instead, I distract her up against the shower tiles.

Now that I’ve found heaven, no one is going to drag me back to hell.

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Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:34 am

LU

Haze woke me in the morning to say he had some club business to take care of and that he'd be back later.

After having a long everything shower and making breakfast for the few people around, I finish cleaning up the kitchen.

With some free time on my hands, I decide to check out the stripper pole that was installed yesterday.

Ora and I took a few classes, and it's really good exercise.

The clubhouse is pretty empty with the men out doing biker stuff, so now is my time to get in some practice.

Opening the door to the room with my water bottle in my hand, I come to a standstill when I see Angel sitting there on the leather couch, bare-chested, with Rose, one of the club girls, naked on her knees in front of him, her head bobbing up and down.

Angel's dark eyes are on me, that ominous scar on his face like a warning.

I haven't ever had a proper conversation with Angel, but I can't help but notice his muscled body, a slight splattering of dark hair on his chest, abs to die for, and those sexy V's that cause women to make bad decisions.

Out of all the men in the club, Angel and Ghost scare me the most.

The two of them just exist out here diabolically in plain sight when they should probably be locked up somewhere.

Rose lets up on his cock and sits back, letting me see every inch of it. And there's a lot of inches. His dick is also pierced, but not just a Prince Albert like Haze but also a Jacob's Ladder. I take a step back, and it's only then that I realize there's someone else in the room.

Suit, the club lawyer, is leaning back against the wall, his foot up against the brick, watching Rose give Angel head.

He's wearing a crisp white shirt, folded up at the sleeves, showing off hidden ink, and black slacks.

I never even knew he had any ink because his clothes must cover them.

He pushes off the wall and comes to stand behind Rose, pulling his cock out and standing there with his feet braced apart.

He grips her hair and pulls her head to the side, sliding his cock in between her lips.

Angel patiently watches them with dark, ravenous eyes until Suit pulls her off and pushes her back in his direction. Angel takes his place, fucking her mouth. I'm frozen in place, wanting to run but unable to look away.

It's not until Suit turns and sees me there, sending an amused and hungry smirk in my direction, that reality hits me and urges me to get the hell out of there.

"You like to watch, Cupcake?" Suit asks, both his and Angel's eyes pinned on me. He grabs Rose off Angel's cock and back to his.

Wow, these club brothers really do know how to share.

I clear my throat. “No, no. I’m sorry. I wanted to use the pole. I didn’t know this room was uh... maybe put a tie or something on the door next time. Okay, I’m going now.”

But before I can, Suit, that bastard, looks me right in the eye as he thrusts faster, finishing in her mouth. His face is a mask of pleasure, and I couldn’t look away if I tried. “Don’t swallow,” he orders Rose, but still keeps his eyes on me. “I want to see.”

My gaze drops to Rose as she sticks her tongue out, coated in his cum.

Oh fuck.

I need to get out of here. Now .

Quietly closing the door when I hear him telling her to finish Angel, I decide to head to the gym instead.

That wasn’t the kind of pole I was searching for, and I definitely wasn’t looking for a ladder.

Except now I’m kind of turned on.

Shit.

I never want to see Angel or Suit again.

After an hour of punching and kicking the bag in the gym, I sit on the mats and take a sip of water, my chest rising and falling with each deep breath.

My mind roams to Haze. He fucked me last night like he had all the time in the world.

And his stamina? I've had about two hours of sleep, and let's be real, he did most of the work.

I lost count of how many times he made me come.

He's insatiable, and spending the night with him is a workout in itself.

He's incomparable to the other men I've slept with, but obviously, that comes with his experience.

It makes me crazy to think that most of the women in this clubhouse have experienced that from him, and they all know him in that way.

There's a serious double standard because if I had fucked a few of the men, I'd be labeled as a club girl, and no one would want me for more than that. But because he's a man, it's fine for him to be a manwhore.

"You look very lost in thought there."

I turn to see the man in question striding up to me. My eyes drop to his muscular thighs in his light jeans, then roam over his skin-tight white T-shirt and his leather cut.

"Just taking a break," I reply, licking my lips as he stands in front of me and offers me his hand. I take it, and he pulls me up flush against his body. "You got any energy left in you?"

His lip twitches before he lowers his face to kiss me. My hands rest on his cheeks,

holding him in place. “Always have energy for you. What do you have in mind?” he asks, his tone low and husky.

I step away from his embrace and lean down to pick up a pair of gloves off the mat before throwing them at him. “Think you still got it?”

He laughs, kicking off his leather boots and socks.

We used to spar together as teenagers, but never seriously.

In fact, looking back, it was probably our way of flirting.

He takes off his cut and places it neatly on the weights bench, followed by his T-shirt.

My gaze immediately zones in on his corded muscles. I am only human, after all.

“Don’t try and distract me with your muscular, tattooed body,” I call out, and he laughs, his shoulders shaking. That dimple on his right cheek makes an appearance, and it’s at this moment I know that I don’t just love Hayden.

I’m in love with Haze.

And the idea of that terrifies me.

I grab an extra pair of gloves and put them on. The two of us get in the ring and playfully spar. It’s clear to see that he has kept up with his training and is still superfast and quick on his feet.

He blocks my roundhouse kick and sweeps me off my feet but catches me before I fall back.

Gently taking me to the mat with him, he removes his gloves, then mine, and then kisses me.

I can feel how hard he is through his jeans, so I guess this was like foreplay for him too.

I've been wet since walking in on Angel and Suit, not that I'd ever admit that out loud.

"My badass baby." He smiles against my lips. "Perfect kicking technique, by the way."

I roll my eyes and run my hands down his back, feeling all the taut muscle packed in there until I reach his tight ass.

He makes a growling sound deep in his throat, then lifts off me a little, taking in my active wear.

"You look fucking sexy in this. The pants show off your round butt so nicely." He pauses.

"Don't wear it in front of the other men. "

"I wear this every time I work out," I reply, moving my fingers to touch the stubble on his face. "Now stop starting a fight with me and kiss me."

I need to come and now.

He smirks, his amber eyes flickering with amusement and hunger before his lips land on mine. When his hand slides into my panties, I don't stop him.

“Fuck,” I whisper as he starts to stroke me, sliding two fingers inside me and curling them.

“So wet. This is what you needed, isn’t it?” He rasps into my ear, biting down on the lobe. A bolt of pleasure runs through my body. “Is my baby needy?”

Fuck! His dirty mouth.

It makes every time with him an experience.

“What do you want, Luella? Because I know what I want. I want to taste that sweet pussy and make you come right here in the middle of the ring. Would you like that?” he asks in a gravelly tone.

I nod, and I know what he’s going to say next. And every time he says it, it makes me so fucking wet for him.

“Use your words.”

“Yes, make me come right here, please,” I beg, swallowing hard. “I want your mouth on me.”

“Good girl,” he replies, moving down my body. He slides my leggings and panties down to my knees, spreads my thighs, and eats me like a starving man.

I don’t even care that I’m sweaty, and clearly, neither does he.

He hums and growls in between licks, and it doesn’t take long for him to push me over the edge, my back arching as I cry out in pleasure.

When I come back to myself, I’m horrified to hear a soft groan of pleasure mixed

with amusement.

We're not alone in the gym.

Haze covers me with his body, making sure nothing can be seen. "What the fuck, brother?"

Turning my head toward the door, I see Suit standing there, casually leaning against the wall. From what I saw earlier, I know he likes watching, so I wonder if he liked the show we just put on.

Just how much did he see?

"Call it even, Cupcake," he calls out before he disappears.

Motherfucker.

And great, Lore's nickname is catching on.

"What's he on about?" Haze asks me, helping me fix my clothing and sit up. He's still hard, but he's going to have to wait until we get to our bedroom to take care of that.

"Nothing," I reply, my cheeks heating.

"Luella."

"I wanted to dance on the pole, and no one was around, so I went in there. But Suit and Angel were in there," I explain, clearing my throat. "With one woman."

Haze's amber eyes widen as he stands and helps me up. He can't hide the amusement

written all over his face. “So what did you see?”

“Angel’s cock,” I blurt out. “And Suit’s. They were getting head from Rose.”

His amusement dies as he grips my nape. Yeah, he doesn’t like that. His voice drops, laced with anger. “I don’t like you seeing their dicks.” He pauses and then softens his tone as he asks, “Is that why you were so wet? You liked watching them, baby?”

I can feel my cheeks heat. “No... I mean, I don’t know.” He arches his brow, and my shoulders hunch. “Yeah, okay... it did turn me on.”

Wouldn’t it turn on anyone?

They are scary hot.

It’s like a scene out of a romance novel, and I’m a dark romance girl.

His teeth rake over his bottom lip. “As long as you come to me for what you need. I’ll speak to Suit about what he pulled just now.”

“It’s his clubhouse,” I say, sighing. “I just didn’t expect such wild shit to be going on before it’s even lunchtime!

I told them to put a tie on the door next time.

Give a girl a little warning. I’m not a prude, but I don’t want to see Rose sucking down Angel’s massive anaconda without some warning. ”

At this, Haze throws his head back and laughs. I can’t look away. “It’s a biker clubhouse, baby girl. There’s always dirty shit going on.”

“I’ll remember that for next time. This clubhouse needs some boundaries,” I grumble, bending down to slide through the ropes.

Haze follows after me, making a groaning sound. I turn around to see his heated gaze locked firmly on my ass. With a mischievous grin, I start running back to our room.

He chases me.

And when he catches me, he throws me down on the bed and takes what’s his.

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Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:34 am

HAZE

Three missed calls from Aspen, but when I call her back, it goes to voicemail.

I don't know where she is, and knowing her, it could be anywhere.

She was staying at my house, but after a few days, she left without a word.

It's a common pattern for her, one that breaks my fucking heart every time.

Loving someone with an addiction has been one of the hardest things in my life.

I'm always worried that I haven't done enough, but I've given and offered her everything I can.

She's stolen items from my house, taken money from me.

I've been through it all with her. I always thought that things would change, but I guess I was wrong.

Bones claps me on my shoulder as he sits next to me at the bar, ordering a drink from Rose. "You all right, brother?"

"Yeah," I lie, forcing a smile. Now is not the time to think of my sister.

We're having a party, celebrating Danger and Omen patching in.

There's food, alcohol, and rap music playing.

I'll be singing a few songs later when the night starts to wind down a little.

My eyes roam to Luella playing pool with Ora.

She's wearing a tight emerald-green dress that matches her eyes, and her blonde curls hang down her shoulders.

She looks stunning, but then again, she always does.

I don't miss the men checking her out as they pass.

If I thought she'd accept it, I'd put a property patch on her right now.

I'll put in an order for one.

Luella bends over to play her shot, the material of her dress riding up farther. I'm enjoying the view a little too much when someone stands in front of me, blocking her from my sight.

With a sigh, I stare into a pair of pissed-off blue eyes. "You've been avoiding me and ignoring my messages."

Ever since she told me she wasn't going to do the paternity test, just to be a spiteful bitch, I've stopped going along with her bullshit.

Little does she know, I spoke to Scorp, and we came up with a plan to do the test without her knowledge.

All we need is a little bit of her blood, and I came up with the brilliant idea of how to

get it.

It just means that I'm going to owe Ghost a marker.

I don't like that, but I don't have much choice right now.

I need to know. My future depends on it.

"You never even told me what happened when you went to the record label!"

Daisy doesn't care about how it went—all she sees are dollar signs.

"Yeah, so maybe you should take the hint, Daisy," I say, leaning back against the bar and studying her.

"I'm done playing this game with you. If the baby is mine, I will step up and be a good father.

Until then, I'm not going to be running around after you.

Now, if you wouldn't mind moving out of the way, you're blocking my view. "

I don't want to stress Daisy out. She's pregnant, and she needs to focus on herself and staying healthy.

But at the same time, I'm not going to let her fucking take advantage of the situation and think she can lead me around by the balls.

I don't do blackmail. She's not in fucking charge.

I tried to play nice and look where it got me.

Daisy won't back away until she gets what she wants—a property patch on her back—but she's never going to get that from me. She bet on the wrong fucking man.

She bends forward so her lips touch the shell of my ear.

“If you don't want me, then you won't get to see your child.

Think about what you're doing right now, Haze.

Do you want your son or daughter to grow up with another man raising them?

Because that's what will happen if you don't start treating me like your woman.

Get rid of Goldilocks. If you truly wanted her, you wouldn't have fucked so many other women.

Does she know just how much pussy you've been through? Maybe someone should remind her.”

Daisy steps away, and I keep my expression blank. She just made a grave error, but I'm not going to let her see that.

“Leave, Daisy,” I say without emotion. “Let's talk when you do the testing.”

“I told you, I'm not getting that fucking test done,” she yells, and I can feel eyes on us. “And you know what, I think I have chosen two names that I like. Lola and Silas. What do you think?”

Her smile is cruel. I can only imagine how pissed Luella will be if Daisy has my child and stole one of the names Luella had planned for our future child.

Jesus Christ.

Luella slides up to me and frowns at Daisy, with Ora at her side. I hope the two of them didn't hear the end of that conversation. "Do we have a problem here?"

Daisy scrunches her face, crossing her arms over her chest. "No, just trying to set things straight with my baby daddy."

"You decided to do that now?" Ora rolls her eyes, then waves to her dad when he steps into the bar. "Tonight is about Danger and Omen, Daisy. Not you. So either have a good time or fuck right off."

I've never liked Ora more.

Daisy storms off and tries to slide up to Bones, who ignores her. I think everyone is sick of her shit, and no one wants to step on any toes.

Prez gets up on stage, and the music cuts off. "I hope everyone is having a good night!"

We all cheer.

"Tonight, we are celebrating two prospects being patched in. They've both been tested and put through the wringer." He looks over at Omen. "One even pissed the VP off and got sent away for a while."

"He was too busy getting his dick sucked!" War calls out, and Ora throws him a dirty look.

Prez laughs and holds up two new leather cuts. "Danger and Omen, come up here!"

The men get up and stand next to him. He hands Danger his first, clapping him on the back before doing the same to Omen. “We’d like to officially welcome you to the brotherhood. You’re Serpents through and through. You both worked hard for this.”

They take off their prospect cut and replace it with the new one that all the patched members have.

I remember when I got patched in, so I know exactly how they feel.

It’s exhilarating. They will be welcomed with pussy, alcohol, and now that they are members, a percentage of the money we earn each month.

And it’s damn good money.

Lifting Luella onto my lap, I bury my face into her neck and breathe her in.

Her.

This club.

That’s all I fucking need.

LU

Haze gets a call in the middle of the night. I'm half asleep, but I get a few words.

“Yeah. What? Okay. Leaving now. Keep her there.” He kisses the top of my head and quickly gets dressed before he leaves the room without a word.

When I wake up in the morning, he's still not back.

Where the hell did he go in the middle of the night?

I'm cracking eggs for omelettes when Ora steps in, freshly showered, her long dark hair damp and hanging down her back. “Good morning.”

“Morning,” I reply with a grin. “Hey, did anything happen last night? Haze disappeared in the middle of the night.”

Ora frowns, shaking her head. “Not that I know of. And if something went down with the club, War would have gotten a phone call.” She pulls out some orange juice from the refrigerator and pours each of us a glass. “You slept with him, didn't you?” Her tone is now a low whisper.

“Yeah,” I admit, turning to face her. “I'm an idiot, aren't I? He might be having a freaking baby?—”

“You're not an idiot... you both have history. He's your person. Now, whether he's an idiot, that remains to be seen.”

“Was it too much for him to still be a virgin?” I tease, smiling when Ora laughs. “Instead, my childhood crush had to turn into the biggest manwhore in this place.”

“I don’t know... Lore and Bones are pretty bad.”

“Haze is known for having not just one woman in his bed,” I remind her, and she winces.

“Yeah, I’ve heard. That’s next level.” She pauses and then adds, “But I bet he’s a beast in bed. Is it true about his stamina?”

I nibble my bottom lip. “Let’s just say his experience paid off.”

Ora laughs and slaps her hand down on the counter. “I knew it! That’s why he likes to show off. He wouldn’t be sleeping around so much with multiple women at a time if he had a small dick and was bad in bed.”

“Oh, and it’s pierced,” I add, fanning my face.

Her blue eyes flare. “Oh fuck, that’s hot.”

“I know.”

We share a grin. “He better be good to you, Lu, because I love having you here and never want you to leave. If it doesn’t work out with Haze, there are plenty of other options for you. I know Blade is?—”

“Luella doesn’t need any other options,” Haze’s rough voice growls, and I instantly twist my neck to look at him. His arms grip the doorframe, muscles flexing, and there’s something I can’t read in his face.

“We’ll see,” Ora murmurs, sipping her juice.

“Where were you?” I ask Haze, my brow furrowing.

He glances at Ora, who clears her throat and nods her head toward him. “I’ll start breakfast.”

“Give me a minute,” I say to Ora, walking toward Haze and trying to slide past him, but his hard body blocks the door. He’s still gripping the doorframe, leaning casually, but his eyes are hard. I thought we’d go somewhere to talk, but apparently, we’re doing it right here. “Is everything okay?”

“It was until I came here to find you and caught the end of that conversation,” he mutters, sliding the ball of his tongue ring in between his teeth.

“Ora is just protective.”

“No other man is touching you. We got problems, we fix them. You get me?”

Wrapping my arms around his torso, I nod. “Now, where were you?”

He swallows, his throat bobbing. “Aspen was found passed out on a park bench. Sheriff Grayson rang me to come and pick her up. She was out of it. I took her to the hospital and then to my house to sleep it off.”

“I’m sorry,” I whisper, and he nods, dropping his arms to bring them around me.

“It is what it is,” he says in a soft voice. “My life has been like this for as long as I can remember, but I’m all she has.”

I wonder if he ever gets sick of having to save people. He stepped up for his family,

and he's still carrying that burden. And now he's got this situation with Daisy.

"If there's anything I can do..."

"No," he shakes his head. "I never wanted you to carry any of this. That's why I stayed away, Luella.

None of this should have to touch you. You need to be happy, baking cakes, and living your best life.

I'm used to dealing with Aspen. It's fine.

I know she was your friend, but in the end, she wasn't a very good one to you. You don't owe her anything."

I lower my voice. "Just because you carry it well doesn't mean it isn't heavy."

He takes a sharp breath. "Baby girl..."

Haze tried to save me when we were kids. He took responsibility for the girl next door because he knew I didn't have loving parents. Nothing has changed—he's still out there trying to save everyone.

"I'm not just here for the good times, Haze. And if we're going to make this work, you're going to have to let me be there for you too."

His amber eyes soften as he lowers his face and kisses me.

I curl my fingers into his cut, pulling him hard against me. "There's no if about it, Luella. We are making this work."

“How were you suddenly so sure about me?” I ask. It’s something that’s been playing on my mind. “I’m not the same girl I was back then. And you went from not wanting me to being all in.”

“I always wanted you, but my demons just wouldn’t let me have you. I just tried to fight it when you surprised me by showing up here. I don’t like surprises, and I don’t like thinking you were there hooking up with one of my brothers. I acted like a dick.”

“How’s that fight going for you?” I smirk.

“How long are you going to throw that in my face?” he murmurs, pushing me back against the wall and caging me in.

“I don’t know.”

“I should have picked you up and thrown you over my shoulder that night,” he mutters, then sighs.

“And to answer your question. No, you’re not the same girl.

You’re a woman now. But our connection is the same.

That never changed. And that’s what I’ve been unconsciously looking for and never found again,” he admits, searching my gaze.

“I never got in a serious relationship, and I know you didn’t either.

And looking back, I know now it’s because no other woman was you. ”

“And how do you know that?” I ask, my brow furrowing.

He plants a kiss just below my ear. “I know everything about you.”

My brow arches. “Not directly from the source, though.”

He licks his lower lip. “Baby, you give me everything I need from the source. I’m hungry again just thinking about it.”

I glance behind me at Ora, whose back is to us as she cooks. “Let me finish helping Ora and then maybe I can.” I walk my fingers up his cut, over his treasurer patch. “Feed your hunger.”

He lowers his voice to a soft, deep rumble. “Meet me in bed in an hour. I want you naked and on your knees with your hands on the headboard. I’m going to make you come so hard.”

Does it matter how we got here?

We’re here now, and I need to enjoy it.

No, I need to live it.

This is no longer a dream—this is my reality.

And I’m going to do it by gripping that headboard and holding on for dear life.

HAZE

Later that evening, I'm sitting by the pool playing my guitar and singing my new songs.

Luella is sitting on the lounge next to me, a glass of wine in her hand, staring up at the stars as she listens to me play.

When a tear drops down her cheek, I know she understands the lyrics and realizes they are for her.

But she doesn't interrupt.

Instead, she listens, soaking up the moment.

An hour passes before I put my instrument down and cuddle up beside her. My phone has been going off, Aspen wanting me back at the house. I don't want to leave Luella, but I know if I don't return, she will just up and leave.

"I have to go and check on Aspen tonight," I tell her, and she nods, resting her head on my chest.

"Will she go back to rehab?"

"I hope so," I reply, burying my fingers in her curls and gently massaging her scalp. "The last place let her check herself out, so she didn't last long. But there's a ninety-day program, and I'd really like her to agree to go to that."

“Will you be back tonight?” she asks, and I nod.

“Yeah, but I don’t know how late or early.”

“Okay,” she whispers.

“Okay?” I ask, my brow furrowing. “You’re not going to fight me on it?”

She lifts her head. “No, why would I? You’re going to be there for your sister. It’s who you are.”

“Fuck,” I whisper, the tension releasing from my shoulders. “Made for me. I’ll join you in bed as soon as I get back. Leave the door locked. I’ll take the key with me.”

We always sleep in her guest room, and I think I know why she doesn’t want to spend the night in my bed.

What she doesn’t know is that I ordered a new bed and that she’s going to be the only woman to ever be in it.

I wouldn’t want to fuck her somewhere she’s fucked other men, either.

And I know it makes me a hypocrite, but I hate the thought of other men having her, so I know how she feels.

Except I doubt her body count is anywhere near mine.

“Okay,” she agrees, sitting up and wrapping her arms around me. “If you’re going now, I’ll go read in bed.”

I nod and turn my head toward her lips, kissing her. “All mine . Fucking finally.”

She smiles widely and kisses me back.

I know if I don't leave immediately, I won't go at all. Standing with Lu in my arms, one hand under her knees and the other under her arms, I carry her upstairs and to what I've been calling our room, ignoring the catcalls from the men along the way.

After she's all tucked in with her Kindle and the group chat going off on her phone, I head over to check on my sister.

When I park my bike at the front of my house, I take in the two-story, cream-colored brick building.

It has a black roof, four bedrooms, and two bathrooms. It's the house I want to raise my kids in one day, and I hope Luella likes it.

She always said she wanted a house with a big garden, so I made sure it had that.

The lights are all on, and when I step inside, I find Aspen sitting on the couch, phone in her hand.

She's extremely thin, and her once bright brown eyes are now dull.

Her brown hair is messy and not brushed, and she's wearing a loose T-shirt of mine with leggings. She looks a mess.

It always saddens me to think of what she could have been, but then I feel guilty because that's not entirely fair. She didn't choose this life. She's just stuck in it, and I shouldn't judge her.

"Did you bring food?" she asks, sitting up and turning to face me.

“No, but I’ll order some pizza.”

“Okay,” she replies, studying me a little too closely.

The last time I saw her, I spoke to her about Luella.

She was high as a kite when she admitted that she had lied back then, and Luella had nothing to do with her drug use.

She said her goodie-little-two-shoes best friend would have never partied with her and her new friends.

At the time, it was all too much, and one of the reasons that when I moved away, I left Luella and my old life behind.

A small part of me believed her. Blamed Luella in a way, I suppose. Looking back, I know it’s all bullshit. My baby has never done hard drugs in her life. She’ll drink socially, and that’s about it.

What I wasn’t expecting, though, was the hate Aspen seems to have for her. I don’t know why, but I know it’s going to be an issue.

“How’s things with your new girlfriend?” she asks, rolling her eyes. “Is she the reason you haven’t been here all day? I’ve been bored, Hayden. And you know what happens when I get bored.”

“I can’t stay here all day, Aspen. I have the club, my music career?—”

“And Luella . She’s more important to you now.”

“You’re both important to me.” I sigh, pinching the bridge of my nose.

“She was always the perfect one. Even Mom loved her more than me,” she snaps, standing up and starting to pace. She has track marks on her arm. I don’t know how to help her anymore, and I don’t like feeling so fucking helpless.

Nights like this is when I’d go back to the clubhouse and lose myself in pussy.

Tapping the spot next to me, I say, “Come on. I’ll order the food, and we can watch a movie.”

She watches me for a few moments before nodding. “Okay.” She looks down at her hands. “I’m sorry I cause you so much drama, Haze. I know I have a problem, but I’m glad that addiction got me and not you. I’d take this every day instead of giving it to you.”

“Aspen,” I whisper.

She forces a smile. “I can be happy that it’s not you.”

“It doesn’t have to be you, either. And maybe we can talk about that rehab program.”

“Yeah, I’m sure you’d like to send me away,” she coos, sitting down with her knees to her chest. “I don’t know if I’m ready for that yet.”

I nod.

I close my eyes and take a deep breath.

I’m all she has.

That has been my mantra for fucking ever, and it doesn’t look like it’s going to change.

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LU

Fingers slide into my hair and pull gently.

I open my eyes, staring into the beautiful amber ones watching me.

He's on top, thrusting into me, commanding my body.

I can't get enough of him, lifting my hips, wanting him harder, deeper.

His lips slam down on mine, tongue invading my mouth and senses.

This is what I always craved—passionate, no-holds-barred sex.

Haze is totally worth the wait.

He watches me closely, not missing anything, making sure it's good for me.

He pulls my head back with a fist full of hair and kisses down my neck, sucking gently and swiping his tongue against my skin.

When he bites down, I feel my orgasm creeping up on me, then taking over.

I moan loudly, closing my eyes, my teeth sinking into my bottom lip.

When my moans turn into whimpers, I open my eyes and look into Haze's hungry ones .

Oh, he likes seeing me come —the look on his face is proof of that.

He quickens his pace, slamming into me harder than before, then pulls out and flips me over, driving back in before I can even catch my breath.

He woke me up with his mouth on me, and he made me come twice before fucking me.

I don't know what time it is or when he got back in, but he can wake me up like this any time.

My fingers find my clit, and Haze's growl of approval rumbles in his throat.

"That's right, baby, you're doing so well," he rasps, hands gripping my hips. "You take me so fucking good."

His palm suddenly comes down on my ass, and my moans get louder. "You like that, don't you?"

"Yes, fuck me harder, Haze."

"Fuck," he grits out, gripping my arms and pinning them behind my back by my forearms. My cheek rests against the soft sheets.

He fucks me even harder, the bed frame banging against the wall with each thrust.

"That's right, just keep your head down and fucking take it.

" There's a possessive edge to his tone.

"What a clever girl you are, Luella. My fucking good girl."

When I come, I scream. I can't help it. Haze follows right behind me, his roar of pleasure echoing around the room.

We stay like that for a few moments, catching our breath.

"I'm not going to be able to look anyone in the eye tomorrow," I joke, smiling at him over my shoulder.

He gently slaps my ass and slides out, grinning as he pulls me up against his chest. "Worth it."

"So worth it," I say with a smile.

He holds me tighter, cradling my face. The cold from his silver rings contrasts with the warmth of his hands. "All the noise goes away when I'm with you."

Another soft kiss, and then he falls asleep.

Not long after, I do the same.

* * *

"Just letting you know there's a spider in my shower. Please don't kill it. We have an understanding," I tell Haze, who stares at me for a moment before bursting into laughter.

I got up earlier than him, had a shower, got ready, and came down for breakfast. Haze woke up later and rushed down to find me. Now he's going back up to have his shower, and this time, I remembered to warn him.

Crossing my arms over my chest, I narrow my eyes. "I'm not sure what's funny. I

leave Harry alone, and he leaves me alone. We have a deal, and it works. So just let him be.”

He leans his hand on the back of the dining table chair to hold himself up as he laughs. “Harry? Oh fuck, this keeps getting better.”

“What’s so funny?” Bones asks, stepping inside the kitchen and looking around. “And where’s the food? I’m hungry. Someone was so loud last night that it made me horny, and I had to message Brandy and tell her to come to my room.”

My mouth opens and closes. “You know what, I don’t even care. I’m giving up on trying to have any boundaries here. I have to see you guys with your cocks out getting blow jobs all the time, so you can listen to me coming too.”

Haze quickly loses his humor about Harry. “I’d prefer it if no one heard you, Luella. Those little moans and screams are only for me, but unfortunately, the walls are thin here.” He scowls at Bones. “Maybe you all can stop mentioning it when you do fucking hear us.”

“And where would the fun be in that?” He smirks, walking over to the table and lifting the lid on the big plate I put in the middle. “Oh fuck yeah, I love waffles.”

Rolling my eyes, I hand him a plate and get the maple syrup. “Where’s Skull?”

“He’ll be down shortly,” he replies, leaning forward to smell the waffles. His blond hair falls onto his face, nearly touching the food. When he sits back down, I take the hair tie from my wrist and tie his hair back for him. “Thanks, Cupcake.”

Yeah, the nickname is spreading.

Haze comes up behind me and pulls me against him.

“Everyone is calling me Cupcake.”

“It’s a cute name. They can keep Cupcake,” he murmurs, kissing my neck. A shiver goes up my spine. “But only I get to call you my baby.”

“You’re also the only one who calls me Luella,” I remind him and moan softly as his tongue trails across my skin.

Bones has stopped chewing and is staring with his blue eyes open wide. “Fuck, you two are walking Viagra,” he murmurs, openly adjusting himself.

“I’m going to have a shower and get ready, then you’re on the back of my bike,” Haze rasps, reluctantly stepping away from me. “I’ll be back, and don’t worry, I won’t wash Harry down the drain.”

“I appreciate it,” I call out, ignoring his snickering as he walks away.

“Haze should put ‘Cupcake’ on your property patch,” Bones casually comments, nodding to himself. “With a picture of a cupcake...” he pauses, tilting his head to the side, “... with a serpent coming out of it.”

“You’re talking like I’m definitely getting a property patch. He’s claimed me, yes, but he never said anything about that.”

Bones licks some maple syrup off his fingers, then picks up another one. He makes a show of putting the whole thing in his mouth, chewing thoughtfully. “Cupcake, I don’t know any man who has claimed a woman and not put a patch on her. And you’re a feeder. That’s a top-tier woman right there.”

A feeder?

The things that come out of his mouth.

“Knowing my luck, I’ll be the first,” I grumble, and he laughs. “If he doesn’t put one on you, I will.”

His blue eyes twinkle with mirth. “Actually, come sit on my lap and kiss me. It might get him moving faster.”

“I can’t even tell if you’re joking or not, but I need to get ready for my first motorcycle ride.” I smile, kissing Bones’ head as I pass him.

“And he’s taking your riding virginity, lucky bastard.”

“Ora’s making her Sri Lankan beef curry for dinner tonight,” I call out.

“Fuck yeah!” He cheers, and I shake my head, stopping in my tracks when I realize something.

I can’t remember the last time I was this happy.

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HAZE

Glancing down, I see her hands come around me, gripping my abs, and something in my chest tightens.

Her breasts are pressed against my back, her warm body as close to mine as it can get.

I take my left hand off the handlebar and place it on her calf, giving it a squeeze.

It's a possessive hold and a comforting one.

She's made to be on the back of my bike.

The sun is out, and it's a beautiful day, so I decide to take her out for lunch at a café opposite the beach.

With everything going on, it's nice to have some time with just her, away from the clubhouse.

I take the scenic yet longer route, wanting her to enjoy her first ride.

I feel proud to have her on the back of my bike.

This moment has been a long time coming.

When I park my bike, I get off first and help Luella off. She removes her helmet, a

few wild curls escaping from her plait.

“That was amazing!” She smiles, her eyes lit up. “Seriously, I get why you guys are obsessed with riding. I can’t remember the last time I felt so free.”

Fucking beautiful.

“You weren’t scared?” I ask her, taking the helmet from her hands and putting it on the back of my bike.

“With you? No,” she replies, and fuck, I can’t help but to pick her up and sit her back on the bike while I kiss her. I’ve made so many mistakes with this woman, but she’s here now, and all that matters is keeping it that way.

She lets out a little squeal when I pick her up and carry her toward the café, only putting her down when we reach the sidewalk.

After we have lunch, we walk along the beach, and on the way home, we stop to check out the progress on the bakery build.

Luella smiles when she sees it. The new building will be even bigger and better, and the kitchen is almost double the size it was.

She still doesn’t know that I own the building and charge her half the rent she’d be paying elsewhere.

Luella also doesn’t know the amount she does pay goes into a savings account for her.

Before we ride back to the clubhouse, I stop and park my bike at one of the hidden rest stops surrounded by thick trees.

“What are we doing?” she asks, jumping off my Harley and looking around.

Gripping the globes of her ass, I pick her up, and she wraps her legs around me. I saw the book she was reading yesterday and didn’t miss her biting her lip as she was lost in the words. Curious, when she put her Kindle down, I opened it and reread a few pages.

Seems like we share a fantasy, and right now, I’m going to play it out for us.

“I’m going to fuck you on my bike, baby,” I say in a husky tone.

She looks around as if making sure we’re alone. “What if someone comes here?”

“We’ll hear them if they do,” I say, pushing her back against the tree and kissing her. Her hands shoot up to grip the back of my neck, and she gently grinds against me. “You want that? Me to bend you over my bike and fuck you from behind?”

She nods, her cheeks flushing.

“Use your words, baby girl,” I demand.

“Yes, I want you to fuck me on your bike.”

“That’s what I thought.” I smirk, placing open-mouth kisses along Luella’s neck until she’s panting for me.

With my hands on her hips, I lift her onto the bike, then flip her so her back presses to my chest. Reaching around, I unzip the leather jacket and tease her nipples through the thin cotton of her T-shirt.

“Are you wet for me, Luella?”

“Yes,” she gasps, pushing her ass back against my hard cock.

“Good girl.” I undo the button on her jeans and slide them down with her panties.

“Now bend over for me and stick out that sexy ass of yours.”

She does as she’s told while I get my cock out and place it at her entrance. Easing into her inch by inch, I pull back again before driving forward all the way.

“Haze,” she whimpers as I start to move. She’s so short I end up lifting her and holding her there instead of me squatting down, fucking her hard. She’s so wet and perfect, and fuck!

“Touch your clit,” I rasp.

“I’m close,” she whispers.

“Wait for me,” I growl.

“Haze, hurry,” she pleads.

Two more thrusts, and then I bark, “Now!”

She comes all over my cock as I finish inside her, and it’s fucking perfect.

I bury my face in her neck, my chest rising and falling as I catch my breath.

“That was... so hot,” she notes softly, reaching back and running her hands through my short hair. “This has been the best date ever.”

Date.

She's right, this was our official first date, and I plan to take her on many more.

We ride back to the clubhouse, and the thought of Luella with my cum still inside her has me dragging her to our room the second we get there and fucking her again before we make it in the shower, where Luella gets down on her knees and makes me come in her mouth.

I return the favor, lifting her legs over my shoulder and eating her pussy until she screams.

I should have known that when things are going too well for me, something usually happens to fuck it up. And in this case, it's Daisy sitting in the kitchen when we finally make it back downstairs.

Her lips curl as she takes in our freshly wet hair and satisfied smiles. "It won't be long until he's bored with you... you know that, right? Why do you think he needed so many women in his bed? He likes variety."

"Daisy," I snap, but she doesn't take the hint.

"He likes to have one woman ride his dick and another on his face. I've seen him with one riding each of his hands, too?—"

"Daisy, what the fuck is wrong with you?" I ask, putting Luella behind me.

"You're right. I needed all of that before I had Luella in my life.

But now I don't. I'm thirty-one, I know what I want, and I'm not going to let you fuck it up.

She knows about my past, but that doesn't mean she needs to hear every fucking

detail.

I don't need multiple women. Luella is enough . ”

“Yeah, but for how long?” she replies, smirking. “When you get famous and go on tour with women throwing themselves at you, doing anything to get a chance for a night in your bed, are you going to turn them down? Men don't change, Haze. I knew what I was getting into with you, but does she?”

With that parting shot, she leaves the room, and I turn around to face Luella, who is staring at the floor.

“She's wrong,” I whisper, knowing Daisy's words have set us back. “And I'm going to prove it to you. I can be faithful. I have been.”

Luella takes a sharp breath and then forces a smile. “It's fine.”

Famous last words.

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LU

It was not fine.

Daisy's words replay in my head for the rest of the day, and they make me feel sick.

But Haze is also right—he hasn't given me any cause to second-guess him, and he deserves that chance to prove himself.

While he's off attending to club business, I make some custom cupcakes that people have ordered.

I also made a honey cake and an extra one for all of us to eat tonight.

My phone buzzes, and I catch up on what I've missed from the Baddies group chat.

Ora

I want sushi so bad. And knowing I can't have it only makes me want it more.

Xanthe

You always want sushi.

Ora

What can I say, your girl likes it raw.

Xanthe

Omg! You'll have to wait for raw until you aren't pregnant.

Ora

All I'm getting is raw while I'm pregnant.

Shaking my head with a laugh, I reply.

Lu

TMI.

Ora

Where are you, Lu? I heard you went on a lunch date.

Lu

I'm in the kitchen, baking. Where are you?

Ora

Dad wanted to take me out for lunch. Now I'm baby shopping.

Lu

Daisy was in here, being a bitch.

Xanthe

What happened?

I give them a rough update and then put my phone down to finish the cakes.

When I'm done, I sit back to admire my creation just as Lore steps into the kitchen.

He's wearing all black today—a tight, long-sleeve shirt straining over his muscles, his cut, jeans, and boots.

His hair is tied back in his usual messy, perfect man bun.

“You okay?” he asks, his violet eyes widening in pleasure when he sees the cake.
“Oh fuck, yes.”

I'm about to ask him if I'm okay about what when I realize he's still in the group chat. “Yeah, I'm fine. And no touching until after dinner.”

He pulls out a chair and sits on it, studying me. “Daisy's not wrong. Haze gives me a run for my money when it comes to casual sex.”

“Lore—”

“But since you and him got together? He's been different. He's more relaxed, less in his head. Happier. And I haven't seen him pay anyone else with tits any attention. All he sees is you. Have you seen the way he looks at you like he's not even sure if you're real?”

Leaning back against the counter, I cross my arms over my chest. “Look, I can't say that her words don't hurt. I mean, all of that stuff did happen. Was I around then? No, but it still hurts to hear about it. I don't want to know what he did with any other women.”

“Which is exactly why Daisy said what she said. She saw you both looking happy, knew he took you out, and was jealous.”

“I know that,” I whisper, sighing. “I get in this happy bubble thinking everything is going so well for me, feeling so happy, and then she’s the reminder that everything is not okay.”

Haze has a past and potentially a baby with this god-awful woman.

Besides ignoring it and trying to pretend that’s not the case, I don’t know how to handle it. ”

Haze steps forward, his eyes soft. I don’t know how much he heard, but he definitely heard some of it. “Come here, baby.” He closes the space between us and wraps me in his arms, my face buried against his chest. “I’ve fucked around, you know this.”

“Haze—”

“And what she said about those women is true.”

“I don’t need to hear this, Haze.” It hurts to hear about him with other women.

“I want it all out in the open so we can let it go,” he rumbles, taking a deep, shaky breath. “That’s not who I am with you. You get me? When I have you, I don’t need all of that.”

“Haze—”

“I love you, Luella,” he whispers, running his hands down my back in soothing circles. I suck in an audible breath. “I’m in love with you . I don’t want anyone else. I can’t change my past, but going forward, I want to be everything you need.”

“I love you, too, Haze,” I reply, my lower lip trembling.

I’ve always loved him.

We never got our perfect fairy tale, but we get it right now.

And for me, that’s enough.

Because there’s no one else I want to be with.

In all my years of dating and flirting, I never met another man I felt a connection to.

When I lift my face, I see that Lore has left us alone. Looking up into Haze’s eyes, he lowers his face to rest his forehead against mine while his thumb sweeps across my neck. “I’ve never said that to another woman before.”

“I’ve never said that before, either,” I confess, softly kissing him.

“I always knew you were mine ,” he says against my lips. “I was your first kiss. And I’m going to be your last.”

I smile as he deepens the kiss, our bodies needing that connection.

“I have Church in five minutes, but I want you in my room tonight. Our new bed arrived. New sheets. New everything. My room is bigger, and my bed is a king. And if we ever decide to move into my house and out of the clubhouse, I’ve had no woman in that bed either. ”

My eyes widen when I realize he knows exactly why I am avoiding going in there. “Okay,” I whisper.

“Okay.” He smiles, his eyes crinkling in the corners.

Fuck, he is beautiful.

“How can I want you again?” he growls, playing with the ball of his tongue ring. “I can’t get enough of you, and it’s becoming a problem. No, a fucking obsession.”

“Well, I feel the same way.” I sigh, and he winks at me before heading off to his club meeting.

I grab my Kindle and head out to sit by the pool.

It’s been a really nice break.

But I can’t wait until Lu’s Sweet Treats is up and running again.

HAZE

It's been a few days since I told Luella I loved her, and things have been amazing between us. The clubhouse is having a party tonight, which is perfect for what I have planned. The women are all getting ready, and I'm sitting at the bar with Prez and War, having a drink.

"I don't think the pole room is turning out how the women wanted it," War comments with a smirk, watching as the twins take Rose and Brandy in there. They don't even bother closing the door.

"No, it's more like a sex room." I smirk, thinking back to how Luella caught Suit and Angel in there. "Luella walked in on some shit she didn't want to see."

"I think it only makes them like it more." Prez chuckles, his blue eyes smiling. He's been happier since Ora came into his life. And I know all about how a good woman can change everything.

"The twins are out of control," War mutters, but he sounds amused. "And don't get me started on Lore."

"As long as they all stay away from Luella, I don't care."

Both their gazes cut to me.

"Have to admit, brother... never thought I'd see the day you'd settle for one pussy," War smirks.

“Not settling for anything,” I reply, grabbing the neck of my beer bottle and lifting it to my lips. “Would choose Luella over anything.”

“Lost another one.” Prez grins, running his hand down his beard. “Who is going to be next?”

Ghost steps into the room, glancing around before walking over to us. “Not him,” War mutters, and Prez barks out a laugh.

Ghost takes the seat next to me, leaning back against the bar. He’s silent for a few moments before he speaks, “You’re going to owe me for this.”

“I know,” I reply, wincing. I fucking hate owing anyone a marker. But someone like Ghost? I just know it’s going to come back and bite me in the ass.

He nods once, running a hand over his bald head. “I’ll get what you need.”

“Appreciate you, brother.”

He stands up and, with a nod at War and Prez, walks away.

“What was that about?” Prez asks, brow furrowing.

Leaning closer to them, I tell them what I have up my sleeve.

“Fuck,” War comments, rubbing the back of his neck. “That’s kind of fucked up.”

“You got any better ideas?” I ask, scowling.

Prez claps me on my shoulder and nods solemnly. “Sometimes you gotta do what you gotta do. I think this is one of those times. Just don’t let her find out... that’s all I’m

saying.”

I nod, taking a long drink and letting the cold beer slide down my throat.

“Omen wants to add a new club girl to the mix,” Prez says, changing the subject. “I don’t want any drama, but he might be right. We only have Daisy, Rose, and Brandy.”

“Is he going to scout for fresh pussy?” War asks, sharing a look with me. “He better hope whoever it is gets along with Ora and Lu, or there’s going to be hell to pay.”

“Yeah, for both of you.” Prez smirks, our eyes all snapping to Lore when he walks in. He’s wearing his cut with nothing underneath and has a bottle of whiskey in his hands.

“I’m ready to party!” He cheers, glancing around the still-empty bar. “Where the fuck is everyone?”

“Looks like you’ve already had a party,” I muse, seeing the red lipstick on his neck.

Lore stands in front of us and nods. “Yeah, without you on the market, someone has to fuck all the women in town. Have to say, even I can’t keep up with what you used to do.”

My lip twitches. “I heard what you said to Luella. I’m glad someone is on my side.”

Lore shrugs, absently rubbing his chest. “You’re good together. And I meant what I said. Never seen you this happy.”

“Never been this happy,” I admit, putting my empty bottle on the counter. I go to order another one and realize the twins are fucking the bar staff. “Guess I’ll have to

get my own fucking drink.”

Prez pulls out his phone and sends off a text. “I’ll get Romeo behind the bar. Patch can man the gates.”

It only takes a few minutes for Romeo to arrive.

Even I have to admit, he’s one good-looking motherfucker.

He’s twenty-five, and I’m sure he doesn’t have to do anything to get pussy because the pussy chases him.

I know some clubs don’t allow the prospects to fuck the club girls, but we let them as long as they are doing everything they’re meant to.

Club first, pussy second.

Romeo slides behind the bar, his one brown eye and one light-blue eye taking everyone in.

“I’ll have another beer, prospect.”

He nods and slides me one, then stands with his feet braced, arms crossed, like a bodyguard. All I know about him is that he’s ex-military, like a few of the brothers here, and gives off vibes like he’d kill you first and ask questions later, only softened by his pretty-boy face.

Luella and Ora walk in, hand in hand, laughing at something.

Luella looks fucking hot, wearing a short black dress that slides off her shoulders and sexy heels with studs on them.

Her lips are red, and I can't wait to see them around my cock later tonight.

Both women's gazes stop on Romeo before anyone else, and I don't miss the fact that Luella does a double take.

"Oh, fuck," she says to Ora.

"What?" Ora asks, but Luella doesn't reply. Instead, her eyes are darting between Romeo and me.

She comes over to me, and I give her a quick kiss. "Have you met one of our new prospects? That's Romeo. Romeo, this is Lu."

Romeo dips his chin.

Luella's eyes widen.

"Nice to see you." She smiles at him, then turns to me, her eyes going comically wide.

"What?" I ask, pulling her onto my lap and keeping her there. When she looks over at Romeo again, I grip her chin and whisper into her ear, "Keep those eyes off him, baby. Remember who you belong to."

"Haze—"

"Now tell me what."

"Not here," she whispers, and I shake my head.

"Yes, here, tell me now. Are you okay?" I ask, my brow furrowing.

If anyone is making her feel uncomfortable or anything, I'm going to end them.

"I know Romeo," she mutters, and my hold on her hip tightens.

"What?" I growl. And then it hits me that she said 'nice to see you,' not 'nice to meet you.' "How?"

"We used to date," she admits, worrying her bottom lip. "It was a few years back. I had no idea he was prospecting. Haze, it's in the past?—"

I know it's not fair, but I see red.

Romeo, the man who looks like he should be on a fucking magazine cover, has had my girl. "You fucked him?"

Fire ignites in her eyes. "Yes, I did. You've fucked how many women here?"

I gently sit her down on the chair next to me and then move to jump over the bar.

"War!" Luella yells, trying to pull me back by my cut.

War puts his arm around my neck to stop me from beating the shit out of Romeo. "What the fuck, Haze?"

"You fucked my woman?" I roar, and Prez steps up to help War restrain me.

"It was before she was yours, man," Romeo states, crossing his arms over his chest, legs braced apart.

"She's always been mine !" I bark, anger filling my veins and clouding my head and judgment.

“Romeo, get out of here for a bit,” Prez orders, and he disappears.

“Haze, it was before you ,” Luella speaks from behind him.

Ora’s got her arms around her, and they are both watching me.

Fuck.

Taking a deep, calming breath, I shrug War and Prez off me and turn to face her. Is this how she feels every time she sees one of the women I’ve been with, even if it doesn’t mean anything?

Wait, did Romeo ever mean something to her?

If so, he’s not going to get my vote for him to patch in as a full member.

No, he can get the fuck out of here.

Ora doesn’t help when she mutters, “You lucky bitch.”

I head outside, needing some air. I know I’m being a hypocritical bastard, but it doesn’t help calm the jealousy pumping through my veins. I knew Luella had dated around. She didn’t come to me a virgin, but fuck.

She wraps her arms around me from behind.

“I know you don’t want to hear this, but too bad because I’ve had to deal with that bitch Daisy all of this time.

Romeo and I slept together a few times. I didn’t even know him as Romeo, which is why when he was mentioned, I didn’t think anything of it.

I knew him as Tate. It was only sex, and there was nothing deeper between us other than friendship.

He treated me well, and then we moved on.

You don't get to be angry at him because he's done nothing wrong.

You hadn't claimed me then. If there's anyone to blame, it's not Romeo. "

No, it's me.

And I think that's why it burns so fucking much.

"I know," I rasp, turning around and burying my face into her stomach.

She runs her fingers through my hair. "I want to fucking kill him."

"Haze..."

I smile at her exasperated tone. "But you're right. He did nothing wrong. It was in the past, just like all my hookups."

She kisses the top of my head. "Only want you, have only wanted you since I can remember. You have nothing to worry about."

"And neither do you," I promise her. Standing up, I lift my woman and kiss her.

"Come on, let's go back inside. I need a drink," she says, and I put her back on the floor and lead her to the bar, which has started to fill up.

The twins reappear from the pole room, and Brandy and Rose get back behind the

bar.

If we get more club girls around here, at least I won't be able to say that I've fucked them all because right now I have. Luella hasn't asked, but I'm sure she knows it, and I hate that I've put her in this situation, especially now I know firsthand how that shit feels.

If I knew she'd show up at the clubhouse one day, I wouldn't have touched anyone.

"What do you want to drink? Vodka cranberry?"

She nods. "Yes, please."

Luella often changes up her drinks, but I've made sure the bar is stocked with cranberry juice after she ordered it the first time.

I turn to Rose and order one.

"You look so beautiful tonight," I say, whispering into Luella's ear. "Can't wait to see that red lipstick staining my cock tomorrow morning. All fucking mine."

She laughs and playfully slaps my arm. "Maybe, if you play your cards right."

"You saying you aren't a sure thing?" I tease, and she rolls her eyes, our previous drama forgotten.

The music gets louder, and the drinks start flowing. Luella goes off to dance with Ora while I stay put at the bar with War, watching them.

"Haze, long time no see." I turn my head to see long pink nails now resting on my bicep.

Raising my gaze, I see they belong to Amy, a woman I've fucked a few times.

She's wild and up for anything. She's also married and works in one of the retail stores in town—I fucking hope that Luella doesn't know her.

I gently slide her hand off me. "Nice to see you, Amy. But I'm taken now, so you're going to have to find someone else to fuck around with."

She throws her head back and laughs until she realizes I'm not playing. "Wait, you're serious? You're not the settling-down type."

My eyebrows rise. "You telling me who I am? I am the settling-down type for one woman only. We had our fun, but it's in the past. I hope you have a good night."

Nice. Sweet. To the point.

If she doesn't take the hint, I'm going to have to change my strategy.

"Maybe she will let me join you both," she asks, and I'm about to tell her that I'm not sharing my woman with anyone, even another woman, when Luella appears in front of me, her emerald-green eyes narrowed to slits.

Goddammit!

LU

“Maybe she will let me join you both,” Amy says, batting her fake lashes at Haze.

I was dancing with Ora, having a good time, when she tapped my shoulder and pointed at Haze. Lo and behold, Amy, a woman who works in town near the bakery, is standing there flirting with Haze.

I didn’t want any more drama tonight after the shock of Romeo being a Serpents’ prospect, but here we are.

“Maybe she won’t,” I reply, flashing her a fake smile. I push between her and Haze, and his arms come around me.

“Won’t share her with anyone,” Haze replies, gently brushing my curls off my shoulder and placing a soft kiss there.

Amy looks genuinely surprised at his declaration.

That shit only serves to piss me off more. “What does your husband have to say about this?”

She purses her hot pink lips and lifts her chin. “What he doesn’t know won’t hurt him.” She flashes a smirk at Haze. “If you ever want to fuck in secret, call me.”

My jaw drops open at the fucking audacity.

Fuck it. I'm going to kick her ass. I move to storm after her.

Haze grabs me, stopping me from going. "She's not worth it, baby."

"You fuck married women too? Was anyone off-limits?" I snap, feeling oddly disappointed in him.

Yeah, I knew he fucked around plenty.

But married women?

I know it should be her feeling guilty for cheating on her husband, but is nothing sacred to him?

"I'm not married," he replies softly, spinning me around and cradling my face. His eyes move to mine. "I didn't break any vows." He dips his head and kisses me hard and wet. At first, I push my palms against his chest, but then I slowly fall into the kiss, melting against him.

I'm still angry.

But the man can kiss.

And he knows it.

The petty part of me is hoping that Amy is watching.

Haze breaks the kiss when the music stops, and Prez gets up on stage. "All right, brothers, I have a surprise for you all. This isn't just another random party. Suit was able to work his magic, so Curse got out early! Let's welcome him home and also welcome Rune to our chapter."

The doors open, and two hulking men step inside.

You can tell they are brothers. Both are the same height, maybe six foot five, are covered in ink, and have dark olive skin.

One has dark, short, cropped hair, and the other has dark hair that curls at his neck.

They are both in all black. The one with the longer hair has one of those wallets chained to his belt loop.

Men and women swarm them, welcoming them as they walk through the crowd.

As they get closer, I can see their dark, almost black eyes.

“If you ever cheat on me, I’m hooking up with one of them,” I announce.

“You’re not hooking up with fucking anyone,” Haze growls, picking me up and throwing me over his shoulder. He suddenly stops and lifts one of his hands from my ass. “Good to have you home, Curse. Rune.”

Double deep chuckles. “And who do we have here?” a deliciously low, husky voice asks.

“This is Luella, my old lady,” he says, and I can hear the pride in his tone. “I’ll introduce you to her properly another time.”

More deep, amused laughter.

“I’m going to find my own pussy for the night,” the one who must be Curse announces.

Lifting my head, I turn to look at them as much as I can with my hair in my face and hung upside down. “Make sure you use protection. Don’t want to be like Haze and have a club girl holding a baby over you!”

Curse dips his head to the side to get a look at me. He has a nose ring, which I find totally hot. “Don’t worry, I bought some extra-large condoms on the way here. Plus, I usually finish in their mouths just to be sure.”

My nose wrinkles. “Charming.”

He studies me, and it’s almost like he can see into my soul, then says quietly so only I can hear, “You’re good for him. He’s a good man. Hero complex. He puts everyone else first. Don’t let him push you away when he gets vulnerable.”

Rune winks at me, dimples forming. I notice he has a lip ring in the center of his lower lip and two black hoops in each ear. His dark hair is perfectly tousled and falls across his forehead like a paid actor. They are both covered in ink from the neck down.

Haze says something to them I can’t hear, and then we are on our way upstairs.

Before we can make it up, though, I hear someone call my name, and turn around to see Xanthe.

She’s wearing baggy jeans and a red top that shows off her flat stomach.

She looks hot and edgy. Her dark hair is flowing down her back.

“Don’t leave yet!” She laughs, but her smile drops when she looks above us.

I spin around to see Daisy coming down the stairs with Ghost next to her. He’s doing

up the button on his jeans, and her lipstick is smeared all over her face.

What the fuck.

I don't see any lipstick on him, so I can only imagine where her mouth has been.

Ghost's face is unreadable until he sees Xanthe, and then he stops in his tracks. His steel-gray eyes flicker with something I can't name before he masks it, but his jaw is tense. The air in the room suddenly shifts, tension building. Ghost's eyes dart to Haze, looking like he wants to kill him.

What exactly is going on here?

Daisy, on the other hand, ignores the lack of air in the room and smirks at Haze. "I told you I'd have to look elsewhere if you weren't going to give it to me." She steps down and walks between us, hips swaying.

Ghost and Xanthe stand there. He's looking at her, and she's looking down at the floor.

"Put me down, Haze," I order, wanting to speak to her.

As soon as my feet touch the floor, I go to her, entwining my arm with hers and pulling her toward the kitchen. I look back at Haze to see him and Ghost having a low, heated conversation. Ghost pulls something out of his pocket and hands it to Haze.

Ghost's eyes follow Xanthe until we are out of view.

When we step into the kitchen, I hear a loud bang, like someone's thrown something.

“What was that?” I ask her, opening the refrigerator and getting her one of Ora’s pineapple juices.

“Nothing,” she replies, worrying her bottom lip. “I didn’t know Ghost?—”

“And Daisy? I think this is the first time they’ve hooked up. Ghost doesn’t do repeats,” I say, wincing as the words leave my lips. Ora told me she’d caught Ghost watching Xanthe the last time she came here for a party, but I didn’t think anything of it until now.

He must want her.

Not a surprise—she’s hot, sweet, and smart.

But her reaction to him?

That is a surprise.

Ghost is unhinged.

He’ll eat her alive.

When her brown eyes glance up at me, filled with what looks like disappointment, I realize maybe she would enjoy it.

“You like him,” I whisper, and she swallows hard, opening her juice and taking a sip. She opens her mouth to reply when Ghost steps inside the kitchen, taking her in.

“Xanthe?” His tone is pure gravel.

She keeps her eyes on me, ignoring him.

“Eyes on me, little one. She’s not going to save you,” he growls, and my eyes widen.

That commanding, deep tone.

Little one?

Shit, she’s in trouble.

Hell, I want to give him my eyes, and I’m low-key terrified of him.

Xanthe looks up at him, following the command, and Ghost, the same Ghost I’ve been told hates to touch, reaches down and gently cups her face. For a moment, she leans into his palm and soaks in his touch.

I suddenly feel like I’m intruding as the two of them stare at each other. I’m about to slowly back out of the room when Xanthe suddenly shakes her head, like she’s clearing her thoughts, and moves away from his touch. “Leave me alone, Ghost. I thought you were different. Clearly, I was wrong.”

Oh, he’s different, all right.

Different like a serial killer.

She stands, and I follow, threading her fingers with mine. “Come on, let’s go have a dance. It’s a party, after all.”

She nods. “Ghost should leave. Looks like he’s partied enough already.”

With that parting shot, we both walk out of there, but I feel her fingers trembling.

Xanthe has been keeping secrets.

And I cannot wait to hear them.

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Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:34 am

HAZE

Ghost is pissed, but I didn't even know Xanthe was going to be here tonight, and I didn't make him walk down the stairs with Daisy. He could have sent her off alone.

I got what I needed but at a price for him, and I don't feel good about that.

The marker I owe him is going to be a big one.

Keeping an eye on Luella, Ora, and Xanthe on the dance floor, I spot Ghost in the corner, leaning against the wall, watching Xanthe with undisguised interest. When Ghost fixates on something, it doesn't always end well.

War moves to the dance floor, standing behind Ora, not letting anyone near her.

I turn to Blade, who's standing at the pool table, also watching Luella.

He can look, but if he makes a move, we're going to have a problem.

The party is starting to get a little wilder, with Omen now fucking someone on the couch.

She's riding him, and he's lying back drinking his beer.

He's clearly already enjoying the perks of wearing a patch.

I wonder how Luella will take that. Her face already went red with what she walked

in on in the pole room.

With another vodka cranberry in my hand, I walk to her on the dance floor and hand it to her.

We haven't fucked with her tipsy yet, and I feel like I'm in for a treat.

She's wild enough without it, so I can only imagine what I'll be getting tonight.

"Thanks." She smiles, touching her mouth to mine.

I ask Ora and Xanthe if I can get them anything, but they are both fine.

Ora can't drink, and Xanthe is staying sober to drive back home tonight.

Before I can head back to the bar, Luella pulls me in for a dance.

I'm not much of a dancer, but when she grinds her ass back against me, I'm not going to complain.

When I turn to my right, I spot Amy standing there, licking her lips as she watches me.

Damn! That bitch doesn't give up.

Ignoring her, I keep my eyes on Luella. It's not long until I can't take any more of her teasing, so I pick her up and carry her up the staircase and down the long hallway. Suit's door is open, and when I hear Luella's gasp, I pause and twist my neck to see what's going on.

Suit is lying back on the bed while a woman rides him.

I know exactly why Suit leaves his door open—he likes to watch and be watched.

I pause, knowing Luella likes to watch, too, even though she won't admit it out loud.

I'd never shame her for any kinks she has.

In fact, I'm looking forward to finding out every single one, but no other man is going to be seeing or touching her.

I almost wanted to kill Suit for watching her come for me.

That's reserved only for me. Suit has watched me fuck other women before, but it's different with Luella.

Slowly stepping past his room and to mine, I lock the door behind us and throw her on our new bed. I moved her shit in here earlier. Stepping to the edge of the mattress, I lift her feet against my chest, running my hands up her calves before undoing the straps on her heels.

"Did you like seeing Suit fuck that woman?" I ask her, sliding one shoe off and then the other. I press a kiss to the arch of her feet.

"Haze."

"You don't need to answer me. Your pussy will do that for you." I grin, spreading her thighs and pulling down her black panties. Swiping my tongue up from her pussy to her clit, I slide two fingers inside. "Fucking drenched."

"Haze," she whimpers, threading her fingers through my hair.

"Don't be shy, Luella. Whatever you want, I'll be the one giving it to you. Now, be a

good girl and take off your dress and bra. I want to see all of you.”

She sits up and does as she’s told.

And then, on my knees in front of her, I eat her like a starved man.

I’m fully dressed while she’s completely naked.

And that is so fucking sexy.

After I make her come twice, I strip down, lay back, and get her to ride me.

And just like I guessed, she’s so fucking uninhibited.

Perfect.

I’ve only ever needed Luella.

And all of those other women put together could never come close to her.

* * *

Luella is fast asleep, her chest to my back, when my phone vibrates, and Aspen’s name appears on the screen.

“Hello,” I answer softly, my voice thick with sleep. “You okay?”

“No,” she replies, sounding hollow and scared. I hear music in the background. “I messed up.”

“What did you do?” I sit up and get out of bed, throwing on my jeans.

“I need you,” she mutters and then ends the call.

Fuck.

Kissing Luella’s cheek, I get dressed and hop on my bike. When I pull up at my house, all my lights are on, and cars are everywhere. She’s thrown a fucking party. There’s a woman out the front on my lawn, throwing up.

“For fuck’s sake, Aspen,” I whisper, sighing.

It’s not the first time she’s done something like this, but when she comes back to me, I usually stay with her.

Because of Luella, I’ve been at the clubhouse more than I’ve been watching over her.

A feeling of guilt hits me, but it’s quickly erased when I see the sheer number of people in my fucking house getting high and drunk.

Someone steps in behind me, and I turn around to Sheriff Grayson. “Got a noise complaint,” he says, taking in the mess around us.

“Oh shit, the cops are here!” someone calls out, and everyone starts panicking, rushing around, and leaving.

“No one can clear a room like you, Sheriff, and for once, I’m grateful.” I grin, and he smirks.

“Aspen?”

I nod.

“You go find her, I’ll clear these assholes out.”

“Appreciated,” I fire back, heading up the stairs.

I find her in the guest room naked and passed out. I cover her with the sheet and then try to wake her. “Aspen?”

Her brown eyes open, muddled. “Yeah?”

“Hospital?” I ask, trying to see how lucid she is.

She shakes her head. “No, I’m not that fucked up.”

“What did you take?”

She goes silent.

“You need to go to the rehab center. I can’t keep letting you do this,” I whisper, closing my eyes and taking a deep breath. “I want my sister back.”

“I’m right here,” she breathes, licking her dry lips.

I get her some water, then leave to let her sleep it off.

Sheriff Grayson is arresting a man as I step back down the stairs.

“Drugs?”

“Yep, taking a few of them in. If I didn’t know you didn’t touch that shit, Haze, I’d be searching your whole fucking house right now,” he mutters, his jaw tensing.

“I need to get her into rehab,” I say to myself, gritting my teeth.

“Yes, you do. The people here tonight are bad news, Haze. She needs to get away from them all because she’s never going to get sober otherwise. Find one with involuntary commitment. There’s no other way she will go.”

I’m not the only one who has been dealing with Aspen’s drug problems around here. Grayson has been around to help her on more than one occasion.

He’s right.

I need to force her. Again.

And I hope this time, it makes a difference.

LU

The last person I expect to see when I'm out on a shopping run is Aspen.

She looks so different from the last time I laid eyes on her, and my stomach twists as I take her in.

Haze hasn't been around the last few days, trying to help her sort out her life, yet here she is, standing in the parking lot and talking to a woman who is in a car with her window down.

The woman looks familiar, and it takes me a few moments to realize who it is.

I take a sneaky photo and then continue into the grocery store to get what I need.

Blade is here with me on babysitting duty, but when his phone rings and he stops to chat, I continue on without him.

What could happen in broad daylight surrounded by people?

"Lu, don't run off like that again," he rasps, gripping my upper arm in an iron grip. "You're to stay with me at all times."

"I'm fine," I grumble, glancing up at him. There's no doubt he's handsome, with a mix of badass and nerdy with his glasses, not to mention the fact he's usually in front of a screen or a book.

“And you’ll stay that way by following orders,” he grumbles, dropping his hand to my lower back. “Come on, let’s get what you need and get out of here.”

I lower my voice and step closer to him. “I actually just saw something interesting.”

“What?” he asks, his brow furrowing.

“You remember Pippa, Ora’s old neighbor?”

He nods. “She’s one of Isle of Insanity MC’s club girls.”

“Yeah, what is she doing talking with Haze’s sister?” I ask him, showing him the photo I just took.

“Fuck,” he snaps, narrowing his green eyes. “This is why you don’t run away from me. Something could have happened.”

“I could fight both of them and win,” I remind him.

“Not if Pippa calls up Insanity MC for backup. Think with your brain, not your ego,” he mutters, making me angry.

“My ego ? I know how to fight. That’s not my ego talking.” I roll my eyes and step ahead of him, grabbing what I need for tonight’s barbecue.

Without Haze around, I have even more time on my hands. I had a few catering clients this week, so that kept me busy, and Ora and I had a movie night.

But I do miss Haze.

I know that makes me selfish, but we’re new, and I want him to at least be in our bed

at night.

Suit keeps smirking at me every time I see him, so I've been purposely avoiding him. Doesn't he have a courtroom or something to be in? I swore Ora told me that he's usually hardly ever around.

Maybe the club members need to do more illegal things to keep him busy. I should tease them and ask them if they are turning into good boys now.

Blade gets a shopping cart and pushes it around while I load it up with everything.

If someone told me one day I'd be living at and cooking for a biker clubhouse, I would have told them that they were crazy.

But I have to admit, these men are growing on me.

Yeah, they are rough around the edges, sometimes pretty vulgar and downright dirty, but they'd protect me with their lives, and I know that.

They are honorable men.

Most of them.

Okay, a few are a bit questionable.

Cough cough—Ghost and Angel.

Blade's phone rings. "Yeah?" He pauses and looks at me. "Yeah, it was that bitch, Pippa, and Haze's sister." He nods his head. "Tell Haze not to let her out of his sight. Okay, bye."

He pushes his glasses up on his nose, and a lock of his curly hair falls across his forehead. He has this whole Clark Kent vibe going for him, and if I wasn't head over heels in love with Haze, yeah, I might have gone there. "You're a hottie, you know that?"

He smirks and bites his lower lip. "You trying to get me killed, Cupcake?"

"Oh God, not you too."

He laughs and throws a packet of XL condoms into the cart, keeping his eyes locked on mine.

I smirk. "You fucking the club girls?"

He shakes his head. "I actually need a connection to fuck someone. Call me old-fashioned," he replies, shrugging his broad shoulders.

"I think that's very sweet," I say, smiling warmly.

If only Haze had that same mentality.

"Women don't want... sweet."

"The right woman will, and that's the only one you need to impress."

"Okay, stop reminding me how fucking perfect you are because you're taken," he replies with a sigh, and I wink at him.

We check out, Blade pays, and we get the hell out of there. He carries the groceries to the car.

I've just returned to the clubhouse when Haze gets back, beelining for me, picking me up, and throwing me over his shoulder. I'm laughing as he all but runs up the stairs and lays me back on the bed, kissing me hard. "Fuck, I missed you so much," he says through the kisses.

"Missed you too," I reply, tearing my lips away. My eyes scan his face. "Aren't you supposed to be watching Aspen?"

"Danger is watching her for now," he rasps, gently stroking my hair off my face. His eyes watch me with a softness I never thought I'd ever get from Haze. "I think Pippa must have some drug connections. That's the only reason she'd be meeting her in a random parking lot."

"How is she doing?" I ask, saddened when I think about my former friend.

"Not well, but I've paid for her rehab. They have an opening next week and will come to the house to get her. So I just need to keep her around here until then," he explains, resting his forehead against mine. "I have to go back, but I just wanted to see you."

Pushing him onto his back, I straddle him. "Let me give you a proper taste."

He smiles, making his dimple pop.

Okay, I might need more than one taste.

* * *

Lore is wearing a T-shirt that reads 'Missionary so we can keep arguing,' which makes me burst into laughter. "I never pegged you for a missionary guy, Lore."

“Don’t use my name and the word pegging in the same sentence, Cupcake. You’ll ruin my rep.” He grins, kissing me on both cheeks. “You even smell like cupcakes, darlin’.”

“That’s because I just made some.” I grin, spinning my barstool to face him as he takes a seat next to me. “Where have you been? The Baddies’ chat has been dry without you.”

“I went on a short run to our Dawson chapter for Prez, and then I got a little... distracted while I was there,” he says, a lazy smile playing on his lips. “There’s this one woman, she has the biggest?—”

“Okay, I don’t need to know the details.” I wince, leaning back against the bar. “You know, one day, a woman is going to come along and put you in your place.”

His violet eyes dance with humor. “I don’t think so. I’ve had my share of women, and not one of them has tempted me for more.” He dips his head to the side, lost in thought. His eyes soften.

“Who were you just thinking about?”

“No one,” he fires back.

“Lies.”

“Let me keep a few secrets, Cupcake.”

Daisy appears out of nowhere, pressing her breasts against Lore’s side. “I’ve missed you.”

“Really?” Lore asks, sounding bored. He taps his knuckles on the bar, getting Rose’s

attention. “Get me a beer, please, Rosie.”

She slides him one with a come-hither smile. “Anything for you, Lore.” She winks.

Damn, the club girls really do like him . He must be good in bed and have a massive cock. But personally, I think it’s because Lore is easy to be around. He’s friendly, funny, and makes you feel like he has nothing but time for you.

“I’m both good in bed and have a massive cock.” He smirks, trying to keep a straight face and failing.

“I said that out loud, didn’t I?” I mutter.

His shoulders start to shake with repressed laughter. “Fuck, Cupcake. You’re a riot.”

“Does Haze know you flirt with all of his brothers? How are you even any better than me?” Daisy barks, putting her hands on her hips. “I don’t even know what he sees in you! You coming here has ruined everything. And now that I’m pregnant, most of the men won’t even give me the time of day.”

Lore and I share a look before he turns to her. “I know you aren’t yelling at an old lady, Daisy. You know better than that. We’ve put up with a lot from you since you might be carrying a Serpent in your stomach, but you don’t get to talk to Lu like that.”

“She’s not his old lady yet,” she all but screams, her face turning red.

“She is,” Lore replies, his jaw tensing. “We’ve all known it for a long time.”

They have?

“Why don’t you worry about your baby now, Daisy, instead of who is fucking who,” I can’t help but add.

“I didn’t ask,” she sneers.

“Dogs don’t ask. They listen,” I reply, standing up and getting in her face. Well, I try. She’s a lot taller than me. “I appreciate Lore defending me, but I don’t need him to. If you weren’t pregnant, I would have beat your ass by now. I’m not threatened by you, Daisy.”

“You should be. Haze and I are having a baby, and once he or she gets here, you’ll just be a forgotten thought,” she replies, smiling widely. The crazy glint in her eyes makes me a little concerned about the kind of mother she’s going to be.

“Whatever makes you sleep at night,” I say, ignoring the jabs.

If Haze is about to have a child, it will be in my life too. I’ve come to terms with that. Whatever happens, I will support him. And I think he will make a wonderful father. Just look at how he is there for everyone else. Me, when we were kids. His mother. His sister, even now. His club.

Haze is a protector.

And he will be that for any children he has.

Suddenly, like he knew we were talking about him, Haze steps into the room, a piece of paper in his hands. His face is unreadable, but there’s a soft twinkle in his amber eyes.

“Actually, Daisy, you and I aren’t having a baby,” he says, handing her the paper. “Scorp just gave me this. I’m not the father.” His eyes come to me, and he holds his

hand out to me. When I'm safe in his arms, he whispers, "Only kids I'm having are going to be with you."

"How the fuck did you get this? I didn't do the test," she yells, stomping her feet. She looks panicked as she rests her hands on the back of her head, starting to pace. "No, no. You were meant to be the father."

"I'm not," Haze murmurs, his tone low and even. "Scorp is going to test all the other members who you've been with."

Oh boy.

I bet there are a few men sweating it out right now.

Daisy starts to cry, and I actually feel for her for a moment. That's until she goes on another rant. "You're about to become rich and famous. I want that life. It was meant to be me!"

Ignoring her, I look up at Haze and smile. Yeah, I'm relieved. It might make me an asshole, but I didn't want this baby to be his.

The amusement in Haze's eyes gives away the fact he can read me like a book. He knows I'm happy.

"I love you," he rasps.

"I love you too."

And I love the fact that he didn't knock that bitch up even more.

Finally, things are looking up.

“Haze, sorry, brother. She demanded to see you,” Danger calls out as Aspen steps into the room.

She stares at me like I’m a piece of dirt on her shoe. I don’t know why she turned on me. All I know is from the look on her face, I can tell she’s not here to catch up on old times.

“Of course you leave me to see her ,” she says, not looking away from me. “Hello, Lu. Long time no see.”

“Aspen.” I nod, taking in her thin frame. She has dark circles under her eyes and looks a lot older than she is. “It’s nice to see you.”

Life has been hard for Aspen, and I don’t take any pleasure in that fact.

“The last time I saw you, my brother was giving you a goodbye kiss. How was it without him there to save you from your shitty parents and shitty life?” she asks, smirking.

“ Aspen ,” Haze snaps, his brow furrowing. “What are you doing here?”

“You left, and I wanted...” She licks her lips, shifting on her feet. “I can’t go anywhere with your men watching me all the time. I need some money, Haze. And if I don’t get it, bad things are going to happen.”

“You owe money?” He guesses, his hand dropping to my lower back and tightening.

“Yeah,” she admits.

“How much?”

She swallows, looking at the floor. “Ten thousand.”

Haze’s jaw tenses, and he shares a look with Lore. “And who do you owe this money to?”

“You don’t understand what it’s like, Haze. I need those drugs. I need them, and?—”

“Who?”

“My friend.” She pauses. “She got them from some bad men.” Aspen breathes hard, throwing me a dirty look like this is somehow all my fault. “And if I don’t get it to them by tomorrow, they’re coming for me.”

Haze pinches the bridge of his nose and turns to Lore. “I need to talk to Prez and War.”

“I’ll watch her,” Lore states, standing up and nodding at Danger. “She doesn’t leave the clubhouse.”

Danger nods.

Haze turns to me and kisses the tip of my nose. “Don’t leave the clubhouse without at least four men until this is sorted, okay?”

I nod and watch him swagger away to fix yet another one of his sister’s problems.

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Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:34 am

HAZE

Six Weeks Later

When Luella finds it hard to sleep, even after a few orgasms and a back rub, I pick up my guitar and play for her.

I used to do this when we were kids with both of our windows open, so she fell asleep to my voice instead of her parents screaming downstairs.

“Everything” by Lifehouse does the trick, and soon, she’s fast asleep with a small smile on her beautiful face.

The last few weeks have been perfect. Aspen got carried off to rehab, which is about a two-hour ride from here, and I know she hates me for doing it against her will.

However, I think she will thank me one day.

I paid off her drug dealer and kept it at that.

I’ve been focusing on Luella. Her bakery is almost finished and will soon be ready to reopen and run again. I’ve paid the construction company extra to get things rolling quicker, and like always, money talks.

Unable to sleep now, I decide to head out to the bar to see who is still awake. I change direction when I hear laughter coming from the pole room and do a double take when I open the door and see Lore pull himself up on the pole. “See, I told you

it's not that fucking hard."

Bones is sitting on the couch, a smoke in his hand, laughing his ass off. "You're meant to look hot doing it, not just use it for pull-ups."

Skull is shaking his head in amusement.

"Should I get some dollar notes?" I call out. Lore turns around and makes a little grinding move that I never want to see again.

"Did Cupcake finally realize what an asshole you are and kick you out of bed?" Lore asks, jumping down from the platform and picking up his beer.

"You wish. Why are you all hanging around here with no pussy?" I ask, taking a seat on the empty leather chair.

"The women went to bed, and we've been sitting here talking shit," Skull pipes up, studying me. "You ready for tomorrow night?"

I nod, grinning. "Been ready for a long time. Things have only just calmed down."

"Things never calm down around here," Lore mutters, sitting back, holding his phone. "What's going to happen when the bakery reopens? Is she still going to live here?"

"We haven't spoken about it yet, but I'd like her to.

Luella seems happy here. We've got the cameras set up so we can watch the bakery live feed to make sure she's safe.

And Prez said we can use the prospects to guard her," I explain, knowing that if

people know Luella is an old lady, it might make her a target.

“Does she know that you own the bakery building? And that you charge her cheaper rent than she’d be paying anywhere else, never mind in that prime location?” Lore asks, and I hear a sleepy gasp as Luella steps into the room with bare feet, wearing silk shorts and a matching top.

“Holy fuck, Cupcake, no wonder you tamed Haze. You look hot as fuck.” Bones grins, and I throw him a look that tells him he better shut the fuck up.

“Is that true? You’re my fucking landlord?” she asks, putting her hands on her hips.

She’s magnificent and even hotter somehow when she’s angry.

Some men don’t like women with attitude, but I find it more than appealing, especially on Luella.

Maybe it’s because she’s so fucking little and cute.

Her curls are wild, her eyes are a fiery volcano, and her nipples strain against the white silk. No wonder Bones is drooling.

“Yes,” I admit.

From the corner of my eyes, I see the men standing up and silently leaving.

Luella steps farther into the room until she’s in front of me, standing in between my thighs. “I’ve been there for years,” she whispers, confusion flickering in her eyes. “Long before we reconnected.”

“I know,” I say softly. My hands squeeze her waist and pull her closer until she’s

sitting in my lap. “I knew it was always your dream, and I wanted to make it happen for you.”

“You own the building?” she asks, swallowing hard.

I nod slowly. “And the rent you pay? It’s all gone into an account under your name. That money is yours, always has been.”

“Haze...”

“Don’t get upset, baby. I know you’re an independent woman and business owner. You have done all of this on your own. That’s why I didn’t tell you.”

“You knew where I was this whole time,” she murmurs, scanning my face. “And you were just happy to let me live my life without you.”

“I was protecting you, baby,” I say, cradling her face with my hand. “You deserved better than me... you still do. You had no bikers showing up to threaten you, no fires, and no club girls wanting to start drama. You were happy.”

“I’m happy now with all of those things,” she fires back, biting her bottom lip. “I’m happier now that I have you. A love like ours doesn’t come around more than once in a lifetime, Haze. And you were willing to let it go.”

“For you.”

Why can’t she see how easy, safe, and sweet her civilian life was? Now she’s tangled up in my world, and things are a whole lot different.

“For me, or so you could slide into any and every pussy you could with no commitments?” she says, her tone sarcastic.

“Luella...”

“You knew where I was the whole fucking time,” she snaps, her voice letting louder now.

“And instead of coming for me, instead of giving me you, you bought my bakery. I’m appreciative for what you’ve done, Haze.

I really am. I probably couldn’t have afforded that spot if the rent is double what I’m paying now, but I’d have preferred to have you. ”

“Baby,” I rasp, my stomach twisting. “I couldn’t be what you needed then.”

She tries to pull away, but I grip the side of her neck and hold her in place. “I’m in love with you. I always have been. You’re mine now, and that’s all that matters.”

“Haze.”

“I’m not going anywhere,” I growl, my other hand on her ass.

I slam my lips down on hers before she can say anything else.

I knew she would have an issue with me essentially being her landlord, as she called it, but I don’t see it that way.

For me, Lu’s Sweet Treats is hers. All hers.

I don’t feel like I own any of it or have any say over it.

It’s her dream, stamped with pretty pink counters and all her fucking love poured into it.

Slowing the kiss down, I take my time with her, tasting her and pouring how I feel about her into it.

She unhurriedly grinds down against me until I can't take it anymore, and I slide my fingers inside her silk shorts and start to stroke her.

She's so fucking wet that my finger slides in with ease.

Pulling it out, I bring my finger to my mouth and suck on it.

"This cunt is sweeter than anything you've ever baked. "

She smiles, her eyes hungry. "Haze!"

"It's true. Now pull my cock out and fuck me, Luella," I order in a low growl.

She slides down my gray sweatpants and takes me into her hands, stroking me a few times before she pushes her shorts to the side and lowers herself onto me.

"We all know you'll still be the one fucking me." She moans, and I grin, knowing she's right. Even with her on top, I grip her hips and control her motions, lifting my hips to fuck her from the bottom.

"I fucking love you," I growl, thrusting harder with every word. "Don't ever say I didn't want you. I've done nothing but want you since the day I laid my eyes on you. Who do you belong to, Luella?"

She whimpers, "You, Haze. You."

"That's right, baby girl. You are mine . Just like I'm yours ."

We finish together, our eyes connected.

It's intense and intimate.

And I'm not scared about it one bit.

In fact, I crave that with her.

What has she done to me?

She lifts her face from my neck and smiles, then glances at the pole. "Want me to show you my moves?"

"Fuck yes. I'd like to replace the memory of Lore up there with something much sexier."

She throws her head back and laughs, and I just watch, taking in her beauty.

All is right in my world again.

LU

With my bag on my arm, I walk down to the clubhouse parking lot, finding Haze on his bike with both feet planted on the ground. He's on the phone, and when I get closer, I overhear his conversation.

"Yeah? Aspen? Are you okay?"

I don't know what she says, but his face drops. "Don't cry, tell me what's going on." He pauses and then tells her, "Okay, I'll be there. I'll leave now."

He turns to me. "I'm sorry, baby. Aspen is really upset and wants to see me."

We were about to go check out the bakery together, but I guess we could do that another time. "Okay, ride safe," I say, kissing him.

"I'll be back soon. I love you. Stay in the clubhouse," he orders, and I step back as he revs his engine and rides off.

I watch him leave, then decide I still want to do what I had planned or at least go out for lunch. I can wait to see the renovations with Haze when he gets back.

"Where's Haze?" Lore asks, walking toward me with his usual swagger.

"He had an emergency with Aspen. What are you doing now? I had plans, but Haze left, and I know he won't want me to go anywhere alone."

Lore studies me for a moment, running his hand over his beard. “Yeah, you are definitely not leaving here alone. Does it bother you?”

“What?” I ask, frowning.

“That Haze has a hero complex and can’t say no.”

“I mean, that’s his sister. I get it.” I still, considering his words. “Is it annoying? Yes.”

“Why do you think Daisy tried to pin the baby on Haze out of everyone?” he replies, crossing his arms over his chest. “Haze will be there. He’s got a hero complex. And yeah, there’s the whole record deal thing.”

“I wonder who the actual father is,” I mumble, and Lore smirks, wrapping his arm around me. “Not me, thank fuck. And I’m never touching Daisy again, that’s for sure.”

“Because you don’t date women with kids?” I ask, repeating his damn slogan that he says all the time.

“Exactly.” He grins, his index finger gently bopping my nose. “We’ll find out who the father is soon enough. I’ll go and get the truck and take you wherever you want to go.”

“Thanks, Lore.”

Thirty minutes later, we’re having lunch at this new Vietnamese restaurant. We’ve ordered a lot, but I’m pretty sure Lore will finish everything I don’t.

The waitress bats her eyelashes at Lore and bites her lower lip as she stares at him.

Rolling my eyes, I wait for her to leave before saying, “Wow, can’t take you bikers anywhere.”

“What?” he asks, leaning his arm along the booth. “She was cute. Think you could stay out of trouble for thirty minutes so I can give her a quickie?”

“Probably not.” I smirk. “You know you don’t have to fuck anything with a vagina, right? Sometimes it’s okay to have other hobbies.”

“Shouldn’t you do what you’re good at, though?” he replies, taking a bite out of one of the spring rolls.

“You’re a heartbreaker,” I fire back, trying to keep the judgment out of my tone and failing.

“I heard some gossip about you from the strippers. You let them stay the night, make them feel special, then bam !” I slam my hand down on the table.

“You move onto the next before they can even wash your cum out of their mouths.”

He starts to choke, and I watch him.

He should know how all the women he gets head from feel.

“I’m not like Ghost,” he says after he swallows some water and gets his laughter under control. “I do repeats. I’ll spend the night with whoever I feel like. It’s really not that deep.”

“Not that deep, hey?”

“You have a filthy mind, Cupcake,” he murmurs, his violet eyes filled with mirth. “Is

it a crime that sometimes I like to cuddle too? Yeah, I don't want any commitment, but I'm not a cold, unfeeling bastard."

"Heartbreaker," I repeat. "Watching you fall in love one day is going to bring me great joy."

"Don't wish such things on me. I thought we were friends," he grumbles, picking up his Coke and taking a sip.

I throw my napkin at him, and he laughs.

Next, I drag him to the mall to buy a few things before we head home. Haze texts me to let me know he's arrived at the rehab center and that he'll be back tomorrow. I tell him I'm out with Lore but about to head back to the clubhouse.

"I love this song!" I say, turning up the radio and dancing in my seat.

Lore smiles, amused at my antics. "You're a joy, you know that? No wonder Haze is so?—"

Another car suddenly smashes into us on my side, and all I feel is excruciating pain in my arm. The truck flips and ends up upside down.

My vision blurs as I try to turn to check on Lore.

"Lore?" I rasp.

And then everything goes black.

* * *

Everything hurts.

Then, it all comes back to me.

The crash.

Lore.

I try to sit up, my hand holding onto my arm, which I'm pretty sure has glass in it.

I'm in a small, musty-smelling room, alone, on a single bed mattress. There's one window, but it has bars on it.

Shit.

Where am I?

Did someone purposely run us off the road?

I hope Lore is okay.

The door opens, and in step two people.

One is familiar, and one isn't.

Pippa, Ora's old neighbor and the woman I saw meeting with Aspen, and a dark-haired man wearing an Isle of Insanity MC cut. Under any other circumstances, I might consider him seriously handsome.

But right now, all I think is fuck.

“What do you want?” I rasp, wondering how the hell I’m going to get myself out of this one.

Pippa smirks, but it’s the man who speaks. “We wanted to set a trap. And you, sweet thing, are the bait.” His hazel eyes give me a slow once-over, but they don’t feel slimy for some reason.

“We tried to use Aspen, but then Haze paid off her debt, and she was sent away,” Pippa explains, a scowl playing on her mouth. “What we didn’t know is that when she left, she stole drugs and money from us.”

“That’s what you get for trusting a junkie,” the man mutters, stretching his neck from side to side.

“So now what?” I ask, wondering what they want out of this.

Revenge?

Are they going to kill me?

This is how I die? Seriously?

“Now we make a deal. They want you back. They’ll give in to our demands.” He pauses and grins. “And if they don’t, we could always use another club whore.”

“ Grip ,” Pippa snaps, wrapping her arm around him possessively.

You can keep him, bitch.

Grip says nothing, just winks in my direction before closing the door behind them.

The Serpents of Chaos MC swore to protect me.

Haze is with his sister, over two hours away.

Looks like now is their time to shine.

HAZE

“I don’t want to be here,” Aspen cries, her shoulders shaking with each sob. “Please, let me come back to your house. I won’t cause any problems, I promise. I will change.”

I’ve heard all of this before, and even though I hate to see her like this, she needs tough love.

When I got there, the staff almost didn’t let me in, but when I explained that I’d come from Rest Falls, they said I could have an hour with her.

Now we’re sitting outside in a little garden, a forgotten chess board between us.

“I’m sorry, Aspen. You know I love you, but I did this for your own good. You can’t keep going on like you have been,” I say gently, rubbing the back of my neck.

I texted Luella again, but she hasn’t replied. She must be upset with me for just leaving like I did. I didn’t even walk her back inside the clubhouse. I just left.

I’m an asshole.

I’m just so used to running in and saving the day with Aspen, almost like a father and child. She has no one else.

But right now, all I want is to be with Luella.

When War's name pops up on my screen, I quickly answer. "Yeah?"

"Lu's been taken. Lore's in the hospital. We haven't heard from them yet," he says, and my body goes rock solid.

"What? I'm two fucking hours away," I reply, fear making my stomach twist. "Insanity?"

"We assume so. I've got everyone on this. We're going to get her back, Haze."

My old lady has been taken, and I'm not even fucking there.

I left her there.

And now she's been kidnapped.

"I'm on my way there now."

"Ride safe, brother. We don't need another man in the hospital," he says in a gruff voice, ending the call.

I stand up, and the chess board and pieces go flying to the ground. "I'm sorry, Aspen. I have to go. I'll come and visit you another time, all right?"

"Yeah, of course, you go running off for Lu. You will always choose her over me!"

I'm taken aback by the jealousy and bitterness in her tone, but I don't have the time to unpack all of her issues right now.

I kiss the top of her head and run out of there.

The ride back is the longest two hours of my life.

LU

Trying to move around doesn't work well for me.

One of my legs has a giant bruise, and while I've pulled out the small pieces of glass in my arm, there's one big one that I'm going to need help with.

I don't know how long I've been lying here, but it feels like about an hour before Grip opens my door, this time without Pippa.

He has a bottle of water in his hands, and he sits on the edge of the bed next to me, studying me.

"Spoke to Rome. He said he agrees to my terms, and they will be here in twenty minutes to do the trade," he says, lifting the bottle of water to my lips.

I open my mouth and take a few sips. He's surprisingly gentle as he helps me.

"How's your arm?" he asks, his brow furrowing. His demeanor is a whole lot different without Pippa around, which is interesting.

"I'll be okay," I reply, not wanting to give him anything to use against me.

"Let me see," he murmurs, reaching over and having a closer look. "Fuck, that looks deep."

The door slams open, and Pippa stands there with two hulking men behind her.

“What the fuck are you doing?”

“Making sure she doesn’t bleed out before the Serpents get here,” Grip comments, his voice nonchalant. He quickly stands and crosses his arms. “She’s going to need to go to the hospital.”

“I don’t give a fuck what happens to her,” Pippa fires back, and I wonder how she holds so much power with these men. Ora told me that a man named Wyatt said she was now the president of the Isle of Insanity MC, but I haven’t seen anyone with a president patch.

I have no fuckin clue what’s going on right now other than I’m being used as a pawn.

I need to do whatever I have to, to survive.

The two men behind Pippa step inside the room, and I ignore them even though I know their eyes are on me.

“Shame we don’t get to sample some Serpents’ pussy,” one comments while the other one licks his lips.

Yuck.

“No one touches her,” Grip demands, standing in front of me to block my view. “We get the money and weapons, and then we let her go. That’s the deal.”

“Shame her man is away,” Pippa adds, smirking.

How did she know that?

“Oh, you don’t know? Aspen owed us, so she called him in. Seems she doesn’t like

you much. In fact, she sounded happy at the idea of getting rid of you.”

Okay, ouch.

We might not have anything to do with each other now, but once upon a time, she was my dearest friend.

“Yeah, I thought you’d like to know that.” She smirks. “She stole from us, though, so I have no problem throwing that bitch under the bus. I hope she gets what’s coming to her.”

“What did we do to you?” I ask her, trying to figure out where she fits into this. There’s hatred behind her eyes, and that doesn’t manifest out of nowhere.

“John was my man, did you know that? He was the president before the Serpents killed him. I loved him. And you all took him from me. You will pay for that,” she sneers, turning around and storming out, the two men following behind her.

Only Grip remains.

“She was his sidepiece,” he adds, and my brows rise, my lip twitching.

I don’t know how I can find anything funny right now, but I have to get my licks in when I can.

With that, he also leaves, and I lay back, feeling helpless.

It’s not a nice feeling.

I must fall asleep because eventually, I’m woken up by gunshots and screaming.

“Where is she?” I hear, and I force myself to sit up.

“I’m in here,” I yell as loud as I can, getting up and banging on the door.

I keep going until I hear someone unlock it, and then I step back. My hand is still covering the wound on my arm, and I’m hoping I can make it to the hospital in time because my vision is starting to blur.

All I remember before I collapse is two sets of identical blue eyes.

* * *

The next time I wake up, I’m in a hospital bed, my mouth is dry as hell, and Haze is sitting in the chair next to my bed, holding my hand. His elbows are resting on his knees, and his eyes are on the floor. He looks miserable.

“Haze?” I rasp, and he quickly lifts his head.

“Baby.” The look on his face devastates me. His hazel eyes are red and filled with pain.

“Water,” I rasp.

He quickly stands and brings a glass to my lips, patiently waiting while I sip it down.
“Lore?”

“He had a concussion and cut on the side of his head, but he’s back at the clubhouse. He’s fine. He’s already asking for the women to play nurse for him.”

My lip twitches. “How long have I been here?”

“A few hours. Bones and Skull brought you here. The doctor had to pull out all the glass in your arm. They said you likely have a concussion too.”

Lying in bed, I twist my neck to face him. I’m feeling a whole burst of emotions right now, and although Haze is here, he wasn’t here when I needed him. Will I ever come first to him?

I think I need some space to clear my head and some rest.

Because I’m so exhausted and overwhelmed right now, I could cry. “You weren’t there.” It comes out as a broken whisper. “I needed you, and you were off saving someone else.”

It might make me sound selfish, but he’s my man . If I can’t rely on him to be there for me, who can I rely on?

I’m hurt.

And I’m angry.

The latter presents itself a lot easier than the former.

“I know. I’m so fucking sorry, Luella. I wasn’t there when you needed me. I fucked up.” He reaches for my face, then suddenly drops his hands in defeat when I turn my head, letting them hang at his sides.

“I just need to be alone right now,” I reply softly, staring in front of me at my hands.

“Luella, don’t do this, please. You know I’d do anything to protect you. Anything?—”

“Anything except put me first. I know you have responsibilities with Aspen, and I never want you to not help your sister. I just need time adjusting to the reality that if you are going to run off without warning every time she calls, I’ll be alone...

” I trail off, swallowing hard. “I’ll always come second.

I just need some space until I heal to be okay with that. ”

“You shouldn’t have to be okay with that.

I’m so sorry, baby. I fucked up badly. You don’t come second to me, and I never should have made you feel that way.

It won’t happen again, that I can promise you.

” He stands, leaning over me and pressing a kiss to my forehead.

“I’ll give you some alone time, but I’m not fucking going anywhere.

I’ll be out in the waiting room. I’ll come and check on you in a bit.

I’m not leaving you, Luella. I’m never leaving you. ”

When I’m left alone, only then do the tears fall.

The next time the door opens, it’s Ora. Her face drops as she takes me in, her arms coming around me. “I was so fucking scared.”

“You and me both,” I reply, forcing a smile. “But I’m okay.”

She sits on the edge of my bed. “Only you would still look beautiful after a

kidnapping.”

My lip twitches. “Now I know you’re lying.”

Her blue eyes twinkle before she dips her head toward the door. “Haze is out there, looking like he was the one in a car accident. He refused to leave your side from the moment he got here.”

“He wasn’t here.”

“I know,” she replies, gently cradling my face. “But he couldn’t have known this would happen, Lu.”

“I know that, but it still happened,” I blurt out, my lower lip trembling.

“Lu, he loves you. He knows that?—”

“Haze didn’t save me,” I whisper, swallowing hard. “The club did. If I waited for him, I’d probably be dead right now.”

“It should have been me saving you.” My head snaps to the door, where he’s leaning against it, watching me. His hazel eyes are filled with pain, and tension rolls off him in waves. “If anything had happened to you...”

Ora kisses my cheek and quietly leaves while Haze sits and takes my hand back into his.

“I’m tired of having to save everyone, and while doing so, it almost meant losing the only person who makes me truly happy.

From now on, I will put you first, Luella.

Aspen is an adult, and I won't be running to her every time she calls from now on. "

"I'm not giving you an ultimatum, Haze. I know you care about your sister."

"I know you're not, but I need to be the man you deserve. I will be the man you deserve. I should have been here, and from now on, I will. I'm not letting you out of my sight again."

I open my mouth to tell him about Aspen purposely calling him away, but I don't want to hurt him. Still, he should know the truth.

"What, baby?" he presses, gently pushing my curls off my forehead.

"Pippa said she asked Aspen to call you, to lure you away from me. I don't know if it's true, but..."

The air in the room instantly shifts. "She did that?" he whispers, his brow furrowing as his eyes shut.

"She did. I'm sorry, Haze. I considered not telling you because I didn't want to hurt you."

"No," he replies, giving my hand a soft squeeze. "Always tell me, Luella. Always . That's it, she's done." He places a soft kiss on my cheek and then takes a deep breath. "I'm sorry. I owe my club brothers a debt I'll never be able to repay."

"You're not perfect, Haze. And neither am I. We will get through it."

"You are perfect to me," he replies, his lips moving to my knuckles.

"I'm not. I run my mouth a lot."

“I like your attitude.” He grins.

“I overthink...”

“I don’t mind overexplaining.”

My heart melts.

“I think baking solves all life’s issues.” I smile.

“That’s not a flaw, baby girl. I love that you’ve found your passion in life. And you are damn good at what you do.”

“I love you, Haze.”

“I love you more, Luella. Even if you have a fucking pet spider in the shower that you won’t let me kill.”

“Leave Harry out of this.”

He shakes his head and runs the pad of his thumb over my lower lip. “Fucking crazy about you. Never going to let anything happen to you again.”

“You better fucking not.”

He smiles, and that dimple pops out.

And all is right in my world again.

LU

FOUR WEEKS LATER

There's a party at the clubhouse, and all the members are present. Ora keeps smiling at me, but I have no idea why she's extra happy tonight. Maybe War did something amazing with his tongue.

I'm in the kitchen cutting up the caramel slices I made when someone speaks in a deep tone from behind me.

"You know if something happens to Haze, the bakery, and all his money goes to you," Suit says, pulling out a chair and sitting with his legs spread and hands threaded together like some mafia leader.

He's not in his suit and tie for once. No, tonight he's not the lawyer but the biker in all black and leather. His cut looks good on him.

"I don't need his money," I reply, wondering if that's what he's getting at. I'm not a gold digger. I haven't asked a man for anything in my life, and I'm not about to start now.

His steel-gray eyes are framed by thick black lashes. "He wrote this will years ago when he bought the bakery."

My eyes widen in surprise as I look back down at the slices. I get what he's telling me. Haze was always going to give me everything. Even if he had never spoken to

me again, and our last contact was the kiss he gave me when I was sixteen.

“He loves you.”

“And I adore him.”

He’s silent for a few moments. “When are you going to look me in the eyes again?”

“I look you in the eyes,” I reply, frowning. I mean, I’ve been avoiding him, but I just did for a few short seconds.

“Give me your eyes, Cupcake,” he orders, and I twist my neck to look at him.

He nods to the chair next to him. Fuck, he’s bossy.

I sit down and arch my brows, silently urging him to hurry up and speak.

“I don’t want you avoiding me anymore. It’s getting old.

Yeah, you saw me, and I saw you. It was hot both times.

You don’t need to be shy about it. I like watching, and so do many others here in the clubhouse.

Don’t overthink it. No one is shy around here. ”

“I’ve noticed.” And I didn’t think I was either.

In fact, no one who knows me would use the word shy to describe me.

I’ve been with a fair few men, but I’ve never done anything like this.

I watched Suit in his bed, that woman riding him.

I didn't have to look, but I did. And yeah, it made me uncomfortable, but it also turned me on.

A lot.

“Okay, just don't tease me about it because I don't think I could handle that,” I admit, and he laughs, his eyes crinkling. “Especially in front of other people.”

“Deal. It will be our secret that Haze caught himself a sexy, kinky baker.” He winks, standing up and offering me his hand. “Come on, let's get a drink.”

“Okay, but you carry out the slices.”

He takes the tray, and we head out to the bar, running into Ora on the way. She arches a brow when she sees Suit standing next to me. “There you are. Haze was looking for you.”

My brow furrows when I see Haze standing up on the stage he usually sings on, with their prez, Rome, and War on either side of him.

“Is he singing tonight?” I ask Ora, who squeezes my hand.

The music cuts off, and Prez speaks. “All right, everyone, we're all here for another Serpents' celebration. Haze here has decided to take an old lady and wanted to make it official. Lu! Come on up here,” he calls out, winking at me.

Oh boy.

Ora nudges me, laughing. “Go up there!”

She leads me through the crowd to the stage, where Haze lifts and kisses me, making a show of it.

The crowd cheers. He smiles when he ends the kiss, taking a women's size leather cut from War and lifting it for me to see.

It has 'Property of Haze' on the back, along with the Serpents of Chaos patch.

My name, 'Luella,' is written on the front, along with a little patch of a pink cupcake.

It's cute and badass, and , oh my God, I'm really his old lady .

He slides it on me, and there are more cheers and catcalls.

"Luella, I've been in love with you since I was a teenager. You've always been mine , and I've always been yours . Now it's official. You look so fucking sexy with my patch on you, baby," he growls, kissing me again, turning me around so my back is to everyone so they can see his name on me.

It's a claiming move.

I'm his.

"My heart is breaking," Lore yells out, making me laugh.

"Serpents, show her how we welcome her," Prez calls out, and I remember this moment from when Ora was given her property cut. I just never thought this would be happening to me.

The men all line up in front of me, and Suit happens to be first. He smiles at me, taking my hand and pressing a kiss to my knuckles. "I'll protect you with my life,

keep your secrets, and always leave my door open for you,” he replies with a straight face. The bastard.

Lore is behind him, his violet eyes filled with pride, happiness, and his usual amusement. He kisses my hand, then starts to trail the kisses up my wrist until Haze comes up and pulls me away from him.

“Sorry, got a bit carried away. Cupcake, I’ll protect you. Die for you. Eat with you. Get a concussion with you. I’ll fight Haze if you ever want me to?—”

“Lore,” Haze growls with a warning. His hands move to my hips, and he holds onto me tightly.

“Baddies for life.” He grins before stepping aside.

Bones is next, and he surprises me by cupping my face and kissing my forehead. “I’ll always have your back. Take a bullet for you. Save you from dirty old houses. Take you to the hospital.”

“Thank you, Bones. I already know.”

He winks and then lets his twin step up. He brings my fingers to his lips and kisses them. “Protect you always, Lu.”

“Thank you, Skull. You have proven that.”

Along with War and Prez, who ran into the old house to save me while the rest of the men stood guard outside, it came out that there was something different about Grip.

His real name is Aiden ‘Ace’ James. He’s an undercover agent working to bring the Insanity MC down. I think my being there might have messed things up for him a

little, but three men, along with Pippa, were arrested.

I knew he was way too hot to be one of those sleazy Insanity men.

Angel is up next. He doesn't touch me but shows respect by bowing his head. "I'll protect you. Kill for you. I'm here for anything you need."

"Thank you, Angel."

Shit, I'm starting to get emotional now, my nose prickling as I try not to cry.

Ghost stands in front of me, a blade in his hand. He bows down in front of me, staying silent.

"Thank you, Ghost," I say softly, keeping my eyes on him as he stands and turns to leave.

Blade comes up next, his expression blank. He's wearing his glasses and cut, a mix of nerdy and badass, and his curls are around his ears and neck. He takes my hand and kisses it, keeping his green eyes locked on me.

"Missed out," he says quietly, and Haze's chest presses closer to my back. "You have my protection. My hacking skills. My respect."

"Thank you, Blade. You know, when you meet the right woman, you'll realize that it wasn't me," I say to him, lowering my lips to his ears so no one else can hear.

He flashes me a grin and disappears into the crowd while the rest of the men come up to welcome me into the Serpents of Chaos MC world.

Last to walk up is Romeo, and he is still as sexy as he was all those years ago. Dark

brown skin, those mismatched eyes that see right into your soul, and an aura so masculine it makes you want to give him anything he wants.

“I might only be a prospect for now, but I’d protect you with my life,” he says, hand on his heart. He winks at me and walks off, leaving me staring after him.

He doesn’t touch me. I guess he values his life.

“Fucker,” I hear Haze mutter, making me laugh.

He kisses the top of my head and lets go of me to speak with Prez and War, who are both congratulating him.

Heaven, one of the strippers from Club Cobra, comes and stands next to me, following my line of sight. “Call me Cinderella, cos I just know it fits.”

“What?” I ask, laughing.

“Raw, next question.”

“Heaven.” I grin, shaking my head at her. “You going to go after him?”

He’s damn good in bed, but I’m going to keep that little fact to myself.

“He’s playing hard to get with all of us. Imagine, a prospect!” she groans, making a tsk-tsk sound. She points at Lore. “Now he’s a much easier target.”

“I bet.” I smirk. “Easy is his middle name. Or maybe heartbreaker.”

“Ain’t that the truth,” she mutters.

I dip my head toward Curse and Rune. “Get a load of those two.”

“I’m fucking trying.” She sighs, blowing them both a kiss.

She has no shame, and as long as it’s not directed at my man, I’m here for it.

“I’m done sharing you,” he growls, squeezing my ass. I wrap my legs around him.

“And don’t think I didn’t notice you checking out Romeo.”

“I was not,” I reply, kissing his neck. “Maybe you should remind me whose property I am now?”

“Fuck, yes. I want you in just the cut and your heels.”

He all but runs until we reach our bedroom.

I slowly undress and then put the soft leather cut back on.

“Fuck,” he grits out, giving me a slow once-over.

“On the bed on your knees, baby.”

LU

The smile doesn't leave my face when Haze opens the doors to my bakery and gestures with his hand for me to enter.

It's just as I remember but better. There are more tables and chairs for customers, and the glass-front refrigerator near the register holds a wider selection of desserts.

I can't wait to show off my cupcake selection there.

I run my fingers over my pastel pink countertop, then step into the back, my eyes widening when I see the bigger kitchen—double the size of the old one.

"It is incredible," I whisper, taking it all in. "It's like you took it straight from my wildest dream."

Haze kisses the top of my head and then shows me the refrigerator and freezer. "I added in a panic room in case there's ever an emergency. You can go in there and call me straight away. No one will be able to get in... you lock it with a code. And it's fireproof."

I turn my neck to look at him and find his gaze already on me, watching my reaction. He looks a little hopeful, maybe. He wants me to love it. And I do. How could I not?

"It's perfect, Haze," I rasp, my voice hitching. Facing him, I go up on my tiptoes, and he lowers his face so I can kiss him. "I love it so much, thank you. I still can't believe you did all this for me, bought the damn building without even saying a

word.”

Haze didn’t want anything in return. He just wanted to take care of me. I don’t know many men, if any, who would do something like that.

My man has always loved me and wanted me to be happy, even if it wasn’t with him.

I was angry at first that he didn’t just come to me, but I get it now.

He wanted me to live my dream.

But little did he know my dream has always been him.

* * *

Haze

Four Months Later

Singing for a crowd, but Luella is still the only one I can see.

* * *

My eyes follow you everywhere you go.

Room full of people, but it’s like we’re alone.

You see me.

You have since you looked at me through our windows.

Now that I found you, I'm not letting you go.

* * *

Luella is front and center, standing with Xanthe and singing along to my lyrics. My first album was a hit, and I've agreed to do a tour as long as Luella will come with me.

I haven't seen Aspen since that last time, and I have reservations that I could ever forgive her for what she put Luella through.

Yeah, I'm all she has, but she should have appreciated that a little more instead of trying to harm the love of my life.

After I finish my set, I put down the guitar, and Luella meets me backstage, running and jumping into my arms. "You were incredible."

"Thank you, my muse." I grin, kissing her hungrily. "Fuck, I love you."

"I love you more."

Lore

Leaning back on the couch, I sip my ice-cold beer. Candy, one of the hot blondes from Club Cobra, is working the pole, giving me a private show, while Rose, one of the club girls, is on her knees in front of me, sucking my dick down her throat.

Does life get any better than this?

My hand tangles in Rose's curly hair, controlling her movements. I let her linger on the head of my cock before she sucks as much of me as she can take down. Her eyes stay downcast, not looking up at me—just how I like it. Eye contact is too fucking intimate, and this isn't about that.

My phone buzzes from the arm of the couch, and at first, I ignore it, my eyes going to Candy as she bends over and flashes me her bare ass.

But then it rings again.

Something feels off.

One thing about me? I always trust my gut instinct.

Glancing at the screen, it's from an unknown number, so I pick up. "Yeah?"

"Hunter?"

I freeze, pulling on Rose's hair to push her off me.

There's only one person who calls me that name, and I haven't heard it in years.

"Lore? What the hell," Rose snaps, sitting back on her knees and scowling.

"Atiana?" I whisper, grabbing my phone with both hands. The whole world around me disappears. I don't hear the music playing, nor do I see the two other women in the room. All the noise in my head suddenly stops.

I purposely never changed my phone number throughout the years, just in case she ever needed me, but after seven long years, I'd given up on that ever happening.

Atiana hated me.

So, if she's calling me, it means that something is really wrong.

Her whimper makes me want to murder someone. "I need your help."

Standing up, I slide up my jeans and walk out of the room. "Tell me where you are. I'm on my way."

No questions.

I'd ride straight into hell if she needed me to.

She rattles off the address, about an hour from the clubhouse. "Find somewhere safe and hide for me."

"Okay," she rasps. "Please, hurry. Before he comes back."

Fuck.

"Atiana?" Rose asks, coming up to stand behind me. "As in the girl tattooed on

your?—”

“Not now,” I snap before quickly getting ready and storm out to my bike. The twins are leaning against their Harleys and instantly go alert when they see me.

“What’s going on?” Skull asks.

“Don’t know what I’m walking to. Might need the truck.”

Bones nods, sharing a quick look with his brother. “We’ll follow you.”

They rush to the truck while I get on my bike and start the engine.

Butterfly, I’m coming for you.

* * *

Continue in... LORE , releasing on September 15th.