



Morsel (Dirty Little Billionaires #2)

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Category: Action&Adventure

Description: You're the sweetest morsel.

Accidentally stealing a billionaire wasn't on my 2024 Bingo card, but here I am doing just that.

When my boss is inadvertently taken by my asshole brother, I'm faced with a terrible choice. Fortunately for me, Oscar is a control-freak who decides to take matters into his own hands. He brings me back to his apartment, calls me his pet, and decides to keep me.

Only, I'm not so sure I want to be kept.

At least, not at first.

But as the hours turn into days, and as I start to get to know the sad, lonely billionaire on a deeper level, I realize there's more to Oscar than meets the eye.

And I realize that it might be up to me to save him from my brother.

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Oscar

I stare at the computer in front of me.

“Make it make sense.”

I desperately need for this to start making sense because right now, I’m totally lost. My brother discovered our father’s secret, but now it’s up to me to take things further. Ryan and Alex are desperately searching for her brother. They’re going to tear apart the fucking world to find him. I know that now.

What I don’t know is who else was affected or why.

I need to get to the bottom of this and find out who else was involved so I can clean house. My brother might like to play by the rules, but I don’t, and Phoenix certainly doesn’t. We’re going to destroy Project Sunshine no matter how hard it is and no matter how deep we have to go.

We already know that Allison Green was a victim of the project she now works on. She’s having a meeting with Phoenix to talk things over as I stare at my own files. I just wish any of this made sense, but it doesn’t.

There’s a knock at the door, and Dolly walks in.

“Burning the midnight oil?” She smiles brightly, and I force myself to smile back.

“Something like that,” I admit. “I’m working on a big project.”

“Sounds important.”

“It is.”

“Anything you need a coffee for?” Dolly asks. She waves at the door behind her. “I was going to dip down to the coffee shop for a cup. Thought I’d get you one, too. You know, if you like. It’s pumpkin spice season,” she offers.

“Do I look like a basic white girl?” I ask, but it’s the closest I’ve felt to joking in a very long time. Dolly smiles. Then she laughs. The sound makes me feel...

Joy.

Is that what I’m feeling?

It’s been so long since my heart didn’t feel like it was aching that I’m not even sure anymore. Maybe that’s what I’m experiencing right now. Maybe it’s something else.

“You know what? I think I’ll come with you.” I close my laptop and stand, stretching.

“You sure? It’s a little bit of a walk.”

“I realize I make more money than you, but I think I can afford to walk a few blocks,” I tell her. Once again, Dolly laughs, and I’m caught off-guard by how easy it is to talk to her. Most of the time, talking to women feels like a nightmare for me. It’s one of those experiences where I’m kind of off my game.

The two of us ride down to the lobby and exit the building, walking past the guards and starting down the sidewalk. We head to the end of the block and turn. Dolly chats about her day. She complains about the elevators and the maintenance people, and she makes a joke about how many birds sit outside the office. Things feel

comfortable for once. They feel easy.

We're having such a good time that I don't notice the van pulling up next to us.

I don't notice her stop walking and standing back.

I don't notice the men getting out of the car.

I don't notice anything until the whole world goes black.

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Dolly

“You said you wouldn’t hurt him.” I hiss the words, and Craig smiles at me.

“I said a lot of things.”

“You can’t be serious.”

“I’m as serious as a dinosaur,” he says.

“Craig, shut the fuck up.” My brother has always been a total prick, but he’s never hurt someone before.

“She’s right. That doesn’t make any sense.” Hank is up in the front seat of the white van. He stares at me, and then he looks at Craig. “But we should get going.”

I look in the van at Oscar’s limp body.

“What did you inject him with?”

“Nothing important,” Craig says.

“You said you just wanted to talk to him.”

“I do. I’m leaving now, though,” he says.

“I’m coming with you.”

Before Craig can tell me to fuck off, I slide in the back of the van. I hear him groan, but he slides the door closed. He gets in the front seat, and Hank takes off.

“How far away are we?” Hank asks.

“How the hell should I know?”

“GPS bro. Check the traffic.”

I sit with Oscar while Hank and Craig look up the best route to Hank’s place. I don’t bother telling them that they should have done this in advance. Hank and Craig have been best friends since middle school, but they aren’t exactly geniuses.

“You’re going to be okay,” I say, whispering to Oscar. I pull his head into my lap, but I don’t know if I’m speaking the truth anymore.

“Don’t baby him,” Craig says. He looks over his shoulder at me. “You always baby people.”

“I do not.”

“You do,” Hank says. “It’s fine, though.”

“Why the hell did you have to inject him with anything?” I asked. I don’t know what I’ll do if he dies. “His brothers will kill you if anything happens.”

“They’ll kill us?” Craig laughs. “That’s real rich.”

“They’d have to find us first,” Hank says.

“Yeah, and you aren’t a snitch, so how would they do that?” Craig’s tone evens out.

“I don’t know,” I say.

“Yeah, well, me neither.” He turns back around and stares straight ahead. I look back down at Oscar, at the handsome man I invited to coffee. I didn’t mean to betray him. Really, I didn’t. My brother asked me to help him get Oscar into the van, and I thought I could do that without suffering any consequences.

Apparently, we were both wrong.

“Twenty minutes,” Hank says.

“When we get there, back in,” Craig says.

“Why?”

“We can haul him out of the back. Not as many people will see.”

“Wait, what do you mean?” I ask. “Hank, do you live in an apartment?”

“Um...”

“Let me get this straight: you two just kidnapped a local billionaire, and you’re bringing him back to your apartment? You really think people won’t notice that?”
Dumbasses.

“It’s called abduction when it’s an adult,” Hank offers helpfully.

“Fuck off, Hank.”

“Man, you didn’t tell me your sister got mean,” he says to Craig.

“She’s always been mean.”

“Not in middle school.”

“She was twelve.”

The two of them keep talking, but I look at Oscar once more.

“I’m really sorry about all of this,” I say. His eyes flutter open. “Oscar?”

“Shit! Is he awake? Knock him out, sis.”

“Stop. He’s not going anywhere.”

I don’t know what my brother and his friend actually gave to Oscar, but they aren’t getting close to him again. I don’t care if I have to fight them both off with my bare hands. Oscar is mine, and I’m going to take good care of him.

“You don’t know that. I heard he’s feisty,” Craig says.

“He’s not feisty.” He’s calm. He looks more focused now. My eyes lock on his, and I stare at the beautiful man who doesn’t deserve this. “Everything’s going to be okay,” I say.

“Dolly.” Oscar’s voice wobbles a little.

“Don’t try to speak,” I say. “The boys are going to ask you some questions. Then you can go.”

He closes his eyes, and he passes out again.

Awesome.

“Need more drugs?” Hank asks.

“He’s knocked out,” I say.

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Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 3:24 am

Oscar

When I woke up this morning, I didn't expect a lot from my day.

Breakfast?

Sure.

Some morning sex?

Unlikely.

A couple of mundane meetings?

Yep.

Being abducted?

No, not so much.

Yet here I am, sprawled out on the floor of what I can only assume is someone's mother's minivan. There's a long metal rod or rail of some kind poking into my back. My guess is that the person driving removed the back bench from the van so there would be room to transport me.

And now I'm in Dolly's lap.

What the hell does she have to do with all of this?

“When we get to the apartment, Dolly goes in first.” The driver speaks to his passenger. His voice is deep. He sounds commanding, but that’s just because of his tone. I know leaders, and he’s not one.

“You get that, Dolly?” The passenger seems familiar with her. A sharp tang of jealousy hits my belly.

Jealousy?

“I got it,” she says. I feel her hand on mine, but I don’t move. For all she knows, I’m asleep. “I’m sorry, Oscar,” she says.

Well, she fucking should be.

I want to reach for my pocket. If my cell is still there, I can grab it and make an emergency call to one of my brothers. Ryan or Phoenix will be able to help.

Unfortunately, while this ragtag team of losers seem ignorant and sloppy, they also seem capable. I’m sure they took my phone already.

As if on cue, the passenger speaks.

“Did you turn off his phone?”

“It’s off, Craig,” Dolly says.

“Good.”

“She’s not stupid,” the driver says.

“Well, Hank, you could have fooled me,” Craig says.

What the hell is with these two guys?

And how does Dolly know them?

Dolly is what I consider to be a kind, cautious human being. She’s soft, and she’s sweet. She’s very interesting, and she has worked for my family for a long time. Years.

I don’t understand why she turned me over to these men, and I certainly don’t understand what they want from me.

Most of the time, when people want something, it’s from Phoenix or Ryan. They’re the better brothers. Ryan runs everything with Shadowvale Industries, and while Phoenix likes to stay out of the spotlight, he’s still pretty involved.

So, why me?

I wait to see if the trio is going to say anything about where they’re taking me or what they want. If it’s money, they’ll get it super fast. Ryan and Phoenix are both wealthy, as am I. Money won’t be a problem.

Unfortunately, the thing about abductions is that they never really follow the same rules, so chances are that there’s more happening than I’m aware of.

“I still don’t think you needed to take him,” Dolly says.

“You don’t know everything,” Craig says.

“Don’t I? You said you just wanted to talk to him,” she says. There’s an edge to her

voice. She's scared.

Why the hell would Dolly be scared?

"And I do."

"Alone in the apartment," Hank adds.

"You want to talk to him alone in the apartment? Craig, it sounds like you want to hurt him."

Yeah, that's not going to happen. I don't know who these fuckers are, but they're not going to hurt me. As long as I can actually regain my strength before we get to the apartment, I think I'll be fine. I don't move, though. I stay perfectly still.

Dolly doesn't seem like she knew anything was going on, but I can't trust her anymore. This is unfortunately because I'm forever two drinks away from asking her out. Dolly is kind-hearted and sweet. There's a reason my brothers and I chose her as our receptionist.

"Worry about yourself."

"Well, I'm not going to do that," she says. "This is my boss, Craig. We need to return him in one piece."

"Oh? Do we? I'm sorry, Dolly, but the world isn't exactly going to be super sad if we're suddenly down one weepy billionaire."

Yeah, fuck this guy. If I didn't already hate him, I sure as hell do now.

I try to listen to the roads as Hank drives. I'm not blindfolded, and as far as I can tell,

I'm not tied up. I pretend to be passed out, though. When they open the doors, I can make a run for it, or I can fight if I'm not too weak. I can't quite gauge how I'm feeling.

I also can't quite gauge where we are.

I strain to listen. Are we passing anything I'm familiar with? It's a big town, sure, but I know it inside and out. We don't cross any train tracks, and it doesn't sound like we're close to any loud places. There are no bars, no clubs.

Where the fuck are we?

I stop thinking about that because the van slows. We turn left. Then Hank keeps driving.

"How much longer?" Dolly asks.

"Not much."

"Don't ask such stupid questions," Craig says.

If I was a villainous billionaire instead of a normal, nerdy one, I'd definitely be killing this guy. Instead, I'll just punch him. Yes. That's what I'll do.

Soon, the van stops.

"Get him inside," Hank says. "I'll move the van."

"Where are you moving it to?" Dolly asks.

"We can't just leave it out in the parking lot," Craig snaps. "He's a billionaire,

dumbass. People will be looking for him.”

Will they, though? I’m not so sure. My brothers are occupied with other tasks, and our employees are busy. The truth is that even though I go to meeting after meeting, I also tend to have long periods of time where nobody needs me. It’s a strange feeling, being me.

Dolly knows this.

“People won’t be looking right away,” she says.

“What?” Craig says.

“They won’t be looking immediately,” she repeats. “Oscar is a busy man, but he’s just one part of the company.”

“Meaning?”

“Meaning that it’s not like they’re going to send a search party for him,” she says.

“They will,” Hank says.

“Whatever,” Dolly says. She gives up.

The passenger door opens. I hear Craig get out, but I don’t move. Instead, I allow myself to stay limp. My best chance is going to be to wait until he pulls me out and into the apartment. Dolly will be there, but Hank will be out parking the car.

It’ll be easier to fight one man than two, and despite the fact that Dolly is somehow in cahoots with these guys, I don’t think she’s going to hurt me. Not on purpose, anyway. Oh, I sure as fuck want to hurt her, though.

She's so fucking pretty, and she doesn't even know it. That doesn't mean that she can just do whatever she wants, though. Kidnapping? No. She knows better than that.

The back door slides open, and sure enough, Craig grabs my ankles.

"Help me," he says to Dolly.

Together, they manage to get me out of the van. I don't know how they're going to get me inside without anyone seeing. It's late afternoon, but it's not dark. The sun hasn't set. There will surely be people in the parking lot who see what's happening, but maybe not. I keep my eyes shut, so I'm not sure if this place is sketchy or not.

"We don't have a lot of time," she says.

"I'm aware."

"We don't have to do this."

"Dolly, shut the fuck up."

I'm tired of the way Craig is speaking to her. How does he know her, anyway? I'm not sure. It's bothering me, though. She deserves the world. She doesn't need this guy talking to her like she's unimportant, like she doesn't matter.

"Let's just get him inside," Craig says.

Together, they carry me toward the apartment. I hear the van drive off. When we near the apartment door, they drop me, and Craig starts to fumble with the keys. I realize this is my moment. I'm only going to get one chance.

Immediately, I leap into action. I jump up, somehow landing on my feet.

“What the fuck?” Craig says. I swing, punching him in the face. I follow up with a second punch, and he doubles over. One more, and he’s on the ground. Another, and he’s passed out.

“Oscar? Oh my god. Fuck. I’m so sorry!” Dolly is crying, but I don’t have time for her tears. I do, however, have time to get out of here with her. I reach for the keys Craig dropped.

“Does he have another car here?” Surely he’s got a backup, regular sedan somewhere. Dolly just stares at me. I regret it, but I slap her. “Dolly! Get with me. Does he have another car?”

“Um, yeah,” she says.

“Show me.”

She nods, and she leads me to the parking lot we just came from. She points at a small black Honda.

“Get in,” I tell her. She doesn’t need to be told twice. Something in my tone must let her know that I mean business because she slides into the passenger seat, and I climb in the driver’s side. I start the car, and then I start driving.

We ride in silence as I leave the parking lot and start heading down the street.

“Spill your guts,” I say.

“I…”

“You’d better start fucking talking,” I tell her. “I’m a patient man, Dolly, but nobody is that patient.”

“I’m really sorry! I didn’t mean for any of this to happen.”

“I don’t give a fuck,” I say. “What matters is that it happened. Now talk.”

“I...”

I grip the steering wheel. I hate that this is happening. I hate all of it. I wish Dolly wasn’t involved, and I wish none of this had happened. If this was up to me, I’d be at home right now. I’d be curled up in bed playing video games. That’s it.

“How do you know those guys?”

I’m going to try to make this easy for her so she’ll talk more. I turn onto a main road, and then I keep driving. I’m not sure where we are. I’m just guessing. Dolly doesn’t offer any suggestions, and I don’t ask.

“Craig is my brother.”

“Didn’t know you had one.”

“We aren’t close.”

“Could have fooled me,” I say.

“We aren’t.”

“And Hank?”

“Craig’s best friend.”

“What happened, Dolly?”

“They offered me money to get to talk to you.”

“Seems like they wanted to do more than talk.”

“I didn’t know about any of that.”

“Dolly.” There’s an edge to my voice I generally reserve for business deals that go awry. I don’t like the way I sound to Dolly.

“I swear I didn’t know.”

“What did they want to talk about?”

“The adoptions.”

Ah.

“How do they know about that?”

She doesn’t say anything.

“Dolly, you better fucking speak.”

But she doesn’t.

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Dolly

There are so many moments where my life feels hard, broken, and damaged. Then there are moments where everything feels perfect.

On the days Oscar walks through the front lobby to work, I feel like my heart is going to soar. On those days, I think I'm going to die if he doesn't stop and talk to me. I yearn for him more than I've ever yearned for anyone. I crave him.

And yet, I've somehow betrayed him without ever wanting to.

"Talk."

I can't.

"You'd better speak, Dolly."

But I don't.

I can't bring myself to say anything else because I'm tired, and I'm scared, and I don't know what's going to happen next.

I'm quiet as Oscar pulls onto the highway. Somehow, he's finding his way home. I'm not sure where Hank's apartment was, and I'm not sure what he and Craig are going to do now, but that's not of any concern to me.

What I'm starting to wonder is what's going to happen to me.

“Where are you taking me?”

“No.”

“What?”

“That’s not how this works, Dolly. If you want information, you have to share.”

“But I-”

“That’s how it works. You speak, I speak. You speak, I speak. If you don’t share, I’m not telling you shit.”

“What the fuck?” I mutter the words before I can stop myself. The low laugh that escapes Oscar’s lips is dark.

And terrifying.

He’s going to hurt me, I realize. He’s not going to just drop me off at my apartment and pretend like everything is normal.

“What are you going to do to me?”

“There we go. That’s the question you should be asking.”

“Oscar?”

“No more talking, Dolly. The next time you speak, it’s going to be to answer questions. If you aren’t going to help me, you’re going to shut the fuck up.”

So I do.

I sit with my hands in my lap, and I wait until we get to Oscar's apartment. He pulls the car into the basement parking lot of the building. I happen to know that he owns the entire building, but he lives on the top floor. I also know that he renovated the entire thing and his place is soundproof.

How do I know this?

I'm just the receptionist, and people talk. When people come by Shadowvale Industries, they stop in the lobby and spill their guts. In some ways, I feel like a hairdresser. People tell me all of their secrets. They don't even think twice about it.

He parks the car, and then he turns to me.

"We're going to get out of the car."

"Okay."

"We're going to walk to the elevator."

"I understand."

"If you run, or you scream, or you try to signal for help, it won't go well for you," he says.

I believe him.

Oscar got to where he is today because his father was a rich man, but he stays where he is because he's a cunning man. In my opinion, he's the smartest of the three brothers. Ryan is broken and sad and mopey, and Phoenix is broody and sad and mopey, but Oscar is strategic. He's the kind of guy who is always figuring out what his next move is going to be.

He's got me trapped.

"Tell me you understand."

"I understand."

He nods, and he gets out of the car. A true gentleman, he comes over to my side of the car, and he opens the door. I accept his hand, wait for him to shut the door behind me, and then we walk to the elevator. We pass about a dozen cars on the way, but no people. He pushes a button for the elevator, and once we're inside, he inputs a little code before hitting the top floor.

"You don't need a keycard?"

"No."

"Have you lived here long?"

He's quiet.

The elevator moves up. The doors open on the main floor, and a tall woman in a blue dress steps in.

"Hello," she says.

"Hi," Oscar says.

I say nothing.

"Traffic is crazy today, huh?"

“Absolutely,” Oscar says.

“Luckily, I walked home from work. Can’t imagine being stuck in this. Did you see the wreck on 17th and Millbrooke?”

“Oh, I did,” Oscar says. He didn’t. We took a different route. He’s just making small talk with this random lady, and I’m trying my best not to completely freak out.

I could ask her for help.

I could beg her to take me somewhere else.

She could call the police for me, she could help me.

But what would I say?

“Sorry I kidnapped a billionaire. I didn’t know better.”

“I didn’t mean to kidnap my boss. I thought we were just going to talk to him.”

“I didn’t mean to do a crime today. It was an accident.”

No matter how I try to phrase my answer, I just think it’s going to come up short. No matter what I could possibly have to say, my words feel weak.

Frail.

Impossible.

“Good thing we’re all off work tomorrow for the holiday, right?”

“Absolutely,” Oliver says. “You have any big plans?”

“Oh, you know. I’ll probably just do chores,” she laughs. “Bathtub needs a good scrub.”

“Well, best of luck,” he says. The doors open on the seventh floor, and she steps out. The woman offers us a little wave, and then she’s gone. The doors close again, and we start moving.

“Do you know her?” I ask.

“No.”

“I thought you owned the building.”

“No more talking, Dolly.”

When the elevator finally stops, the doors open to a small lobby. We step off of the elevator. Oscar steps up to the ornate marble door. He reaches for a keypad, and he inputs a password.

“Inside,” he says, and I walk ahead of him into the apartment.

Somehow, I know that no matter what happens next, my world is about to change.

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Oscar

I hate the way she's wiggling her ass as she moves.

She doesn't even realize she does this.

Dolly stands in the center of my minimalist apartment, and she turns to look at me. Despite everything, my dick doesn't seem to get the message that she's bad for me.

For us.

She's going to tear me apart if I let her, but oh, I want to let her.

"What are you going to do now?"

"Hand me your stuff," I say. She slides off her jacket and hands it to me. I feel inside of her pockets, but they're empty. She's standing in her black dress pants and her white blouse.

She looks beautiful.

"Take off your shoes."

She does.

"Phone."

I hold my hand out.

“What?”

“Give me your phone.”

She pulls it out of her pocket. There are a dozen missed calls from her brother. I’m sure he’s going crazy trying to find her. Good. He can afford to worry a little bit.

I drop it on the floor, and I step on it.

“What the fuck are you doing?” Dolly cries out. She moves to stop me, but I hold my hand up. Instantly, she stops moving. She stands still.

I reach for the broken phone, and I take it into the kitchen. There’s a hammer in my bottom drawer, and I pull it out.

“Oscar, don’t.”

“Shut up, Dolly.”

Three good strikes and the phone is really dead. I toss it in the trash, and I look at her.

“You’re mine now,” I say.

“What?”

“You’re mine. Whatever life you led before, it’s over. You don’t get to go back to normal. You betrayed me, Dolly. You abducted me. I trusted you, and you hurt me.”

“Oscar...”

“Take off all of your clothes.”

“What?”

“I don’t want you escaping,” I say. “And I don’t want you secretly calling for help. Take off your clothes.”

“But I...”

“Do it, or I call the cops.”

She juts her chin forward. For just a second, I think she’s going to tell me to go ahead and call the cops, but to her credit, she doesn’t.

Instead, she reaches for her top button, and she undoes it.

Then the next.

And the next.

And the next.

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Dolly

Am I really doing this?

Am I really undressing in front of my boss?

I want to argue. Every ounce of my body is threatening to rebel against what's happening, but there's another part of me that's excited in a sick, twisted sort of way.

Oscar Shadowvale is about to see me naked for the very first time.

"This isn't the way I thought this would happen," I say. I lick my lips.

"Take off the clothes, Dolly."

"I thought that the first time you saw me naked, it would be a consensual thing."

"I'm waiting."

"I figured you'd take me to dinner, maybe."

He stares at me.

"I thought, you know, that maybe there would be something special between us," I say, but I feel like I'm going to break.

"There's nothing special between us."

“Oh.” I stare at him.

“Dolly.”

“Fine.”

I unbutton the rest of my shirt. The fabric falls open, revealing my red lace bra. I definitely should have chosen a plain bra for today.

He stares at me. An eyebrow lifts.

Is he intrigued?

Does he want more of this?

I hope he does, because I want more, too.

The Shadowvale brothers have always been a mystery to the women of Shadowvale Industries. For years, I’ve wondered what secrets they’re really keeping, and I’ve wondered what those secrets mean for the rest of the community.

“Tell me something, Dolly.” He starts to walk around me. He circles me like a shark, and I close my eyes.

“Anything.”

“When you got up today and chose this outfit, did you know I’d be seeing it?”

“No.”

“Did you want me to?”

“Yes.”

There’s no point in lying.

“Interesting,” he says.

“Why is that interesting?”

“Because I’m going to be seeing so much more than your bra,” he says. “Take off the rest.”

I push the fabric off my shoulders and let the shirt fall to the floor. Next, I start to reach for my pants, but he shakes his head.

“Bra next.”

“What?”

“I want to see those pretty nipples of yours, pet.”

I stare at him.

Oh, no.

No, no, no.

“Um...”

“Now.”

Something in his tone lets me know that he’s serious. He’s not messing around. More

importantly, he's not about to let me get away with trying to be shy.

"Oscar, this isn't like you." I still have to try.

"Excuse me?"

"You aren't like this. You're a gentleman."

"Am I?"

"Yes," I say. "You volunteer, you're polite, and you always hold the door."

"And yet being a gentleman didn't keep you from kidnapping me," he says.

"I..."

"Now. Bra. Floor."

I stare.

"I'm getting tired of repeating myself, Dolly. Do it now, or I'll cut that fucking bra off and shove it in your mouth."

My jaw drops, but suddenly, I think he's being serious, and I decide that keeping my underwear in one piece is more important than anything else.

I drop the bra.

Instantly, my nipples harden in the cool air. I look at the large flat-screen television on the living room wall, at the leather couch in the center of the room, at the gas fireplace. I didn't even know apartments could have a fireplace. I look anywhere but

him, and then Oscar grabs my chin. He forces me to look up at him, so I do.

“What?” I whisper.

“You’re beautiful.”

“Shut up, Oscar.”

“No.”

I stare at the man before me, and I wonder why he’s saying these things to me. He certainly doesn’t need to. He’s a wealthy man who can do literally anything he wants to do. So why am I here?

Oh yeah.

I abducted him.

Shit.

This isn’t a date, I silently remind myself. It’s a punishment.

He’s here to hurt me, and I have to let him.

“Take off the rest of your clothes,” he says.

I don’t move, and he kisses me. Oscar’s mouth comes crashing onto mine, and I kiss him back desperately. I’m filled with a greater need than I’ve ever experienced in my entire life. I don’t know what to do except give everything I am.

So that’s what I do.

“What are you doing?” I finally pull away.

“Whatever I want.”

“You can’t do whatever you want.”

“I can.”

“No,” I say.

“Pants. Floor. Now.”

I quietly pull my pants and panties down together. I step out of them, kicking them aside. Now I’m totally bare before Oscar Shadowvale, and I feel like my heart is going to explode.

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Oscar

She's so much more perfect than I could have possibly imagined.

"You're pretty, pet."

"Don't call me that," she says.

"New rule," I say. "No talking."

She presses her lips together. I can tell staying silent is hard for her.

"Do you need to go to the bathroom?"

She shakes her head.

"Good. Then let's get you into the bedroom." Her eyes widen, but she doesn't say anything. "I'm not going to fuck you," I add.

Is it just me, or does she look disappointed?

"Until you beg me to," I say.

Yeah, she looks relieved.

Interesting.

I never thought Dolly was the kind of woman who would fall for an asshole like me, yet here we are. I take her hand and lead her through the luxurious apartment. We slip down the hallway past my office, bathroom, and guest room. Then we reach my room.

She gasps as we enter the room. The walls are painted red, but the ceiling is black. A four-poster bed sits in the center of the room. It's covered with a red comforter, black throw pillows.

"Get on the bed," I say.

"Oscar."

I grab her by the throat, kiss her hard.

"Say my name again," I say.

"Oscar."

"Again."

"Oscar."

"Now shut the fuck up and get on the bed."

She moans as she scurries toward the bed. She climbs on, settles in the center, and looks at me.

"You're not leaving this bed until morning," I say.

"Okay," she says.

I walk to my ornate wooden dresser. I'm silent as I fish around for a handful of ties. Then I come back to the bed and secure each of her arms to the bed posts.

"What are you doing?"

"No more questions. I'll gag you."

I will, too. I don't feel like talking. I'm sure she thinks she has a lot more to say, but she doesn't. Instead of sticking around to watch her gorgeous naked body, I leave the bedroom, and I close the door behind me.

Once I'm back in the living room, I call both of my brothers.

"Oscar?" Phoenix says, answering the call. Ryan joins seconds after.

"Where the hell have you been?" Ryan asks.

"Abducted," I say.

"What?" Phoenix asks.

"What the fuck?" Ryan adds.

"The receptionist," I say by way of explanation. "Our girl Dolly took me and didn't seem to mind. It's not exactly a good look, really."

"What happened?" Phoenix asks.

"I was invited out to coffee. I did not get coffee," I say.

"She took you? How?"

“Two men were with her. Their names are Hank and Craig. Craig is her brother.”

“On it,” Phoenix says. I know he’s doing his Hacker Man stuff where he tries to find out everything he possibly can. The thing about Phoenix is that he’s wildly smart. The other thing about Phoenix is that he doesn’t have any financial limitations, so he can pretty much find anything he wants to.

“What did they want?”

“Apparently, they told her they wanted to talk to me,” I say.

“And that was not the case,” Ryan says.

“No.”

“They took you,” he says. “What details can you share? Vehicle?”

“They jabbed me with something. I passed out. Not sure how long for. I woke up in a minivan. Dolly was with me. They didn’t expect her to.”

“So was she an accomplice?” Phoenix asks. I hear his keyboard clicking. He’s tapping away, trying to figure something out. What exactly, I’m not sure. Something helpful.

“I don’t know.”

“Bro, you have to have an idea,” Ryan says gently. He’s breathing heavily.

“Are you fucking right now?”

“No.”

“Oh shit,” Phoenix says. “Ryan. Stop.”

“I’m not doing anything,” he says, but we can all hear him breathing heavily.

Shit.

“Look, all I know is that she says they wanted to talk to me. Then they took me. One of them said something about adoption stuff.”

“You think this has to do with Dad?” Ryan asks.

“Bingo,” Phoenix says. “Here’s what we’ve got.”

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Dolly

It's easy to untie myself. Oscar might be a billionaire, and he might own one of the biggest companies in the state, but I grew up with Craig as a brother and Randy as a stepfather. The two of them would tie me up when I got too mouthy, when I was too annoying, or just because they felt bored.

Things are different now.

I'm different.

As soon as I'm free from the binds, I slip out of the bed. For some reason, Oscar took my clothing. That's fine. I can find something else to wear. I rifle around in his dresser until I find a pair of sweatpants, a Kiss t-shirt, and some socks. There are no shoes randomly lying around in my size, but that's fine. The socks will work.

Quietly, I open the door to the hall. I pause, and I look both ways.

There's nothing.

I slip out into the hall, close the bedroom door behind me, and turn left down the hall. I know that Oscar is still in the apartment somewhere, but I'm probably just going to have to run out of the room when I get close.

Or, who knows?

Maybe he'll be in the bathroom and I can just sneak right on by.

When I reach the living room, I hear him talking on the phone. He's on speaker, so I know the other voices are Ryan and Phoenix Shadowvale. Oscar has always been close with his brothers, so I shouldn't be surprised they would be his first phone call.

"What is it?" Oscar says.

"Her brother has been in and out of jail for years." That's Phoenix.

Shit.

Phoenix is kind of a whiz when it comes to computers. He's the tech bro genius of the brothers, so it's no surprise to me that he's the one Oscar asked for help.

What bothers me is that this feels invasive.

Probably, I'm sure, as invasive as Craig abducting Oscar.

"For what?" Oscar asks.

"Does it matter?" Ryan says.

"It matters."

"Everything from lighting fires to stealing cars," Phoenix says.

Embarrassment washes over me. I don't like to think of my family history like this. It's bad enough that Craig did what he did today.

Do I really need to live with the fact that his past is coming up now?

"Why do you think he went after you?" Ryan asks.

“Dolly will know,” Oscar says.

“And where is she?” Ryan asks.

“In my bed.”

“Alone?” Phoenix asks.

“She’s restrained.”

“Dude. Kinky.” I can hear the mirth in Ryan’s voice, and I hate it. He doesn’t need to know that Oscar tied me up. He definitely doesn’t need to know how much Oscar liked it.

And there’s no doubt in my mind that he liked it.

I saw the way he looked at me as I slipped out of my clothes. I didn’t miss the way his pants tented. He liked what he saw even if he didn’t act on it.

And is that what I really want?

A part of me feels embarrassed. Knowing that the others know about me being tied up feels humiliating, but there’s also a part of me that likes this embarrassment.

How sick and twisted is that?

“Fuck off,” Oscar says.

“You brought it up,” Ryan says.

“I don’t ask you about Alex. Don’t ask me about Dolly.”

“Is there...what?” Ryan says. “Is there a thing between you and Dolly?”

“No.”

“Do you want there to be?”

“Not the time,” Phoenix says. “Where is Craig now?”

“No clue,” Oscar says.

“Do you have her phone? Can you call him?” Ryan asks.

“I destroyed her phone,” Oscar says.

“Good move.”

“It’s too easy to track people,” Oscar says. “We all know that.”

Yeah, especially me. I think of all the times Craig has slipped tracking stuff on my phone without me knowing it. I don’t want him to know where I am, and I certainly don’t want him to have the opportunity to trick me

I’ve spent so much of my life being tricked. I don’t need anyone to do that to me again.

“How are you going to find him?” Phoenix asks.

“I don’t know,” Oscar says. “I’m sure she’s asleep by now. I’ll wake her up in a little while and talk to her.”

“Are you going to talk with your words or with your dick?” Phoenix asks. There’s a

hint of laughter in his tone.

“Dude. Fuck. Off.”

“What? I’m just asking.”

“It’s a genuine question,” Ryan agrees.

“I’m hanging up,” Oscar says. “Just keep looking. Let me know if you find anything else.”

“Want us to come over?” Ryan asks.

“No. Stay away.”

“He wants to be alone with his new toy,” Phoenix says, but then Oscar ends the call. I hear him sigh, and I press myself flat against the wall.

“You can come out,” he says. “I know you’re there.”

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Oscar

How the hell did she think she was going to sneak by me?

Is she being serious right now?

Dolly doesn't make a move, though. She stays where she is, just out of sight, and she waits.

"Dolly."

Silence.

"I'm going to count to three, Dolly." I can't believe I'm pulling this out. "If you don't come here by then, you won't like what happens."

"What?"

There we go.

"I've got your attention," I say.

"You can't count to three on me. I'm not a kid."

"One."

"Oscar!"

“Two.”

Silence.

“Three.”

I move as I say the word. I slide around the corner, grab her hair, and tug. Dolly cries out, but we both know I’m not really hurting her.

“What are you doing?”

“I gave you an option,” I say. “You chose not to take it.”

“But Oscar!”

I have no interest in arguing with a petulant brat, so I haul her to my dining room table, pull out a chair, and sit. I yank her over my lap. She lands hard.

“What the fuck? Oscar, this is so messed up. You can’t really be planning on spanking me!”

“Oh, but I am.”

I stare at her ass.

“You look good in my clothes.”

“Look, I’m sorry about the clothes,” she says.

“You aren’t, but you will be.”

“I am! I am sorry!”

“Sweetie, you haven’t even begun to feel sorry,” I say.

She stills, and I run my hands over her bottom.

“You work out a lot,” I say. Her ass is tight and rounded.

“Oscar...”

“No more talking unless you’re apologizing or begging,” I say.

She chooses to say nothing.

I slide my thumbs under the band of the pants and push them down. The pants slide down easily. She’s not wearing panties, and her ass is now exposed.

Dolly whimpers.

“Why are you whimpering?”

Silence.

“Are you nervous?”

“No.”

“You should be.”

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Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 3:24 am

Dolly

What the hell have I gotten myself into?

I just wanted to escape.

Can I go back to work?

No.

Can I go back to my apartment?

Probably not.

Am I completely alone in the universe?

After this, yet.

Still, I thought I'd be able to get away.

That's proving to be untrue.

"You should be scared of me, Dolly," he says, and the truth is that a part of me is. Oscar is a very powerful man. He's part of a powerful family that does powerful things.

"Why?" I ask.

“I told you not to speak unless you were apologizing.”

“Or begging.”

“Ah, so you can listen.”

Once again, I fall silent.

Yeah, I can listen.

No, I don't want to.

I'm also not sure what's happening to me right now. I'm sprawled out over my boss' knee, and he's staring at my bare ass.

Should I feel embarrassed?

Yes.

Do I?

Absolutely.

Do I hate the feeling?

Not as much as I thought I would.

Humiliation mixes with excitement as I feel his hands on my skin.

Does Oscar know that he's basically massaging me? When was the last time anyone touched me like this?

Wait.

Have I ever been touched like this?

There was Mark, but he always just started fingering me. He never traced little lines over my skin the way Oscar is. Becky was great, too, but she always wanted to jump right to sex. She didn't do the thing where she just took her time.

I hear a smack before pain registers in my ass.

“Stay with me, pet.”

“I'm not your pet.”

“You are now.”

More heat washes over me.

The pain from Oscar's smack spreads out from my bottom, but I don't hate it. It's not as bad as I thought it was going to be. I kind of like it.

And he's right.

I was getting lost in my own head.

“I'm going to spank you now, Dolly.”

“I thought you just did.”

“That wasn't even your warmup, baby.”

I'm quiet for a second.

"Do you understand what I'm saying?"

"Why?" I ask.

"What are you asking, Dolly?"

"Why are you going to spank me?"

"How many reasons do you want?" Oscar says.

I can list a few, and he does, too.

"You abducted me."

"That wasn't me."

"You led me out of the office. You're an accomplice."

Yeah, that much is fair.

"You didn't save me when you could have. When we stopped at the apartment, you helped Craig."

Again, true. I didn't really feel like I had a choice. I also didn't really know what I was supposed to be doing.

So I made the wrong choice.

I've done that a lot in my life. Haven't I? I've had options, but chosen wrong. That's

why Craig turns to me. He knows he can manipulate me, and he knows I let him. I hate that about myself. When I started working for Oscar, I thought I was being offered a chance to be a better person.

Smack.

This time, I cry out.

“I told you to stay with me.”

“I’m not going anywhere.”

“You are in your head, baby, and I don’t want you spacing off.”

“You can’t control my mind,” I say.

“I can control whatever I want tonight, and what I want right now is to spank you, punish you, and humiliate you.”

“Why?”

“Because you’re a troublemaker and a brat,” he says.

“I’m neither of those things.” My cheeks heat.

“You’re both, but that’s okay. I’m going to beat your ass, and then I’m going to kiss the fuck out of you.”

I didn’t consent to this. That’s what I start to say, but then he starts spanking me, and my words disappear.

I close my eyes, and my body goes limp in his lap.

At first.

I'm flat across his knees as he smacks me over and over. I melt into him, and the pain starts to come in waves.

Then I start to fight.

I wiggle, but he holds me in place somehow. I think he has an arm on my back. Despite my wiggling and kicking, he keeps right on spanking me.

"Give up," he says. "Give up and learn your lesson."

But I don't want to learn my lesson.

I want to be free.

"Please," I say.

"There we go," he says. "I knew you'd start begging."

Tears are pouring from my cheeks, and I can't bring myself to stop. I want him to stop spanking me, but there's also a part of me that loves that I'm finally crying. When was the last time I actually cried? I don't even know.

"That's it, pet. Let it all out."

I realize that I'm sobbing loudly as he spans me over.

And over.

And over.

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Oscar

She needed this.

I can feel the moment she gives in, the moment she stops resisting, and I know that for her, it's everything.

“That’s it,” I say. “Just cry. Let it all out, pet.”

I shouldn’t be talking to her this way.

Dolly isn’t my submissive. She’s my captive. She’s here because I want her here. She’s here to pay me back for what she’s done, and she’s going to use her body to do it.

For now, I let her cry. I don’t even think she notices when I stop spanking her. Dolly’s ass is nice and red, just the way I like it, and I start massaging her skin.

“Let it go.”

She does.

She cries, and she cries, and she cries.

When the tears finally slow to sniffles, I help her to her feet. She reaches for her pants to pull them up, but I shake my head.

“No. Go put your nose in the corner.”

“What?”

“Go.”

I point to the corner of the dining room. Dolly looks like she’s going to argue with me, but she decides to play it smart, and she goes. She stands with her nose in the corner and her butt exposed.

Good.

I like staring at my handiwork. Right now, it doesn’t matter that we’re not in some spicy club. I don’t care that we’re not in front of a crowd. We’re not dating, and I’m not showing her off to anyone. This is just for me.

When was the last time I had something just for me?

It’s been a while.

“You look like a brat,” I say.

She sniffles.

“A well-punished brat.”

“I don’t think I’m a brat.”

“Too bad. I do.”

“And you’re in charge, huh?”

“I am in charge.”

I shouldn't be letting her talk as much as I am, but I'm starting to feel curious about the woman here.

“Why?”

“Because you kidnapped me, Dolly.”

She spins around and balls her hands into fists.

“Stop saying that! I didn't kidnap you! That was Craig, and I told him not to, okay? I told him not to.”

I stare at Dolly, and then my eyes slide down to where her pants have fallen even lower.

So low, in fact, that I can see her bare, shaved pussy.

Dolly sees me watching, and she flushes.

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Dolly

No.

No, no, no.

No.

This can't be happening.

Oh, no. It just can't.

I reach for my pants to tug them up. Before I can, Oscar is in front of me. His hands are on my wrists.

“No.”

“What?”

“Stay.”

“Oscar, I...”

I'm bare.

I'm completely bare before him.

It's not like Oscar is some random guy, either. He's my billionaire boss. He's my boss, and I'm...

Well, apparently, I'm showcasing my damn pussy.

"You're beautiful, Dolly."

"What?"

"Has anyone ever told you that you have a pretty pussy?" Oscar asks.

"No."

"Really? Oh, they're idiots," he says.

"I..."

I kind of like the idea of Oscar calling my exes idiots. It brings me a strange sense of satisfaction to know that he thinks they screwed me over somehow.

I feel that way, too.

"Take the compliment, Dolly."

"Thank you," I say.

"Try again."

"Thank you, Mr. Shadowvale."

"There we go," he says. "I knew you had good manners."

I flush.

Wait.

Am I supposed to be feeling this way?

His praise is doing so many weird things to me. Today has been such a fucked-up day.

“Did I really let you spank me?” I whisper.

“You didn’t let me do anything.”

“I could have resisted.”

“You were getting punished, Dolly. You were a bad girl today.”

“I’m sorry,” I say.

He reaches for my chin and tilts it up.

“You mean it this time, don’t you?”

“Yes.”

“Why?”

“Because you didn’t deserve to have Craig take you. I’m so sorry. Oscar, I really didn’t know they were going to do that.”

“What did you know, Dolly?”

I ignore the fact that his hand is on my chin. I try to pretend like his other hand isn't stroking my hip. His fingers are dangerously close to my pussy, and honestly, I want them to be right on top of it.

"I knew they were going to talk to you."

"And that was your job? You had to get me to talk to them?"

"Yes."

"What did they want to talk about?"

His fingers inch closer to my pussy lips, to my clit.

"Craig knows about your dad's adoption scheme. He wanted to threaten you about it."

"Why?"

"He wants money."

"Why?"

"He gambles," I say honestly. "And he spends. A lot. He owes people."

The wrong people.

This has always been my brother's issue.

"How was he going to threaten me?"

“He wanted to go public,” I say. “He knows a reporter.”

“What the fuck?” Oscar says. He drops his hands, and I instantly crave his touch.

“What reporter?”

“I don’t know,” I say quickly. “Really. I don’t. I just know that he said he was going to talk to her about doing an expose on your family unless you gave him what he wanted.”

“Shit,” Oscar says.

“I really don’t know anything else.”

“I know, Dolly.”

Suddenly, I want to help him, though. I shouldn’t.

“You could have Phoenix hack his phone,” I say.

“Phoenix isn’t a professional hacker,” he says.

“He knows people, though. Don’t you know people?”

“I don’t know how easy you think these things are, Dolly,” Oscar says. He drops into the chair, and he closes his eyes.

I want to move to him, to touch him. Before I can convince myself not to, I do. I slide across the floor, and I reach for him. My hand lands on his hair, and I pet it softly. He reaches for my wrist, and he holds.

“What are you doing?”

“I was comforting you.”

“Don’t do that, Dolly.” His voice is firm.

Because I’ve betrayed him.

Because I’ve hurt him.

Because I don’t actually get to love him.

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Oscar

I tuck her into bed, and I close the door, and I pace around the apartment. This time, I don't lock Dolly up. I just trust that she'll stay. My security system is top of the line, so if she tries to leave, I'll know.

I call Phoenix and Ryan, and I fill them in. Both of my brothers want to jump into action right away, but I want to sleep. I need the night to rest, so I head into my bathroom, fill the tub, and sink inside.

There's something to be said for just melting into a tub of hot, bubble-filled water and letting go. This has historically been a problem for me. I cling to things. I stress. I worry. I've lived quite a bit of my life filled with anger at my father for the mistakes he made, especially with raising us.

Ryan and Phoenix deserved better from our dad.

We all did.

When Ryan discovered that our father had been taking and stealing children and then adopting them out to wealthy families, he came to us. He shared what he'd found, but it was too late. The damage was already done, and our father was already dead.

How the hell are we supposed to heal from all of this?

I want to fix things, to make them better. I want to do whatever it takes to clean up the world, to create a place where things are nicer, better.

I can't do that, though.

And now Craig is after me.

Will he ever get close to me again?

No.

Will I be hiring more security for the office?

Absolutely.

The fact that all it took was Dolly inviting me out to get me into trouble, though?
That one hurts.

A shadow falls over my face, and I open my eyes.

"Dolly."

"Hi, Oscar," she says.

"What are you doing in here?"

"I couldn't sleep."

I sit up in the tub. The bubbles cover all of my best parts, but she can see my abs, my stomach, my arms.

"You should go back to bed."

"Oscar."

“What?”

“I want you to come sleep with me.”

“I’m not sleeping in that bed with you, Dolly. Be glad I even gave you a bed. I probably should have locked you up in a dog kennel.”

“What the fuck?”

“I’m just saying. It would probably be more secure.”

“You can’t lock me up,” she says.

And just like that, my hand is on her throat. I tug, pulling her into the bathtub with me. She flails around as she falls in. I catch her in my arms. She straddles me in the tub.

“Oscar.”

“Didn’t you learn your lesson about mouthing off?”

“I wasn’t-”

I kiss her, and she shuts the fuck up. My lips conquer hers, and the world stops spinning.

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Dolly

I've kissed a lot of people, but I've never kissed anyone like Oscar Shadowvale.

He kisses me with his hands on my throat, my breasts, my hips. They're everywhere all at once, and I am lost to him. If I thought I was getting out of this with my heart unscathed, I was dangerously mistaken.

"What are you doing?" I ask.

"Destroying you," he says.

"Why?"

"Because I want to."

Because I deserve it, I'm sure, but there's more to it than this.

He likes me.

He likes that I'm bratty and mouthy and troublesome.

He's getting pleasure from this exchange, just as I am.

I kiss him back, hungry for everything he has to offer me. He doesn't know just how much I need this, just how much I need him.

“Oscar, I-”

“Stop talking, Dolly.”

This time, I do. I let his body take control of mine, and I straddle him in the tub. Water is everywhere. I’m covered in bubbles. My clothes are heavy and waterlogged, but neither one of us really cares. I cup his face as I kiss him back, and Oscar comes alive beneath me.

There are so few moments in life that feel satisfying, but this does.

He does.

“You’re hard,” I say.

“And you’re wet.”

“From the bubbles.”

“Because you want me.”

“I know.”

He pulls back.

“You know?”

“Yes.”

“Have you felt this way for a long time, Dolly?”

“Yes.”

“And you didn’t want to tell me, did you?”

“No.”

“Why not?” Oscar asks.

“Because I thought you’d think I was crazy,” I say.

“How could I think a beautiful woman was crazy?”

“I don’t know,” I whisper.

“Stop selling yourself short, Dolly. That’s how we got into this mess in the first place.”

I stare at him, and suddenly, I pull away.

“Stop,” he says.

“No. I don’t want this. I don’t want you to touch me anymore.”

“Why? Because I told you the truth?”

“No, because you were an asshole about it.”

“I’m sorry,” he laughs. “Are you offended? Maybe think about how I was offended when you had me abducted.”

“Are you ever going to get over that?” I ask.

“It’s been hours,” he says. “So, probably not.”

“Oh.”

“Time for bed, Dolly.”

Oscar points at the door, and I quietly climb out of the tub.

“I don’t have any other spare clothes for you,” he says. “You can sleep naked. Leave the clothes here.”

For the second time tonight, I undress in front of Oscar.

Then I go to bed.

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Oscar

Sleep finally claims me.

I wake up on the couch to the smell of bacon.

“Dolly?”

“I’m here,” she says. “Are you hungry?”

“Yes.”

I don’t question why she decided to make herself comfortable at my house this morning. Instead, I sit down, accept the coffee, and watch quietly as she puts together a plate of food.

“Here you go,” she says. She places a blue glass plate filled with eggs, bacon, and fruit in front of me.

“What’s this?”

“I cooked.”

“Did you sleep?”

“I slept.”

“Did you?”

“Yes,” she says.

“How did you sleep?”

“You don’t have to ask me that.”

“I want to.”

“I slept fine, Oscar. Are you going to call the cops this morning?”

Dolly speaks so casually that her words don’t register at first.

“Dolly?”

“I mean it,” she says quietly. “Are you going to call them?”

“Why would you ask me that?”

“Because I know what I did,” she says. “I know it was wrong.”

“Why don’t you sit down?” I finally say. “I think we should talk.”

She sits quietly.

“You’re still naked.”

“Yeah,” she says.

“I’ll order you some clothes.” I should have thought of it earlier. “What size do you

wear?”

She stares at me.

“What?”

“What size clothing do you wear?” I should know this, but I’m too tired to think straight.

“I’ll just get my own clothes later,” she says.

“You can’t go back to your house.”

“Why not?”

“Again with the kidnapping.”

“But if you aren’t going to call the cops, then it doesn’t matter,” she says.

I stare at Dolly.

“For someone so pretty, you really are dumb.”

“What?”

“Do you really think your brother and Hank won’t attack you?”

“I don’t think they’ll attack me,” she says, but her eyes betray her thoughts.

“You are so fucking gorgeous,” I say. “Now, let’s talk.”

“About?”

“You. Tell me everything.”

I take my phone, and I send a message to my assistant. I ask her to drop off an assortment of clothes in various sizes, and she assures me that she will. I Venmo her a bonus for the trouble. She’ll use my credit card for the purchases.

“What do you want to know?” Dolly asks.

“For starters, how old are you?”

“Twenty-eight.”

“Where did you grow up?”

“California.”

“How’d you end up in the Midwest?” I ask.

“My dad took a job here.”

“What job?”

“I don’t know. He died shortly after we got here. Car wreck. I don’t even know if he ever actually started the job.”

“That must have been tough,” I said. She’d had to be alone for so damn long. I looked at Dolly, and I watched as her shoulders slumped forward just a little. Quickly, she pulled them back.

“It was hard, but we got through it.”

“You and your mom?”

“I had a little brother, but he was in the car with my dad.”

“Dolly.”

“It’s okay.”

But I’m on my feet and tugging her out of the chair almost instantly. I wrap my arms around her, and I squeeze.

“It’s not okay,” I say.

“It was a long time ago.”

“That doesn’t make it not hurt,” I whisper.

“I know. It’s just...I try not to think about them.”

“Why not?”

“Because I miss them,” she says.

“It never stops hurting,” I say. I think of my own dad, of my sister-in-law, of my nieces. Phoenix lost his family, too, but he’s not the only one who lost them.

“I feel like I haven’t quite learned to live with the pain.” Dolly looks up at me. “Do you have any tips?”

I laugh gently. “No, baby. I don’t have any tips.”

“Why are you being nice to me?”

“You’re mine now, Dolly.”

I don’t mean to say the words, but now that I have, I don’t bother trying to take them back. The words feel right. Everything about this feels right.

“I’m not yours, Oscar.”

But I kiss her.

And kiss her.

And kiss her.

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Dolly

Hours later, I'm fed, showered, and dressed in a pair of pajama pants and a soft sweatshirt that Oscar's assistant dropped off. I step out of his bedroom and into the hallway. I hear voices, and I pause.

"Just come on out," Oscar says. "It's Ryan and Phoenix."

"And Alex!"

I step around the corner to find the four of them standing in the main room.

"Um, hi," I say.

They all stare.

Alex is someone I almost thought I'd be able to be friends with. Judging from the way she's looking at me, though, that's never going to happen.

"I filled them in," Oscar says.

"Oh."

"They know it wasn't your idea," he says.

"Okay."

“We’re still pissed and think you suck.” Ryan glares at me.

“Understood.”

“Ryan!” Alex hisses.

“I’m just being honest.”

“It’s okay,” I say. “I deserve that honesty.”

“Sit down,” Oscar says, and I sit.

“What the fuck?” Phoenix turns to his brother. “What was that?”

“She’s my pet,” he says.

I feel my cheeks heat.

“Like, your submissive?” Alex asks.

“Something like that,” Oscar says.

“Are you two fucking?” Ryan asks.

“Not yet,” Oscar says.

They all stare at me. I stare at my hands.

“We found out more about your brother,” Phoenix says, saving me from my own humiliation.

“What did you learn?” I ask. I wonder if it’s anything I don’t know.

“He worked for our dad a few years ago,” Phoenix says.

“What?”

“He worked for our dad,” Oscar repeats his brother’s words. “We don’t know how. We just know they were involved in the adoption business.”

“Like, you think my brother stole kids?”

“There were both a lot of kids taken and also, not a lot,” Phoenix says. “If that makes sense.”

“It doesn’t.”

“There were about twenty-five missing children that we’ve been able to tie to our father.”

“Meaning what?”

“Meaning that our dad was a complete prick,” Oscar says. “We want to find the kids and reunite them with their birth families.”

“And what does that have to do with Craig?” I ask.

“If he worked with our dad, he might have access to records we don’t,” Oscar says.

“He tried to capture Oscar, which means there’s more to this than we know,” Ryan adds. “If your brother is trying to hurt ours, chances are that there’s something shady still going on.”

“And you think he’s going to come after Oscar again,” I say, realizing why I’m still here.

“No,” Oscar says. “We think he’s going to come after you.”

Oscar

There are few moments in life where I feel out of control.

When I'm skydiving, when I'm skiing, and when I'm bungee jumping are all examples that come to mind.

When I'm watching Dolly be hounded by my brothers for information is another.

"You can't really think he's going to come after me," she says.

"You know he will," Alex says. "Do you think he knows you're here?"

"No," I say. "They definitely think I either killed her or turned her in to the police."

"We've gotten a lot of fake calls in the time since you took her," Phoenix says. "I've got a team of people on it, but there's only so much we can do right now."

"What kind of fake calls?" Dolly asks.

"People asking about you, asking about Oscar," he says.

"And that's not normal?" Dolly speaks quietly.

"No," I say.

"Not normal," Ryan agrees.

“What happens next?” Dolly asks.

“We get back to work,” Phoenix says. “Oscar took the day off, but he can’t do this every day.”

“True,” I say. “The company needs me.” It’s not something I’m proud of. “I need to get back to normal.” I look at her. “And so do you.”

“Me?” Dolly asks.

“We spoke. We agree that it would be best for you to resume your daily duties,” Phoenix says.

“I don’t want to go back to work,” Dolly says. “I’ll quit.”

“You can’t quit,” Ryan says.

“You can’t make me stay,” she says.

“I can,” I tell her. “You’re mine now.”

“Stop saying you’re mine,” she says.

“Hey, it’s okay,” Alex says. She stands and moves to Dolly. She hugs her, pulling her close. “It’s seriously going to be okay.”

“You’re only saying that because you’re fucking a billionaire.” Dolly stage whispers. We all hear her, but I think she might have meant for us to.

“That hurts,” Ryan says. “She likes me for more than my big wallet.”

“Yeah, I like you for your big cock,” Alex says, flashing him a grin.

“Fuck,” Phoenix says. “Could you please just fucking stop?”

“Not sorry,” Alex says. She’s still hugging Dolly, whose head is on her shoulder now.
“But the boys are right.”

“They’re wrong,” Dolly says.

“Your brother won’t hurt you,” I say. “We’re increasing security.”

“I’ll still be exposed,” she says.

“You’ll be safe.”

“You don’t know Craig,” Dolly says. “I’ll never be safe.”

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Dolly

My first day back at work, I sit at the desk for three hours before I finally open my email. I've got over three hundred messages. Most of them are important, but I delete the ones that aren't. A few people come into the building. I get them checked in and direct them to where they're going.

My phone rings, and I answer it immediately.

"Shadowvale Industries. Dolly speaking. How may I help you?"

"It's me."

Oscar.

"Why are you calling me?"

"I'm upstairs," he says.

"I'm aware."

"Gretchen is coming down in ten minutes to relieve you," he says.

"What?"

"You're having lunch with me in my office."

Somehow, I realize that this once again is not a request.

“Oscar, you can’t just force me to eat with you.”

“I can,” he says. “You’re my pet.”

“Why do you always call me that?” I feel my cheeks heating again. Do I ever do anything but blush when I’m with him?

“Because you’re mine,” he says. I almost expect him to add, “and I love you,” but he doesn’t.

“I’m not yours, Oscar. I’m not anyone’s.”

“It’s okay that you think that. Be up here in ten.”

He ends the call, and I stare at the receiver for a long moment before I place it back in the cradle. A woman comes into the lobby and stands in front of the desk.

“How can I help you?” I ask. She’s got long, red hair that stretches to her waist. She’s wearing a black dress that goes all the way to her ankles.

“I’m here to see Oscar Shadowvale,” she says.

“Do you have an appointment?” I ask. This is almost always my first question. The number of people who walk in without an appointment and demand to see one of the Shadowvales is insane.

“No.”

“I’m afraid Mr. Shadowvale only sees guests by appointment,” I say politely. “I can

pass along his assistant's information if you'd like to reach out to schedule something."

"I'd like to see him," she says.

I press on a fake smile. I don't really want to play the bitch card today, but that's why the Shadowvale boys pay me a stupid amount of money. They could have gotten someone to work for them for minimum wage, but they pay a lot, and they get respect because of it.

"Again, I can put you in touch with his assistant," I say. Although, to be fair, I might not be doing that if this chick doesn't calm the fuck down.

"Is there a problem?" Brenton, the security guard on this floor, starts walking toward us.

I stare at the lady in front of me. I try to take a mental picture in case any questions come up later. There are cameras in the lobby, of course, but I think there's a lot you can really only tell about people in person.

"No problem," she says. "I was just leaving."

She marches past Brenton loudly. Her heels threaten to make permanent indentations on the lobby floor.

"What was her deal?" Brenton asks.

"I don't know."

"What did she want?"

“I also don’t know.”

“I don’t like it,” he says.

“Yeah.” Me neither. The elevator doors ding. Gretchen steps out and hurries over to me.

“Hey, girl,” she smiles. “You ready for lunch with a hot billionaire?”

“What the fuck?” Brenton asks.

Gretchen just grins.

“Yeah,” I sigh. I’m suddenly starving.

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Oscar

I set out the catered food and stare at the conference table. Is it enough? Maybe it's too much.

A knock sounds.

"Come in," I say. Dolly enters the conference room and stares at the assortment of food.

"I'm sorry," she says. "I totally thought this was just us."

"It is."

"Really?"

"Yes," I say.

"Oscar, you have like, an entire feast laid out for us." She stares at the food. She doesn't look unhappy.

"I wasn't sure what you liked."

"So you ordered sweet and sour chicken, enchiladas, quesadillas, burgers, sandwiches, and pasta."

"Which one would you like?"

“All of it,” she says, laughing.

“Let’s dig in.”

She stares.

“We can’t eat all of this, Oscar.”

“Don’t worry,” I say. “We’ll share. Make a plate, we’ll go into my office, and I’ll let everyone else know it’s a free-for-all.”

“You sure?”

“I’m sure.”

This seems to calm her down. Together, we each make a plate of food. We head into my office, which is connected to the conference room. I close the door. Then I send out a quick message on my computer to let the assistants and receptionists on this floor know they can come take what they want. The other admins are in a meeting, and I’m pretty sure they don’t actually need free food, anyway.

“Sit down, Dolly.”

“Where?”

“There are a number of seating options. Choose what you want.”

She stares at me.

“What?”

“I don’t want to choose wrong,” she says.

“You can sit in front of my desk in one of the chairs there,” I say. “There’s also the couch in front of the fireplace. What sounds better?”

“The couch.”

“Then go there.”

“I might spill.”

“You won’t spill, Dolly.”

“I might.”

“Dolly, I don’t care if you spill. Just sit.”

She moves somewhat reluctantly to the couch. She sits, crossing her legs. Then Dolly tries to balance her plate on her knees.

I set my own plate down on the coffee table in front of the couch. Then I tug the table closer to both of us.

“Dolly,” I say.

“Oscar.”

“Tell me everything you know about Project Sunshine.”

Dolly

“I don’t really know anything about it.”

“Then tell me what you know about your brother.”

“I know that he’s been through a lot,” I say.

“Explain.”

I stare at Oscar.

“Why are you like this?”

“Like what?” Oscar asks.

“So cold. So calculating.”

“I’m not being either of those things,” he says, but he is.

“Is it because you’re wealthy?”

Oscar stares at me for a moment. His food is waiting on the coffee table, but he’s sitting next to me. I could reach out and place my hand on his knee, but I don’t.

“When my parents got divorced, my dad got custody of me and my brothers,” he says.

“Oh.”

“It was very, very hard to be the child of such a pompous asshole.”

“I believe it,” I whisper. “I can’t imagine how hard that must have been.”

“Harder than it should have been,” he says.

Because he had an evil stepmother who hated him. I’ve heard stories. As far as I know, Oscar’s dad went through a couple of wives and many, many girlfriends.

“Being a teenager in that position must have been hard.”

“It was,” he says. “I just wanted my parents to be together.”

“I’m sorry you went through that.”

He holds a hand up.

“You don’t have to be,” he says.

“I still am.”

“You don’t have to say you’re sorry. It’s not your fault.”

I stare at him.

“Oscar, have you ever had a friend?”

“What?”

“Have you ever had a friend?” I repeat my question.

“I’ve had a friend.”

“You’re acting like you haven’t. Friends try to comfort each other when they go through something hard. I’m not saying ‘sorry’ to be annoying or callous or fake. I’m saying it because I actually feel sorry for you.”

“Oh,” he says.

“My family broke up, too,” I say.

He’s quiet, and then Oscar speaks, too.

“I’m sorry.”

“Me too.”

“So you know what it’s like.”

“To be alone? Yeah. To have a stepparent that hates me? Also yes.”

“My stepmom sent us to boarding school.”

“You and Ryan, right?”

“Phoenix was too old,” he says.

“Phoenix got lucky.”

“He didn’t. There were no winners,” he says. “We all lost.”

“And now you had to go and find out about your dad’s indiscretions.”

“That’s such a nice way to describe it.”

“Oscar, your dad was a rich guy.”

“What?”

“He was a rich boy.”

He stares at me, blinking.

“Your dad was so fucking rich that it’s amazing he didn’t have more scandals.”

“I don’t think that’s much of a comfort.”

“Maybe not,” I say. “Still, he took kids, and he gave them homes. There are worse things.”

“We don’t know what happened to all of the kids,” Oscar says.

“Then you need to find out,” I say. “You need to track them down, and you need to make sure they’re okay. Then maybe you’ll find out what my brother was really after.”

And maybe we’ll find out why my brother was so quick to be willing to throw me under the bus.

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Oscar

After work, we return to my home. Dolly traipses inside of the apartment, drops her purse on the floor, and sits down beside it.

“What are you doing?”

“I’m tired.”

“Baby.” I reach for her hands. I tug her back to her feet and into my arms. “Talk to me.”

“You?”

“Me.”

“I’m just...”

And then Dolly does something I don’t expect.

Dolly starts to laugh.

This isn’t some gentle snicker, either. She’s full-on rage laughing. Her head goes back, and when she comes back up, she wraps her arms around me, and she kisses me.

And kisses me.

And kisses me.

I pull back.

“What are you doing?”

“I’m giving you everything, Oscar.”

“Why?”

“Because you aren’t what I thought I wanted.”

I stare at her.

“What did you think you wanted?”

And what am I not?

She reaches for me.

“I thought you’d be so much more of a dick.”

“You’ve worked with me long enough to know I’m not.”

“I’ve worked with you long enough to know that it is,” she says. “But I now know that you aren’t just a dick.”

“I’m not sure if this is supposed to be a pep talk or not,” I say.

“It is.”

“It’s not going super well,” I whisper.

“I know, baby.”

She kisses me again, and this time, I feel a rush to my head. I let her chaos wrap around me, and I allow myself to just feel, to just be.

“We shouldn’t be doing this,” I say.

“You all talk, Oscar? Is that what’s happening?”

“You’re just hurting.” She’s scared, and she’s tired, and I’m here.

And even though I want her so much, so desperately, I also want more.

I want her to actually want me, too.

Right now, I’m not convinced that she does. I know that she’s having a hard time. We both are.

And honestly, yesterday is a day where I was so mad, I could have fucked the hell out of her and not cared.

But this is Dolly.

This is the woman who has nobody else to look after her.

And right now, I want to look after her.

“I’m not just hurting,” she says. “I’m a big girl, Oscar. I can take care of myself.”

“I know. You don’t have to, though.”

“Oscar?”

“With me, you don’t have to,” I say. I lift her up into my arms. She wraps her legs around me, and I just look at her.

She’s so fucking pretty.

“Dolly, let me take you to bed, I say.”

Then I do.

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Dolly

I think he's going to fuck me.

Only, when we get to Oscar's bedroom, that's not what happens at all. He undresses me slowly, carefully stripping away layer after layer of clothing, and then he spreads me out on the bed.

"What are you doing?" I ask, looking up at him. He's not getting undressed.

"Quiet, Dolly."

I watch him watch me. I bite my tongue. It's hard to stay quiet when he's looking at me like he wants to eat me up.

Oscar crosses his arms over his broad chest, and he looks at me.

What's going through that head of his?

"Oscar?"

He shakes his head.

Quietly, Oscar slips out of his jacket. He sets it on the back of the red velvet chair that rests just next to the window. He stares out of the window for a moment. Then he takes a breath so deep his shoulders rise up. When he turns, he begins unbuttoning his white shirt.

And I watch.

I watch the man who stole me away.

I watch the man I stole first.

“Oscar.” I say his name again.

He undoes a button.

“What are you doing?” I ask.

Another button.

“What’s happening?” I whisper.

The last button.

He slides the shirt off. It lands on the floor. He kicks his shoes off. Then his socks come off. A moment later, he undoes his belt buckle. His pants slide down.

I stare at Oscar in his black boxer briefs. His chest is covered in tattoos. A large ship features waves that appear to be endless. He’s got an octopus or kraken of some kind that laces up his left thigh. His right leg features more sea creatures, more mystery, more intrigue.

“Oscar.”

He climbs onto the bed and kneels between my legs.

“You are a mindfuck, Dolly,” he says.

“Am I?”

“You’ve got me feeling crazy,” he says.

“I’m sorry.”

“I’m not.”

He leans down, and he presses his lips to my belly. He slides his tongue up, carefully gliding between my breasts. He doesn’t touch them.

I want him to.

A moment later, he’s at my neck, and then my lips.

He dominates my mouth, owning everything I am. I reach for him, but Oscar pins my hands down on either side of my side. He kisses me harder.

Faster.

Deeper.

I arch my back up, pressing my breasts into the shirt on his chest.

Oscar laughs.

“Feeling eager, pet?”

“I’m not your pet,” I say.

“You always will be.”

He slides his hands down my arms, down my sides, and to my hips. As soon as his hands are there, he slides back. Oscar returns to that kneeling position between my legs.

“What are you doing?” I ask. “Why are you stopping?”

I want so much more.

“Tell me what you want,” he says.

“I want you to fuck me,” I say quickly. If asking him for what I want gets me that thing, I’m not embarrassed. I’m not scared to ask.

“No,” he smiles. “I don’t think I’ll do that.”

Oscar

“Then why the fuck did you ask me?” Dolly asks. I laugh, and I reach for her throat, and I tug her up to myself. I kiss her hard. Then I release her. She falls back onto the bed.

“Because it’s important for us to communicate.”

“Why?”

“Because you’re mine.”

“I’m not.”

“I’ll keep saying it until you believe me.”

“And what if I never believe you, Oscar?”

“You will,” I say. I smile at her, and then I climb off of the bed. I stride over to the wooden dresser that stands in the corner.

“What are you doing?” Dolly asks. “Where are you going?”

“I’ll be back.”

I open the top drawer. I pull out a jar of lotion, and I return to Dolly.

“You seem tense,” I say.

“What?”

“It’s been a long week.”

I wiggle my finger at her, gesturing for her to roll onto her tummy. Somewhat reluctantly, she does.

“What are you doing?”

“I’m going to help you with some of the tension.”

“You don’t have to.”

“Stop talking, Dolly.”

She’s quiet as I run my hands over her body.

“You’re very beautiful,” I tell her.

And she is.

“When I first hired you, I thought you’d make a great addition to our team,” I say.

“I thought Becky hired me,” she says.

“Becky was the head of the committee, but the final call was mine.”

“I never knew that.”

“I don’t like for people to know just how involved I can be,” I say.

“Why not? Isn’t that a good thing?”

“Maybe,” I say.

“But maybe not?”

“People have a lot of opinions about me,” I say. “Many of them are not good ones, Dolly.”

“Why’s that?”

“Because the world can be a pretty terrible place,” I say. “People can do pretty terrible things.”

I grab the jar of lotion and open the lid. Then I rub some of the cream over my hands, warming it against my skin. When I start rubbing her back again, Dolly melts deeper into the bed.

“You think they’re lumping you in with your dad, huh?”

“I do,” I say. “My father was a pretty terrible person. He did pretty terrible things.”

“Plus, he was an awful father.”

“I like that this is what you’re focused on.”

“He was. He didn’t deserve you.”

“That’s very kind of you, pet.”

“Why are you always calling me that?” Dolly asks.

This time, I don’t answer her. Instead, I focus on rubbing my hands over her skin, on relieving the tension she’s been carrying.

“Tell me about you.”

“What do you want to know?”

“Everything.”

“Suddenly, I can’t think of a single thing about myself,” she says. I laugh.

“Isn’t that how it always is?”

“Yeah. In college, I was always terrible at telling interesting facts about myself,” she says. “One of my friends was always super good at it. She told me her secret.”

“What was it?”

“Just lie.”

I pause my rubbing.

“What?”

“I lie,” she says again.

“You lie about your interesting fact?”

Dolly rolls over so she’s facing me.

“Oh, yes,” she says.

“What the fuck, Dolly?”

She laughs. The sound goes straight to my dick. Shit. I’m supposed to be the gentleman here.

“It’s a great idea,” she says. “Want to play?”

“No.”

“We can lie to each other.”

“I don’t want to lie to you, Dolly.”

“Then tell me why I’m still here, Oscar.”

“You’re here because I’m protecting you from your dickhead of a brother.”

“He’s not here. He hasn’t reached out. I’m safe. I’m fine.”

“You’re not fine,” I say. “I’m going to do whatever it takes to keep you safe.”

“You can’t protect me forever,” she says.

“I can try.”

“You don’t have to.”

“Dolly.”

“Oscar.”

“Don’t be such a brat,” I say. She’s so fucking mouthy. All I’m trying to do is give her a massage.

But she smiles up at me, and she smirks.

“What are you going to do to stop me?”

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Dolly

I am aware that I am playing with fire.

Like, I totally get it.

I'm playing a very violent, very dangerous game that could end in me getting spanked or killed or locked away forever, but I'm not actually scared of Oscar even though I should be. What I want from him is time and attention and his body. He makes me feel so fucking good that I can't stand it.

And when I mouth off to him yet again, and he tosses the lotion to the floor, I know that it's time to pay the dick piper.

It's time for us to take this to the next level.

He kisses me hard and fast and deep.

"Oscar."

"Shut the fuck up, Dolly."

He kisses me again, and this time, I wrap my legs around him. I pull him closer to myself, and I lose everything I've been holding onto. I let it all go. I just focus on him.

"You're so fucking perfect," he says.

“Please.”

“What are you asking for, Dolly?”

“Everything,” I say.

Him.

Us.

All of it.

He seems to know what I want without me really making it clear. Oscar slides down between my legs, pushes my knees apart, and starts eating my pussy like he’s been starving for it.

Holy.

Shit.

My boss is eating me out. I cover my mouth with my hands because if I don’t, the entire apartment building is going to know I’m getting devoured by the hot billionaire upstairs.

“Don’t do that.” Oscar pulls back and looks up at me.

“Don’t do what?” I ask, panting.

“Don’t cover your mouth, baby. I want them to hear your screams.”

“Oh my god.”

“I want them to hear you getting eaten out.”

“Fuck.”

“And then the whole damn building is going to hear you getting fucked.”

“Oscar.”

“Close your eyes, baby, and let me hear you.”

He dives back into me, sliding his tongue up my slit and settling on my clit. He massages my thighs as he licks my pussy. The sensations are too much. Everything is too wonderful. It's too much for a girl like me to handle.

I don't know if it takes a minute or an hour. I lose all semblance of time.

Then I come.

Fireworks erupt, and my entire body is doused in pleasure. Oscar keeps licking me until he's sucked out every ounce of pleasure I could possibly have to offer.

Then he pulls back, and he looks up at me.

“You're so fucking perfect, Dolly.”

“Come here,” I whisper. “I need you to fuck me now.”

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Oscar

It's an honor to fuck someone as goddamn delightful as Dolly. When I position myself over her, I claim her mouth in yet another kiss. Then I slide into her, filling her cunt up with my dick.

Dolly molds herself around me.

Her hands are in my hair and on my chest and grabbing at my ass as I fuck her hard and deep.

"More," she groans.

"Be patient," I laugh.

"Please."

"I'll give you everything you need, baby."

She's desperate, and her eagerness is such a turn-on as I continue to slide into her over and over and over. She groans as I plunge into her tight, wet pussy.

"Why are you so fucking perfect?" I ask.

"Please."

I slide my fingers between us. Then I lower them so I'm right over her clit. Her eyes

widen and then close.

“Yes,” she says.

“Tell me what you want.”

“More.”

“I want to feel you come apart,” I say.

“I want that.”

“I want to feel your pussy squeezing my cock.”

“Me too.”

“Baby, you feel so good. I don’t know how long I can hold on for.”

Her eyes flutter open, and she cups my cheek. She leans up and presses her lips to mine. Dolly kisses me with an eagerness I love. She devours me, and I devour her right back.

“I need more,” she says.

“Tell me.”

“More of you. More of this. More.”

I slide out of her body, and I reach for her hips. Without a word, I flip her over. Dolly’s on her belly now, and I haul her back toward me. I’m kneeling behind her, and I impale her with my dick.

She groans.

Yeah, that's the spot.

I once again begin to torture her sweet clit. This time, she groans into the bedsheets.

"Oscar!"

"That's right," I say. "Give me those moans, baby."

"I'm so fucking close."

I can feel her. She's clenching me harder with every thrust, and I meant it when I said I couldn't hold on much longer. I need her so damn bad.

"Please," she says.

And then she explodes.

Her entire body quivers as the orgasm washes over her. I keep playing with her clit until it is no longer pulsing, and then I finally allow myself to come, too. I thrust into her one last time. My hands are digging into her hips as I come for her, filling her up, and then I collapse on the bed beside her.

"Wow," she whispers.

"Wow."

"Oscar, that was so fucking hot."

"All you, pet."

This time, she doesn't argue about the name.

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Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 3:24 am

Dolly

I wake up in the middle of the night to find myself alone.

I slide out of bed, and I make my way down the hall to his office. Oscar sits at his desk in the dark. He's staring at the computer screen. I see the words "Project Sunshine" on the top, and I know he's looking for answers.

Is he ever going to find them?

"You'll hurt your eyes," I say quietly.

"Who needs eyes?"

"Finding answers?"

"Not really."

"Anything I can help with?" I ask.

He turns to me, and he holds his hand out. Instantly, I'm at his side.

"Do you know how I learned about Project Sunshine?"

"No."

"Alex."

“Your brother’s girlfriend?”

“Yes.”

“What’s she got to do with this?”

“Alex started working for Ryan because she needed money to pay for a private investigator,” he says.

“Sounds reasonable.” Or, you know, dramatic.

“She was looking for her brother, who went missing after they entered the foster care system.”

“Oh, shit,” I say. “What the fuck?”

“Yeah, it was bad,” he says. “Ryan started looking, and so did Alex. They sort of independently stumbled upon this project my dad worked on.”

“Sunshine,” I say.

“Sunshine.”

“So, what exactly is it? Or, was it?”

“We have such limited knowledge that it’s been really hard to find anything out,” he says. “What I know is that for a period of a couple years, my father facilitated twenty-five adoptions. Those are the ones I’ve been able to find.”

“That feels like a lot.”

“He found kids on the street, spruced them up, and sent them to live with wealthy families.”

“So, what, Alex’s brother was just one of the kids?”

“Yes,” he says.

“And did you find him?”

“Sort-of.”

“Come again?” I feel like I’m missing something.

“Alex and Ryan were sure they found Aaron. He had a new name, a new family, everything. They talked, and then they met up. They had a little reunion. Apparently, it went well.”

Relief washes over me. Okay, so maybe not everything in the world is trashy and bad.

Oscar doesn’t say anything for a long moment, though.

“Is there something else?” I ask. “Something you haven’t shared?”

“Yes,” he says. “When they left, Alex was sure that the man she met wasn’t Aaron.”

“Did Ryan believe her?”

“Yes.”

“So what happens next?”

“We’re trying to find him,” Oscar says. “Along with the other kids who are missing.”

“Have you gone to the police?” I ask. I already know the answer. Oscar leans his head against my tummy, and I pet his hair.

“The police don’t have the resources we do. They also tend to color within the lines, whereas my brothers and I have certain freedoms they don’t.”

“Meaning you can torture people if you want to,” I say, nodding.

“What the fuck?” Oscar looks up at me. He laughs. “You dirty little freak.” For some reason, I know this is a term of endearment. “How much true crime do you watch?”

“A lot,” I admit.

“Well, I was thinking we could break into buildings. Not torture people.”

“Ah.”

That makes more sense.

“We still don’t know as much as we should,” he says. “I’d like to talk to your brother.”

“But he’s like, gone underground.”

“He wanted to abduct me for a reason,” Oscar says. “I think we should give him another chance.”

My blood runs cold.

“Oscar? What do you mean?” Another chance? No fucking way. I’m not losing him. Not now.

“I just think it would be a great way to get more answers,” he says.

“But I can’t lose you,” I say.

The words are out of my mouth before I can stop myself, but I don’t bother trying to recall them.

“What?” Oscar stands. He places his hands on my waist.

“I can’t lose you,” I repeat.

“Why not, baby?”

“Because I’m falling for you.”

“You’re falling for the man you abducted,” he says. He strokes my cheek.

“I am,” I say. I don’t argue about the details this time.

Oscar smiles, and then he kisses me. His mouth covers mine, and our tongues fight for dominance in this moment.

“I need you,” I say, pulling back.

“I need you more, pet.”

“You’re everything to me,” I admit. It’s only been a few days, but I’m falling.

Hard.

“You’re the sweetest morsel,” he says, and then he kisses me.

And kisses me.

And kisses me.

Oscar

“I’m very aware that this is a terrible idea, but I want to talk to Craig.”

Phoenix, Alex, and Ryan all stare at me.

“Do you think this is a good idea?” Alex asks Dolly.

“No,” she says.

“And yet you’re letting him do it,” Ryan says.

“Um, I’m sorry. Am I his keeper?” Dolly frowns.

I smile. I love how feisty she is. She’s not afraid to stand up to my brothers even when they’re being intimidating. I really, really love this.

Phoenix nods. Looks like he respects her, too. He turns to me.

“What’s your plan?”

“Dolly has been texting him,” I say.

“What the fuck? You started the plan without us?” Ryan asks.

“I’m sorry, I thought you were at a shareholders meeting today,” I say dryly.

“You know I fucking hate those meetings,” Ryan says. “I only went because you’re such a fucking flake that you couldn’t go.”

“You know me,” I shrug.

“Are you two done?” Dolly asks. She holds up her phone. “Craig and I are going to meet in thirty minutes. He doesn’t know Oscar is coming with me, but Craig is sneaky. We’re planning to meet at the Blue Ox Cafe, but I guarantee he’s going to try to pull something weird.”

“Why did you say you wanted to meet?” Phoenix asks.

“I told him I had gotten away from Oscar. I said I had some new information that might help Craig get whatever revenge he’s after.”

“Are you sure this is a good idea?” Alex asks. “I mean, we don’t really know your brother.”

“Not even I know him that well,” Dolly says.

“And yet you’re the one planning this little reunion,” Phoenix says. “Interesting.”

“No jabs,” I say.

Phoenix holds his arms up. He wishes I’d calm down, I guess.

Fat chance.

“It’ll be fine,” she says.

“Because it has to be.”

Dolly

I sit at the cafe and wait. Craig walks in right on time. Hank is with him.

“Both of you?” I ask.

“What do you want, Dolly?” Craig asks. He sits across from me. Hank stands.

“Sit down, Hank.”

Hank sits.

“I don’t appreciate you letting that asshole take me,” I say. They both know I’m talking about Oscar. They don’t know I don’t think he’s an asshole at all.

He’s a soft, gooey man with a soft, gooey heart.

“And I don’t appreciate you letting him beat the shit out of me,” Craig says.

“You got beat up by a suit,” I say. Craig frowns. He doesn’t like to look weak. “I’m surprised you’re admitting it.”

I raise my coffee to my lips and sip.

“Are you going to go order a drink?” I ask. “This place makes a mean caramel latte.”

“Get to the point, sis.”

“I want to know why you wanted Shadowvale so much,” I say.

“You know why.”

“No, I know you worked for his dad.”

“For a time.”

“And I know you don’t like Oscar in particular. Why?”

Craig cocks his head. This is the negotiation point.

“What’s in it for me?”

“I know where he is,” I say. “I’ve been to his place. I even know the fucking password to get in.”

“You fuck that out of him?” Hank asks.

I bristle. Then I remember this is all part of the plan.

“Something like that,” I say.

Craig nods. He believes me. He’s always thought I was kind of a slutty loser, so this fits with his previous idea of who I am.

“Tell us,” he says.

“You first.”

He leans back and crosses his arms over his chest.

“Mr. Shadowvale paid me a lot of money.”

“And what exactly did you do for him?”

“I built the websites.”

“What?”

“No one knew where he was getting the kids,” he says. “The only thing people knew was there was a website with kids who were from great backgrounds: genius-level IQ parents. Rich parents. These were babies who had been bred for greatness.”

“And you built a website that, what, highlighted this?”

“Oh, I built multiple websites,” Craig says. “This was ten years ago. All of the kids had already been adopted. Shadowvale wanted to make sure that if people had questions about the legitimacy of the adoption agency as the children grew that there was something in place.”

“So, what, you just built a fake site?”

“Yes.”

“How?”

“Fake pictures. Fake testimonials. Fake stories. Fake families. I wrote biographies of parents waiting to adopt, I wrote stories about kids who had been adopted. I did all of it. We made it look real.”

“And then what happened?”

“And then Shadowvale’s wife started to ask questions,” he says.

“What?”

“Megan,” Craig clarifies.

“What did Megan do?”

“Nothing. Not at first. She was talking to someone at a function when they mentioned how much they liked working with Edgar to adopt their kid.”

“And she didn’t know anything about the project?”

“Nope.”

“So she asked him?”

“Yep.”

“And what was his response?”

“He wanted everything scrubbed from the web,” Craig says. “Literally everything.”

I have to be honest. There’s a part of me that’s wildly shocked my brother did any of this, much less without ever getting caught.

“Just because Megan asked a question.”

“Oh yeah,” he says. “He was afraid of her.”

“Are you seriously telling me that Edgar Shadowvale was scared of his wife?”

“He was terrified,” Craig says. “He’d done so many things to seem legit. He’d tried his best to make sure that everything looked like it was on the up-and-up. He only stopped doing the adoptions because he started making more on other ventures.”

“There must be something more,” I said.

“There is,” Hank says. “Megan’s sister was the one who scared Edgar into shutting everything down.”

Oscar

We don't have that much more than when we started, yet on some levels, we have an incredible amount more. I'm waiting close to the cafe where Dolly is meeting her brother, and when she leaves, she comes straight to me. We talk, and she fills me in, and then we go back to my place.

"He said he'll come by tomorrow," she says.

"So, tonight."

"Probably."

"If he's smart, he'll let you think we've got time."

"He really wants you. He's still convinced your brothers will pay a ransom for you."

"It's deeper than that," I say.

"Fuck."

"What?"

She turns and looks up at me.

"Do you think he's looking for a ransom from someone else?"

“Who?”

“Someone who was adopted,” she says. “Someone who would do anything at the chance to get back at you and your brothers.”

“No,” I say. “This is too specific. If he wanted to capture all of us, there are ways to do that.”

“Then why you?”

That’s the question, isn’t it?

“I think it’s time to call my mother.”

Dolly

Juniper is tall, slender, and fit. Her wife, Helena, is shorter, curvier, softer. The two of them arrive at Oscar's apartment approximately thirty minutes after he calls. They come in without knocking, and they both wrap me up in a big, shared hug.

"What's happening?" I ask.

"Just go with it," Oscar says.

"What?"

"Don't fight it."

When the women pull back, they look at me and nod.

"I'm Dolly," I say,

"And we're delighted," Helena says.

"A pleasure," Juniper agrees.

They turn to Oscar.

"What's wrong?" Helena asks. "You said there was trouble."

"It's about those emails," he says.

Juniper lowers her voice. “The ones about Project Sunshine?”

“Yes.”

Oscar has already filled me in on the fact that his mother was a great lead in figuring out what Edgar was up to. She used to work with him and played a major role in the company.

Quickly, he explains the situation to his mother. He describes Craig and the abduction. He explains what happened with Hank. He even tells her that the two of us are sleeping together now.

Juniper and Helena don’t even flinch at this information.

“Is he being good to you?” Helena asks me.

“Yes.”

“Good.” She nods, satisfied, and turns back to Oscar. “Tell us how we can help.”

“That’s the problem,” he says. “I don’t know where to go from here.”

“You think Craig is going to attempt to take you again,” Juniper says.

“Yes.”

“You have security on site?”

“On the first floor,” he says. “But I’ve commanded my people to stand down if Craig shows up. I don’t want any of them getting hurt.”

“It doesn’t sound like he’s the killing type,” Juniper says slowly. “If anything, I think he’s the least of our worries.”

“Why’s that?”

“He seems to be the muscle, but he’s not very muscly. And he doesn’t seem to know as much as we all think he does.”

“So, what are you really saying?” I ask.

“I think Hank is pulling the strings, Dolly. He’s the one you should be worried about.”

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Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 3:24 am

Oscar

It's midnight when the door to my apartment opens and the boys walk in. I'm waiting on the couch, sipping my whiskey.

"You knew we were coming."

"I suspected."

They stand in the doorway for a moment. Then Hank closes the door.

"You'll need to come with us," Craig says.

"Not just yet. I have questions first."

"What kind of questions?" Craig asks.

"How did you start working with Hank?"

Craig stills.

"What?"

"And when did he pitch the idea of taking a billionaire to you?"

"Why do you think he would do that?" Craig asks. He's flustered enough that I know my mother was right.

Shit.

Hank steps forward.

“You piece of shit,” he says.

“Excuse me?”

“You think you get to just say what you want, do what you want, be who you want. You have no idea what your family has taken from the world.”

“You were one of the kids my dad stole. Weren’t you?”

Hank stares at me.

“Do you have any idea what it’s like to be in a loving family that dies? Do you? To be thrown into the foster care system and just want your own parents back? My foster parents were fine. Great, even. Then one day, I was walking home from school, and I got lost.”

I watch, waiting.

“I found myself downtown near your father’s business. He was getting back from lunch, spotted me, and invited me in. He said his lunch meeting ran late, so even though it was closer to dinner time, he thought there would be time to munch. That’s what he said. Word for word. Time to munch.”

“And you were hungry.”

“He said he’d call my foster parents. He didn’t. Instead, he sent me off to live with a rich, wealthy family who wanted to train me to be their predecessor. You know the

most fucked-up thing? They'd had a son who had died. They wanted me to take his place."

"What the fuck?"

"And his name was Oscar. Like you."

"Oscar Prescott," I whisper. I remember him. He died when we were twelve in a car accident. I hadn't seen his parents again. I didn't know they'd taken in a child."

"My name wasn't Oscar. They wouldn't call me anything else. They wanted me to be their perfect kid, and when I wasn't, they tossed me out. I was sixteen by then, and I had nowhere to go."

"I am so, so sorry," I say.

"It's far too late for that."

"What was your big plan, Hank?" Dolly steps out of the hall. "You want to kill him or get money from his brothers for him?"

"Ideally, both," Hank says. Then he pulls out a gun. "But one is going to have to be good enough."

He points the weapon at me. Then he turns to Dolly.

"I'll start with you," he says.

As he fires, Craig shoves Hank hard. The gun fires into the ceiling instead of into the love of my life, and the security team from downstairs instantly rushes in. They grab Hank and Craig both, and they haul them out.

“I’m sorry,” Craig calls to his sister as they’re leaving. “I’m so sorry.”

Dolly

There are many moments in life where our choices can change things for us.

When Edgar Shadowvale decided to launch his fake adoption business, he was in it for the money. He was into a lot of things for money.

“Are you okay?” I ask Oscar. We’re in bed, staring at the ceiling.

“Am I okay that my father trafficked children? Not really.”

“Maybe he thought he was doing a good thing.”

“He didn’t.”

“Maybe he’s done worse.”

“He has.” Oscar sighs. “But this is the most fucked-up.” He sits up and looks at me. “I’m going to tell the world what he did, Dolly.”

“What?”

“I’m telling everyone,” he says. “I’m going to burn it all down. I have more money than I know what to do with. I don’t care about any of it at all. I don’t care about these companies. I never wanted to run them.”

“So you want to stick it to your dad, huh?”

“I do.”

“I’m with you,” I say. “I think it’s the best fucking idea, Oscar.”

“People who do shitty things need to be exposed for it,” he says. “Your brother and Hank’s lives have been irreparably damaged from what my father did.”

“You still don’t have all of the answers,” I say. “You don’t know what your stepmom or her sister did, or how they were involved.”

“None of that matters,” he says. “And I don’t care. All I care about is destroying my father’s legacy. My brothers will help.”

I nod, and I snuggle up against Oscar.

“You’re doing the right thing,” I say.

And I truly believe that.

The two of us connected in the most unlikely of circumstances, but now that I’m here, I don’t think there’s any going back. I need him more than I need anything else. I crave him.

“I need you,” Oscar says. “Although I’m not happy with how we got together.”

“What? You don’t think stealing your abductor and making her fall in love with you was a good idea?” I laugh. “What would be a better story?”

“I don’t know what would be a better story, but I can promise you one thing: you’re the only morsel for me.”

Phoenix

There's never been a good time to say goodbye to your family.

When you stand in front of the priest on your wedding day, you promise to love your partner forever. You believe it. At least, I did. Emma did. Together, we were supposed to be unstoppable.

Our dream was to conquer the world together. We'd give our money away, and we'd spend all of our time helping people.

Emma wanted to build libraries, and I did, too. We wanted to pay for classes. We wanted to create jobs.

And then we had Tamara.

And then we had Quinton.

Our children were perfect, wonderful little creatures whose biggest hobbies were making us laugh and making us think too hard.

I cherished every moment, and then they were over.

Car accidents are things that happen to other people. Not me. Not my family.

Only, then it happened.

Now they're gone.

It's been four years since I lost my wife and our children, and now, as I stand at their graves, I weep.

I do this every Sunday morning. It's just me and Gerald here. He's standing by his own wife's grave. He's doing the same damn thing because we're just two broken men who don't know any better.

"I miss you," I say.

Emma can't hear me, but I want her to know this anyway.

"I need you."

She's never coming back.

I kneel in front of her tombstone, and I whisper our favorite song lyrics. I sing to her until my throat hurts, and then I walk quietly back to the car. I slide into the driver's side, and I wait. I'm not sure what I'm waiting for, and I'm not sure how long I sit, but I do.

Then, finally, I start driving.

Somehow, I end up at the office. I ride quietly up in the elevator until I reach the top floor. It's here that I slip out of the elevator, creep down the hall, and head toward my office. There's always work to be done, and even though it's Sunday, I want to be here.

Most of the employees follow a strict no-weekends policy. I don't expect my staff to work weekends. Honestly, I don't want them there.

So imagine my surprise when I push open my office door, and the room isn't empty.

It's not even close.

The woman standing in the center of the room turns when she sees me.

"Oh," she says.

"Oh."

"It's you."

"Yes."

"You aren't supposed to be here," she says.

No, I'm not.

The story continues in *Dirty Little Billionaires: Book Three*.