

Rich Man (Blue Collar Bad Boys #3)

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Category: Action&Adventure

Description: Eric:

Being the wealthiest man in Blackwood Falls has its downsides. Namely, everyone in town hates me and assumes that I made all my money by being ruthless (not that they're completely wrong about that). It does have its perks, though. My money and power get me the type of female attention that I crave: the type that only lasts a night. When I first meet Amanda, I assume she'll be yet another woman who tumbles in and out of my bed, but as I get to know her, I realize that maybe the most heartless man in Blackwood Falls can fall in love after all.

Amanda:

My mom always tells me to marry well, since that will be the only way for our family to improve our circumstances. With a house that's on the verge of collapse, a sick grandmother, and a ton of debt for my nursing degree, it would be smart to take her advice to heart. When Eric Joiner, the wealthiest man in Blackwood Falls, asks me out, I say yes, knowing that he could be the key to solving all my problems. But as I get to know him, I realize there's more to this ruthless businessman than meets the eye. Wealthy or not, he's completely won me over. But when he takes me home, he sees firsthand just how different our circumstances are. Will he think I'm only with him for his money? Can our love survive the chasm that exists between us?

Rich Man is a standalone morally grey, dirty talker romance with some virgin fun.

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Amanda

It wasn't my intention to find myself in my current situation. Sometimes I wonder if life is just predetermined, if we have any true control at all.

"Amanda," my coworker says gently, pulling me out of my stupor.

I've been staring at the discharge paperwork in front of me for the last – I check the clock – fifteen minutes. God, it's been a long day. And it doesn't help that rent's due in a few days. I don't have it, and I've already gotten one extension.

Shaking my head to clear my mind of those thoughts, I smile at Mina, who's looking at me curiously, and say, "What's up?"

"I was just asking if the paperwork was finished," she says, a hint of concern in her voice. "Everything alright today? You seem a little distracted."

I wave my hand to dismiss her concern as I give her the paperwork, "I'm fine. It's just been a long shift."

"You're telling me," she replies compassionately. She glances at the clock on the wall. "Well, the good news is that you've probably only got one more patient before you can get out of here."

"Always looking for the silver linings," I say, giving her my best impression of a real smile.

It's enough to placate her because she walks off a second later, leaving me to collect myself.

I rub my shoulder and roll my neck a few times.

Ever since my grandmother moved into the already-cramped house I share with my mom, I've been sleeping on the couch.

It's not even comfortable enough to sit in for long periods of time, so I hate to think of the damage it's doing to my neck and back.

Not that I get enough sleep anyway. Since the water heater stopped working, I've been waking up early to take showers in the gym.

Uncomfortable as it may be, I am desperate to get home.

Unfortunately, I do have another patient today, though I haven't bothered to look at his information.

I'm fairly certain it's just a final checkup after a shoulder injury.

All I'll be doing is asking a few questions.

I get to my feet and wander over to the nurse's station.

I've made an unfortunate habit of tucking myself away in corners to work on reports, but in my defense, I haven't felt particularly sociable lately.

In fact, dread pools in my stomach when the other nurses see me coming over and say hello to me.

"Hey, ladies," I say, doing my best impression of someone who isn't so stressed about cash she's sick to her stomach every minute. "What're we looking at?"

"There's the chosen one," one of my coworkers, a new girl whose name I haven't learned yet, says.

"Chosen one?" I ask, glancing at the paperwork in her hands. I can't read the name on it, but I assume it's for my final patient of the day.

"Your patient in room 203 is... very good looking," she says with a grin, handing me the pages so I can read about him.

Eric Joyner. That's my patient's name, and for some reason... it sounds familiar. I wonder if he's a family friend or if I've met him in passing. No, that doesn't seem right. I think I've seen his name on a sign before, but I can't imagine where.

Pushing that thought aside, I scan the rest of the document. I was correct when I thought he was in here for a final checkup. All of his other information looks fine. He's a healthy man who got an injury while being active.

"So, he's good looking," I say, rolling my eyes playfully when I finish going through the file. "There are a lot of good looking men that come in here."

"You don't ever appreciate the eye candy," another of my coworkers chimes in. "But you should with this one. Not only is he hot... he's rich!"

That's where I know his name from. Eric Joyner is a real estate developer - an infamous one at that.

Most of the people in Blackwood Falls blame him for the rent prices soaring.

And, while I don't think he's single-handedly responsible, there's no denying his investment properties have certainly played a role.

In fact, because he's able to charge more for rent in his newly renovated properties, our landlord feels justified in raising our rent despite the fact that he's made no improvements to the property.

I roll my shoulders back, reminding myself that nothing about Eric's personal life or the way he makes his living matters right now. It's my job to go in there and ask some intake questions before I hand him off to the doctor. I'm a professional, after all. And god knows I need this job.

"Well, lucky me, then," I say to the other nurses. "Is he ready for me?"

"He should be," one of them says.

"Get his number," the new girl encourages.

I don't bother to hide the way I roll my eyes at her statement. She's lucky there aren't any veteran nurses standing around. They'd be on their way to HR right now to get her written up for even suggesting fraternizing with our patients.

For some reason, when I stop in front of room 203, my fist poised to knock, I'm overcome by a wave of nervousness.

It's strange, almost like something big is about to happen when I walk into this room.

There's no explaining it, but I have to take a few deep breaths before I can bring myself to knock on the door before sliding it open.

"Mr. Joyner," I say, peeking my head inside with my patient-service smile on.

"I'm Nurse Amanda, I'm just here to ask a few questions before we had you over to the doctor.

" I always use my first name with patients.

Not only does it put them at ease, but it also makes it more difficult for them to find and follow me on social media or, god forbid, at my house.

As I step inside, he turns to look at me, and my heart skips a beat in my chest. I recognize his face because it's been in the newspaper. I could tell by those photos he was an attractive man, but they don't do him any justice. I can't quite believe how gorgeous he is in person.

Eric has blonde hair that's combed back and gelled neatly into place. His brown eyes watch me inquisitively, and one perfectly maintained eyebrow quirks curiously. The edge of his mouth tugs upward, stretching perfect, very kissable looking lips.

"They must have sent me the prettiest nurse working here," he says, and oh my god, his voice is just as attractive as his face.

My face grows hot at his compliment. I clear my throat and look down at his file in an attempt to regain my composure. I say, "No, that was just luck of the draw."

"Then I must be the luckiest man on earth."

Is he flirting with me? Oh my god. He's flirting with me. I swallow around the strange sense of excitement that bubbles in my chest all the way up to my throat. I've been flirted with before by other patients, but something about Eric Joyner is different.

"I'm not sure about that, Mr. Joyner," I say, settling in front of the computer in the

room. I pull up his online chart quickly and scan the information. "Would you call severe shoulder strain lucky?"

"If it led me to meeting you, absolutely," he says, the words silky-smooth.

I clear my throat again, my face flaming. Even if I were in a position where I could respond without risking my professional integrity, I wouldn't know how. So, I decide to change the subject, to get this appointment on track.

"Well," I say, my voice high-pitched and breathy, "I've just got some questions to ask before I pass you off to the doctor."

"By all means, ask away," Eric says.

I let out a breath I didn't know I was holding, glad to be steering Eric's appointment into familiar territory.

I scroll down the file on the computer in front of me and ask about his activity level, his drinking and smoking habits, and his pain levels.

He answers them all respectfully, though there's a teasing smirk on his face that lets me know he isn't quite done with me yet.

Is it a bad thing that the thought fills me with excitement?

As I'm finishing up taking his blood pressure, he says, "So, Nurse Amanda, when do you get off work?"

I pause, the question catching me off guard.

It was different when he was just flirting with me, that was harmless; he was going to

leave and I wasn't ever going to see him again – except for maybe in my dreams. This, though...

It's not just blurring the line of professionalism, it's jumping right over it.

Turning him down is what I should do, but my coworker's words echo in my head. He's rich . Then, another voice, one that sounds exactly like my mother says, A rich man could take care of you. He could solve all our problems.

I stay silent for a little too long, because Eric says, "If you turn me down, I might have no choice but to get another injury so I have a reason to see you again."

And that seals it for me. He has money, he's attractive, and he's interested in me. I'd be a fool to turn him down.

"There's no need for that," I tell him, smiling as my heart races at the thought of what I'm doing. "You're my last patient of the day. By the time the doctor's done with you, I'll be off work."

"Good," he says, his voice curling around me like a warm hug. "Wait for me, Amanda."

I nod, unable to say anything else as I finish taking his blood pressure. When I finish, I put the cuff away and give him a wave, promising the doctor will be right in before I leave the room. Then, once the door closes, I pinch myself, not convinced that this is real life.

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Eric

I might be a little short with the doctor, but I don't think it's unreasonable. There's a beautiful woman waiting for me with big, green eyes and a ponytail of blonde hair that I can imagine wrapped around my fist as I fuck her mouth. As soon as I saw her blush, I knew I needed her.

Am I moving a little fast? Maybe. But I've always been the kind of man to go after what I want, regardless of what it is. Usually, my sights are set on properties or business ventures. But sometimes, I want a little action.

So, I'm going to do everything I can to make her mine. For a night at least. It's not my style to hook up with women more than once. Less chance of forming attachments and distractions that way.

I'm practically pushing the doctor out of the door when he gives me the information for a physical therapist. Everything he's telling me can just be sent over in an email.

I have more important things to do than listen to him rattle off the same things the physical therapist is going to go over when I get there.

Once I'm finally out of that damn exam room, my eyes scan the nurses. At first I don't see her in the throng of women gossiping at the station. My stomach sinks, and I'm overcome with an acute disappointment. As I'm starting to plan how I'm going to find Amanda, I see her on her own.

She's looking at something on her phone, chewing the nail of her thumb. Her anxiety

over whatever she's occupied with is palpable. I decide that I'm going to figure out what's giving her issues, and I'm going to fix it, whatever it is. This woman is far too beautiful to be stressed like that.

Immediately, I squash that thought. I don't have time for an attachment like that. Besides, the whole reason I want her is to have a little fun—I don't want to spend the entire evening listening to her cry about her woes.

"Amanda," I say, walking over to her and grabbing her attention.

She jumps slightly, locking the screen of her phone quickly before shoving the device in the pocket of her scrubs. The worry on her face is quickly replaced with a warm smile, the same one she gave me when she left the room. God, I'm tempted to kiss her right now.

I would kiss her if I didn't think this woman would change her mind about me. It's not like I've never been turned down before, but I'm used to getting what I want. And, truthfully, I have no idea what I'll do if she tells me to get lost.

I don't think I'll be able to do that. And my lack of resolve freaks me out a little. Maybe I should high-tail it out of here to prevent her from getting under my skin. But I know I can't do that either, not while she's looking at me with those big, green eyes.

"Everything okay?" she asks, her voice lyrical and less high-pitched than before, her head tilting ever so slightly to the side.

God, she's adorable.

"Yep," I say, grabbing her hand and giving it a squeeze. I count it as a victory when she doesn't pull away, and instead allows me to lace our fingers together. I start walking her toward the exit. "Doc mentioned something about a few weeks of physical therapy, but I've got a clean bill of health."

I know that's not exactly what she was asking about, but she doesn't need to know that I'm almost certain I could fall in love with her, if I was that type.

I'll deal with those thoughts after I get what I want.

Although, the more I think about it, the more I think that going through with this is going to damn me into spending every waking hour and using all of the resources at my disposal to make her mine – permanently.

I'm playing with fire here, but I don't care if I get burned.

"Where are we going?" she asks as we exit the building.

"My place," I reply, waving at my driver to get his attention.

"I thought you were going to take me out," Amanda says, that sweet voice of hers filled with confusion.

I wait to respond as my driver pulls my SUV to the curb in front of us. I open the door for her and help her in. Then, I climb in next to her, holding her steady in the middle seat.

"Take us back to my place," I instruct my driver.

I grab Amanda's hand again, reaching forward to tuck a strand of her silky blonde hair behind her ear.

As soon as her attention is firmly on me, I say, "As much fun as I think we'd have going out somewhere, I think it's best we're somewhere private."

"Somewhere private?" she says, breathy. There's a hint of delicious anticipation there. It's so thick in the air around us that I can almost taste it.

"That's right," I confirm, leaning in a little closer to her, noting the way those forest green eyes drift down to my lips.

"Wh– why?" she asks, her tongue darting out to wet her lips. I don't even think she realizes that she's doing it, because when I trace the movement with my gaze, her cheeks flush bright pink. It's a good look on her.

"Well, Amanda," I murmur, cupping her cheek with my palm, the heat of her blush warming me all the way to my shoulder, "I don't think bringing you out in public would be a good idea considering what I want to do with you."

She swallows so hard that I can hear the click of her throat in the otherwise quiet car.

I glance up at my driver, confirming he's wearing his earbuds – he knows to mind his business when I've got someone in the backseat with me.

Although usually the conversations going on back here are related to business, which is the farthest thing from my mind at the moment.

After a few seconds, Amanda finds her voice again. Her words are barely above a whisper when she says, "And... what– what do you want to do with me?"

I smirk, soaking up her innocence. It seems far too genuine to be put on, which only makes me want her more.

She's a beautiful girl, but from what I can tell from this interaction, she doesn't have very much experience.

That notion strokes something deep inside of me, and I nearly growl at how quickly my cock starts to fatten up.

"You don't know?" I say, stroking her jaw gently. When she shakes her head, the smirk on my lips grows even larger. "I suppose I'll just have to show you, then."

I watch as Amanda's brain goes into overdrive. It's adorable, her brow furrowing and her lips parting slightly. I take a moment to admire her before I lean in to kiss her.

A tiny noise of surprise escapes her as she processes what's happening. Her mouth goes slack for a moment, but I don't pull away. Then, when she finally realizes that she's being kissed, she returns my affection.

She kisses me slowly at first. It's experimental, and I wonder how deep her surprise runs.

Surely she had to have some inkling of my true intentions.

I hadn't even said a single word to her before I started flirting.

I'm fairly certain that men who intend to properly court a woman don't behave that way.

Or maybe it's her lack of experience, my brain supplies.

That line of thought only makes me harder for her. I grab onto her waist, my fingers digging into her skin through her soft scrubs. Her mouth opens slightly as she gasps, and I can't stop myself from plunging my tongue inside, swiping it along her teeth.

There's a lingering taste of caramel coffee. I groan, somehow surprised that she tastes so sweet. She's like a little candy, just waiting to be unwrapped. I don't even have to go down on her to know that her pussy tastes even sweeter.

Amanda's hands find my wrists, and she holds on tight. A slight whine escapes her as I massage my tongue against hers. Her responses are sloppy, but enthusiastic. It only feeds my idea that she hasn't kissed many people in her life.

Fuck, what if she's never kissed anyone before me? That shouldn't turn me on as much as it does, but I know that I'm a sick bastard. This girl is just barely old enough to be a nurse. She's about half my age, by the looks of her, and that only makes me want her more.

My driver takes a turn a little harder than necessary, and Amanda ends up nearly in my lap.

I keep my grip on her tight, but I pull back to gauge her reaction.

She's breathing heavily, and her lips are shiny with saliva.

Her pupils are blown, almost completely swallowing the green of her irises.

She's blushing even more fiercely than before, and the red in her cheeks makes her green eyes stand out all the more.

She's gorgeous. And, for right now, for the rest of the night, she's mine. I'm not going to waste this opportunity, even though it's going to hurt like hell when I force myself to say goodbye to her.

Without another word, I lean in to kiss her once again.

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Amanda

I've never been kissed like this before. In fact, before today, I'd only ever had one, very chaste kiss. That was years ago, when I was still in high school and just wanted to get it over with. It was anticlimactic and part of the reason I haven't been interested in pursuing relationships with men.

Eric kisses me like he's starving. His mouth is hot and insistent against mine, and I have no hope of keeping up with him considering my limited experience.

There's a niggling thought in the back of my mind that says this is going to progress; and, while I'm endlessly excited that a man as attractive as he is wants me, doubts start to creep in.

When he finds out I'm a virgin, will he still want me? The way he's moving against me, the way his hands rest on my waist and occasionally slide up my sides... it's obvious he knows what he's doing. Whatever expectations he has, there's no way I could ever live up to them.

Then, there's our obvious gap in social class.

I'm no idiot. I know that rich men like dating rich women.

They all live in their own world, a world I could never truly understand.

Eric essentially owns half the town. He's untouchable.

This man has enough money to buy anything he's ever wanted.

My family has been living paycheck to paycheck my entire life, and I'm up to my eyeballs in debt from going to school for my nursing degree.

Eric essentially owns half the town. He's untouchable. This man has enough money that he could have anything he wanted in a matter of days. Would he really want a poor girl like me? Would he really want me if he knew that I'm well aware of who he is and how much money he has?

Would he see right through this plan to get with him for a financial advantage?

I do my best to keep up with the movement of his lips, gasping as he deepens it. On instinct, I slide my hands up his arms. When they come to rest on his shoulders, I feel him smile against my mouth, and I take pride in knowing I did the right thing.

There's nothing I want more than to get lost in this kiss.

Despite my inexperience, I can say with certainty that this man is an excellent kisser.

It's just that every single time I feel myself getting caught up in the moment, my doubts resurface and threaten to drag me into the deep end of my anxiety.

I don't know if I'll be able to force myself to be with a man, even a man as good looking and obviously skilled as Eric, just because he has money.

My whole life my mom has told me that this is how you get ahead, that marrying for love is a mistake and it's money you should be after. Still, I never quite internalized that.

As if sensing my thoughts, Eric pulls away. His pupils are wide, swallowing the

brown of his eyes. I feel myself blush, and my heart pounds even harder in my chest. I've been found out. He's going to tell his driver to pull over and leave me on the side of the road.

Just as I'm about to open my mouth to apologize, the corner of his lips tugs upward. He reaches for a loose strand of my blonde hair and twirls it around his finger. It pulls slightly at my scalp, and despite my concern, another thrill runs through me.

"You've never done this before, have you?" he asks, his voice low with a lilt of amusement.

Relief floods through me. It only lasts a second, though. Quickly, the feeling is replaced with embarrassment. At least he doesn't look upset. I think about mentioning my high school kiss, but now I realize that hardly counts. If that was a drizzle, this is a hurricane.

"No," I admit after a beat, wanting to pull my gaze away from him but finding myself completely unable to. "I... I haven't."

He chuckles, leaning back to rake his eyes over my body. I'm fully clothed, but I feel like I might as well be naked. It doesn't take a mind-reader to know that that's what he's imagining.

"You don't have to be worry, baby," he practically coos, his big hand releasing the stray strand of hair and sliding into my roots. The pet name does something to me, twists my insides in a way that's so delightful it's almost uncomfortable. "I'll make you feel better than you've ever felt before."

I'm frozen in place. He's into me. He wants me. I think I want him too, but there's still that nagging feeling that I'm only doing this for money. This isn't how I imagined my first time with a man would go. I thought I'd be in love, not executing

some spur of the moment, poorly thought out plan.

Eric doesn't give me much more time to mull it over. He pushes me down, my back hitting the leather bench. Giving me one last kiss, he hooks his fingers in the waistband of my scrubs and panties, pulling both garments down with practiced ease.

With my most private parts fully exposed to him, I become acutely aware of the presence of another person. I glance toward the driver, but he seems to be focused on the road. Nothing about his body language indicates that he has any idea what's going on less than a three away from him.

Eric laughs again, spreading my legs as much as he can and leaning in to kiss my inner thighs. He says, "You don't have to worry about him. He's a professional, and he's wearing noise cancelling earbuds. You can be as loud as you need to be. Just focus on me."

This time, he waits for me to nod before getting back to business. His lips are hot and assured on the sensitive skin between my legs. He leaves a trail of wet kisses from mid-thigh to just short of my core. Instinctively, I try to close my legs, but he clicks his tongue with a smirk on his face.

"Don't try to hide this gorgeous pussy from me, baby girl."

Again with that pet name, making me go insane and turning me into putty for him. As soon as my body relaxes, he's back against me. With a quickness that tells me he doesn't want me to change my mind, his mouth is against my opening.

He puffs hot air against my wet folds. I shudder in anticipation of what's to come. I've read about this act, but I never considered what it might be like to be on the receiving end. The first swipe of his tongue against my most sensitive parts makes me keen. I slap a hand over my mouth in an attempt to keep quiet. Between my legs, Eric's movements stop. He lifts his head up, shaking it slightly.

"I told you that you could let all those sounds out. I want to hear you, Amanda," he says before resuming his attention.

As soon as his head is back in place, his tongue darts out.

The noise that escapes my throat is nearly a scream.

I know that he told me not to hold back, but I'm almost embarrassed by how strongly I'm affected by his ministrations.

He hasn't even done much, and already I feel like I'm about to fall apart.

Eric takes my sound as confirmation that I'm enjoying the attention. He repeats the motion as he shifts my body, putting my legs over his shoulders as he moves in closer. The space in the SUV is cramped, but it doesn't seem to make a difference to him.

His tongue works through my folds, and he slurps up my juices greedily. All at once, I can't believe I was on the fence about doing this. So what if I only agreed at first because of his money and my dire financial situation? The way he's eating me out is enough to make me fall in love with him.

On instinct, I reach down to thread a hand through his blond locks. I feel like I need something to keep me present. His mouth feels so divine against me that I worry my consciousness will float away and be replaced with pure pleasure.

I wonder if that would be such a bad thing.

I thank every higher power that I'm holding onto him, because he shifts his tongue from my folds to just above them. Sharp shocks of pleasure rocket through me, and this time, there's no hope of holding back the moan. I pray that those noise cancelling earbuds that the driver's wearing are good.

Eric hums against me before latching onto the little bundle of nerves that's been driving me crazy. I push my hips up against him, practically begging for more. It's so good, and I can't believe that this is what my miserable, boring day has led to.

"Oh my god, Eric," I whine, my fingers tightening in his hair. It's the only thing I'm able to do. I'm pinned against the seats, his body holding me down. "I–"

He rubs his thumb against my thigh gently. The suction of his mouth doesn't let up. In fact, he flicks his tongue over that nub of nerves. I realize that this is his way of encouraging me to go over the edge.

It only takes a few more seconds of his attention for my body to explode. The pressure I didn't even realize was building in my abdomen releases. I shake, and my thighs clench around Eric's head.

A sensation like I've never felt before rages through my body. Tremors erupt from my core to my limbs. I moan so loudly that my voice breaks and no sound comes out.

I'm not sure how long the orgasm lasts. My perception of time is warped. It isn't until Eric sits up, wiping his mouth and reaching for my discarded panties and scrub pants that I take stock of my surroundings.

We've stopped moving, and the two of us are alone in the SUV. As I get dressed, I glance out the window. My jaw drops when I see the house.

I knew Eric was rich, but seeing such a blatant display of that wealth is something

else.

This house isn't even a house. It's a mansion.

From what I can see, the multi-colored stone structure is at least three stories tall.

The yard is immaculately kept, and the porch overlooking the mountains looks like the perfect place to spend an evening.

I've never seen anything like this in my life, and I'm glued to my seat. It isn't until Eric opens my door, offers me his hand, and gives me a charming smile, saying, "Come on, baby. There's more inside," that I get allow myself to be led to the house.

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Eric

I can tell that Amanda's impressed by the house, and in her defense, I was too when I first bought it.

I came from nothing, so when my first investments started to turn major profits, I splurged.

I doubt I'd buy something so flashy now.

This place is far too big for me and the small staff I keep, but it certainly has its perks.

I'm experiencing one of those perks right now, as I get to watch wonder bloom on Amanda's face as I lead her through the foyer to the grand staircase that serves as the focal point of the room.

I support her weight as we walk up the stairs, letting her take in the chandelier that hangs from the ceiling and the commissioned artworks that adorn the walls.

It's best she takes a minute to breathe after that orgasm I gave her in the car, because once I get her alone, I'm going to be relentless.

My cock has been aching since I started kissing her.

Honestly, it's a testament to my willpower that I don't pin her against the wall right here and take her on the staircase.

On the landing, she stops, staring at the painting of Blackwood Falls. A friend's mother painted it, and it's the first piece of art I ever commissioned. It's always been my favorite, and from the way Amanda's lips quirk, it seems to be hers, too.

I find myself staring at her longer than I should. My fingers itch to reach out and caress the soft curve of her cheek. She looks like she belongs here, and my mind provides flashes of something that looks suspiciously like domestic life with her. Something akin to longing aches in my chest.

I force it down, stomping it out with all my might.

Still, I can feel the ember continuing to burn.

With a little more force than necessary, I tug Amanda away.

I need to get her to my bedroom and fuck this sensation out of my system.

Then, I can send her on her way and forget all about this encounter.

But deep down I know I'm not going to forget about Amanda anytime soon. Something tells me that even if she leaves, I'm going to remember her for the rest of my life. Fuck... this is why I stay away from women. I don't have time for these kinds of distractions.

Once we're inside my bedroom, I slam her back against the door, attacking her mouth with mine. She makes a surprised noise, but seems to melt into the kiss. She lets me take what I want, and it's more intoxicating than any spirit I've had.

With one hand fisted in her hair and the other gripping her waist tightly, I spin us around. I don't break the kiss as I walk her backward toward my bed. In fact, our connection stays steady even as I push her back onto the mattress.

I grind my aching length against her as I continue to explore her mouth possessively. She moans, the sound slipping out from between our lips. I swallow it down greedily before repeating the same motion and making her whine wantonly.

In the back of my head, I know that I'm being too rough, that I'm going too fast. This is Amanda's first time. Someone as sweet as her deserves better, but I can't allow myself to give her that. If I do, I'll fall in love with her.

It's best for both of us in the long run if I make it clear that this is just sex. Although, when I think of voicing that thought, my throat tightens painfully. It feels almost like an allergic reaction.

"We have to get you out of these clothes," I growl, pulling away from her.

My tone is ruthless, rugged, and mean. I don't care, though.

It's best for us both if she leaves my house thinking I'm just a sex-hungry monster.

At the end of the day, that's what I am.

It's not like I could provide her the softness, the care, and the consideration that she deserves, even if I were to pursue her.

The reputation I have around Blackwood Falls of being a money-hungry, inconsiderate bastard didn't come from nowhere. When you come from nothing, you have to fight tooth and nail to get what you want. There isn't any point in pretending I didn't step on people to get where I am.

Amanda's a nurse. Her entire profession is helping people, very likely at the expense of her own mental and physical well-being. If I did somehow convince her to give me a chance, I'd only corrupt her, ruin that sweetness with my own wickedness. I grab onto the hem of her top and yank it over her head, attempting to quiet the thoughts in my head.

I've never been like this with a woman before.

Usually, the only thing I care about is getting off and getting her out of my space as quickly as possible.

Clearly, I'm moving too slowly if I'm giving myself time to conjure up... whatever those thoughts are.

"Fuck, you're gorgeous," I tell her as I reach around to her back to unclasp her bra. I pull it from her body, tossing it aside to stare at her perky tits, the dusty pink nipples hardened into delectable little nubs. "Such a hot little body."

I pinch one of her nipples between my thumb and forefinger. Amanda's body starts at the contact. My name escapes her lips, broken and needy, as I roll the nub of nerves between the pads of my fingers.

"You make such filthy sounds, little girl," I growl, leaning forward and nipping her collarbone hard enough to leave a mark. Again, I know I'm being rougher than I should, but Amanda isn't complaining. "Now, let's see that pretty little pussy again. Bet it's still sopping wet from my mouth."

Amanda whines, her capacity for coherent speech seemingly stolen from her. It's such a good look on her, and my cock aches with need. She's something out of my wet dreams.

I thank god for the elastic waistband of her blue scrub pants. They slide off her legs even easier with the additional space my bedroom provides. Her panties come along with them, and I knock those damn plastic clogs from her feet as I rip her remaining clothing off.

With her laid bare in front of me, I take a moment to admire the sight.

Those scrubs she wears for work hide her gorgeous, feminine form.

Without the slightly baggy clothes, I'm able to trace the curve of her hips with my hungry eyes.

When I reach out to run my fingertips over her soft skin, gooseflesh raises on her arms, and she lets out a stuttering, shaky breath.

There's a burning desire in my gut to draw this out as long as possible, but my cock twitches painfully in the confines of my jeans. I'm sure there's a wet spot on my boxers from how long I've been waiting to get inside her.

"Can't wait to get inside this tight little pussy," I say, swiping my thumb through her wetness, groaning when I stick it in my mouth to get another taste of her divine sweetness.

I strip myself of my clothing in a flash.

Then, I position myself on top of her, using my thighs to push her legs apart to grant me easier entry.

The thought of using a condom flashes through my mind, but I can't be bothered to stop and get one.

That, and there's a sick part of me that hopes I get her pregnant, that I pump her full of my seed and she grows round with my child.

"Are you ready for my fat cock, little girl?" I ask, looking into her wide, green eyes and suppressing a shudder at the desire I find there.

"Yes, daddy," she says.

Half a second later, her body goes still. Her mouth opens and closes. My own body reacts in a visceral way. Those words punch me right in the gut, and before Amanda can say anything else, I'm plunging inside her tight, wet pussy, not bothering to work her up to taking the full thing.

"If you want daddy's cock, you'll get it," I say, my limbs shaking with effort to keep from blowing my load right there.

I can't recall a time another woman's calling me 'daddy' has inspired this kind of response in me. Maybe it's Amanda's tone or the look on her face or the fact that I'm the first man to ever touch her. Whatever the reason, I'm feral with lust.

My pace is bruising, and the sound of my balls slapping against her ass fills the room. She moans, wanton and loud, adding to the symphony of the noises of our pleasure. Apparently, Amanda likes it rough.

Fuck, this woman might just be the girl of my dreams.

"You're so fucking tight," I groan, speaking to distract myself from my thoughts. "And so goddamn wet. You like it when daddy fucks you rough like this? You like being put in your place, little girl?"

Now that I'm inside her, I can feel the way her body reacts to the words. Her pussy squeezes around me, and her breath hitches. It drives me closer to the edge, and the familiar coil of my orgasm begins to tighten in my gut.

After a few seconds, she finds her voice and manages to whimper, "Yes, daddy."

And, fuck, if that doesn't do something to me. My insides twist, and possessiveness flares. This girl is mine . No one else can have her. I'll die before she calls anyone else 'daddy', before anyone else sees her like this.

"That's right," I growl. I lean in, kissing her possessively. I nip at her bottom lip, thrust my tongue deep into her mouth. "You love it when daddy destroys this tight pussy. I bet you're about to cum again, aren't you? I can feel the way you're getting tighter. You gonna cum on this cock?"

"Uh huh," she confirms, her body bouncing with the intensity of my thrusts.

I can feel her orgasm seconds before it takes her over as I drill into her. Angling my hips slightly, I'm able to hit the spot that drives her crazy. She clenches around me hard, her nails digging into my back as her pleasure takes her.

"That's right," I praise, chasing my own release now. "Cum for me, little girl. Cum on daddy's cock. Just like that."

Before her orgasm completely subsides, I spill my load inside her. My breath catches on an unbridled moan. As pangs of ecstasy shoot through my being, all of my senses and my thoughts are filled with Amanda.

My climax rages through me, and I come to the realization that Amanda is it for me. Maybe I'm not her ideal man, maybe I'm too inconsiderate for someone as sweet as her, but I'm going to convince her. I'm going to give her everything she's ever wanted and more. I'm not going to let her leave.

Unfortunately for me, it seems like the universe has other plans. As I'm pulling out, her phone goes off. She scrambles out of bed before I can grab her and instruct her to

ignore whoever's texting her.

"That's my mom," she sighs, sounding stressed. She glances from her phone to me. "I need to get home. She needs help with my grandma."

"You should stay," I say, attempting to shut down that line of thought.

"I can't," she sighs, starting to get dressed. After a beat, she hesitates, then says, "But I wish I could."

"We'll see each other again," I say, the conviction in my words surprising even myself.

She smiles shyly before she finishes putting on her clothes. She checks her wallet, then furrows her eyebrows and asks, "Do you think your driver could give me a ride? I, uh... I don't have cash for a cab."

"That's not a problem," I say, pulling myself to my feet and walking over to give her a kiss. "I'll ride with you."

A look of shame crosses her features, but she hides it quickly. "You don't have to do that."

"I insist," I reply, leaving no room for argument. Then, I say something that I never thought I'd say to anyone. "I just want to make sure you get back safe."

Her face goes bright red, and she blinks once. Twice. Finally, she averts her gaze and mumbles, "Okay."

"Good," I say, hooking my finger under her chin so I can look her in the eyes again. I press our lips together. "Let me get dressed and we'll head out."

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Amanda

Sitting in the back of Eric's SUV, his driver wearing those noise cancelling earbuds, I can't stop myself from fidgeting nervously. I'm finding myself starting to like Eric. Maybe it's just the sex, but I don't feel like I'm just interested in him for his money anymore.

But that just makes what's about to happen even worse. I'm about to lose all my chances with him when he sees the hovel I live in. One look at my house, and he'll correctly assume my interest was born of financial need. And while that's true, it's not quite how I feel anymore.

"Helping with your grandma, huh?" Eric asks, pulling me out of my spiraling thoughts.

"Uh, yeah," I say, smiling at him. "She got sick during the pandemic, and she's been weak ever since.

She had some preexisting conditions. We almost lost her.

" I shake my head, realizing that he probably doesn't want to hear about my grandmother's illness.

"Sorry. Anyway, she's mostly okay now. She just needs some help sometimes."

There's a look in Eric's eyes that I don't quite recognize. He blinks it away quickly, making me wonder if I imagined it. There was something vulnerable there. I'm sure

of that.

"No need to apologize," he says, and even though his mask is back on, I can detect the hint of emotion there.

It intrigues me. From everything I've heard and seen, Eric is unshakable, not caring about anything.

"I lost my grandpa when he got sick. I was barely out of high school. I know how hard it can be." He clamps his lips together, looking troubled at his own admission.

"I'm so sorry," I say, reaching out to grab his hand in an attempt to provide comfort.

"It's okay," he says, expertly clearing the vulnerability from his voice. "It's just part of life."

"That doesn't make it any easier," I point out.

He smiles, and there's something so genuine in his expression that it makes my heart clench in my chest. It's like I'm getting a glimpse of the man underneath the hard exterior. There's more to him, and I desperately want to know everything.

"You're too sweet for your own good," he says as he leans in close to capture my lips in a kiss.

His hands slide slowly up my inner thighs as his mouth slides against mine.

He rests his palm over my clothed private parts.

We part, and he rests his forehead against mine.

"Every single part of you is sweet, Amanda."

I gasp as he slips his hand into my pants, his fingertips brushing against me over my underwear. He kisses me harder, taking the opportunity to lick into my mouth as he teases me. My body reacts to him without my permission, my hips pushing into his hand to get more friction where I need it most.

"Ask for what you want, little girl," he tells me, the pet name sending a rush of wetness between my legs. "You can have anything you want if you ask for it."

For some reason, being called 'little girl' makes my head go blank. The only thing I'm able to say to his request is, "More, daddy."

Thankfully, Eric doesn't make me ask for more. He seems to understand the effect his words have on me. So, without any further prompting from me, he repositions his hand inside my panties, his fingertips brushing against my wet folds.

"Yes," I hiss, unable to keep quiet as he begins to massage me.

"That's it," he says as he circles my clit expertly. "Let daddy hear you."

I turn my face, hiding against his neck. I think the windows of the SUV are tinted, but I don't want to risk anyone seeing me like this. The driver's presence still lingers in my mind despite the fact that I'm already shaking from pleasure.

As Eric plays with my clit, I let out whines and moans that earlier today I would have found embarrassing. With him, I don't care. I want him to hear me. I like that he likes the way I sound. The fact that he enjoys this heightens my pleasure.

I get closer to my release, and I grab onto his forearm desperately. It's partially to keep myself steady, but mostly because I need to touch him. I long for more, to be

closer to him. I curse my luck, hating that having sex like we did earlier isn't an option right now.

Maybe if the drive were longer... Maybe if we were the only ones in the vehicle... Maybe...

My train of thought cuts off abruptly. An intense wave of pleasure hits me. My stomach clenches, and the pressure that is now becoming familiar, that signals my impending orgasm, builds to nearly its breaking point.

"Eric," I whimper, bucking up against him. "Daddy, daddy. I-"

"Just let it out, little girl," he whispers, his voice husky with arousal. "I'm right here, I've got you. Cum on my fingers, baby."

I nod, wanting to do exactly that for him. I'd do anything he asks. After a few more seconds of his focused movements, I feel my peak approaching.

With a jolt, my orgasm slams into me. It overtakes my body, and I shake hard. I'm acutely aware of the fact that I'm saying something, but I'm too far away from myself to make out the words.

My peak feels divine, and the way Eric is touching me, calling me his little girl, feels like nothing short of worship. I understand with sharp clarity the reason for every love song and poem ever written. Although words could never accurately describe the pleasure that I'm feeling.

Slowly, my climax wanes. I pull Eric's hand away from me weakly. The good feelings he's giving me are becoming sharper, bordering on painful. I don't think I dislike the sensation, but that isn't something I want to experience in the back of a car with a driver in the front seat.

As I'm catching my breath, Eric brings his fingers to his mouth. I watch, my heartbeat pounding in my ears as he slides them between his lips, licking off my taste. I wonder if it's normal for the action to turn me on so much, especially less than a minute after having an orgasm.

"Fuck, I mean it, Amanda," he says when he takes his fingers away from his lips, leaning in close to me, his breath hot against my mouth. "Every single part of you is sweet."

I blush intensely in response to his compliment. Before I'm able to respond, he leans in and kisses me. It's so easy to get lost in the contact. We fit together perfectly. I can't believe I had any reservations about this earlier.

As the kiss starts to get deeper, the car comes to a stop. Both of us are reluctant to pull away, but eventually I have to. Despite how badly I want to stay in this little bubble for the rest of my life, I can't. My family needs me.

"We're here," I say, glancing at my tiny, one-story, two bedroom home. Normally, I'm blind to its flaws, but sitting next to Eric, I notice the peeling siding and the missing tiles on the roof. "I should get inside."

Before I'm able to pull the door open, Eric grips my arm hard. When I glance at his face, my heart sinks. His distaste for what he sees is etched into every line of his features. He must be putting together why I agreed to come with him today.

This is it. This is going to be the last time I see him. I shouldn't have asked for the ride. I should have just walked or shelled out the money I don't have for a cab.

"This... is where you live?" he asks after a long, heavy pause. "This is where your sick grandmother stays?"

"I..." I start, my face burning with shame. This is so much worse than I thought it would be. Maybe if he hadn't said anything, his judgement wouldn't feel so awful. "Yes. It's just... I'm the only one working right now. We don't want for anything, though."

That's a lie, but I can't stand to have him know the truth. This situation is already bad enough without admitting that we're dirt poor. I want to say more, to downplay the reality of my living situation, but I can't find it in me.

I stay where I am, waiting for his response. It doesn't come, though. His grip on my forearm loosens, then drops. His jaw is held tight, and he's quiet. The whole thing makes nervous beyond belief and bursts the bubble of excitement I was feeling just moments before.

Eventually, when it becomes clear that he's not going to say anything, I get out of the car. I don't look back as I trudge up the poorly-maintained path. At least I'll have the memories of the short time I spent with Eric, but the idea that this is over so soon after beginning makes me feel awful.

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Eric

My driver pulls away as soon as Amanda gets inside the door of her home. I'm so dumbfounded that it takes me nearly two blocks to bark at him to pull over, reaching forward to pull out one of his earbuds. I need a minute to think before we get too far away.

That house... I had looked into purchasing it about two years back. The owner of that place is a slumlord, and he wanted fifty percent more than the price I offered even though I'd have to pour money into the property to make it remotely livable. I walked away from the deal.

From the looks of it, that bastard didn't do any of the repairs it needed before renting it out to Amanda and her family. I shouldn't care so much about it. It's not my business what he does. But now...

Now that I know Amanda is involved, it is my business.

When I brought her home with me, this was never what I intended.

Our interaction was supposed to end after I fucked her.

Her sweetness, that look in her eyes, the way she cares about everyone in her life...

She's managed to worm her way under my hard exterior.

I can't let her live like this.

I wish I had bought that house when I had the chance.

It would mean that she and her family could live in a place that was up to code.

Still, I know for a fact that it's too small.

From what I understand, there are three adults living there, and there are only two bedrooms. Amanda probably doesn't even have her own private space.

An idea strikes me, but it all relies on the property owner being willing to sell now.

The house hasn't been on the market for at least a year – probably since Amanda and her family moved in.

Though I know that I can convince them to sell.

Money talks. It doesn't matter how much they ask for. I'll pay it.

I'll pay anything if it means making Amanda's life easier.

It doesn't take me long to find the number I'm looking for.

There aren't many real estate developers in Blackwood Falls, at least not private ones – there's been an influx of corporate developers coming in, building overpriced apartments and driving up rent prices.

I've been taking the blame for that for years.

I call the owner – Mr. Kent Pierce – at his office number first. Impatience festers in my gut as the phone rings.

I tap my foot against the carpeted floor of the car, listening to the grating ring.

I'm so keyed up by the time the voicemail message plays that I yell out of frustration as I hang up. the phone.

"Goddammit," I say, looking down at my phone. "This shouldn't be so fucking hard."

At a loss for what else to do, I reach out to my buddy at the police station. While it's not exactly legal, he's looked into things for me before. Getting the personal phone number of another real estate developer is the tamest favor I've asked for.

It takes Noah, my contact, five minutes to respond with what I need. In that time, I started brainstorming other ways I can make Amanda's life easier. I know for a fact that my reaction to seeing her home hurt her feelings, and while I normally wouldn't care, I'm genuinely remorseful for it.

There's no need to feel shame over doing what you have to in order to get by.

Lord knows that before my grandfather willed me his house, I had my own fair share of struggles.

And, contrary to popular belief, I don't fault my tenants for the curveballs life throws at them.

Sure, I'm strict with rents, but I don't deny people extensions if someone has an emergency – provided they aren't lying, which I always check up on.

With the number in my possession, I give Kent a call.

He answers on the second ring, and his voice is just as grating as I remember.

Taking a deep breath, I remind myself that taking out my anger on him isn't going to do anything about the house situation.

Once I've bought it, I can lay into this man for being a slumlord.

"Kent," I say, my foot still tapping impatiently. "It's Eric Joyner."

"Eric," he says, and I can hear that smarmy smile through the phone. "It's been a while since I've heard from you. I trust you're doing well?"

"I don't really have time for pleasantries, Kent," I say, struggling to keep my voice even.

He laughs, and when I catch my driver's eye in the rearview mirror, I let my irritation show. It takes Kent a few seconds to get himself under control, and when he does, he says, "You're the same as I remember you. No time for anything but business. You won't make any friends like that, you know."

"It's a good thing I'm not trying to make friends, then," I deadpan, earning myself another infuriating laugh from the man on the other end of the line. Before he finishes his laughing fit, I say, "I called to ask about the house on Willow Street."

"Willow Street..." he murmurs as if sorting through mental files to find the place I'm talking about. "Oh! You mean the one you didn't want a while back?"

"That's the one," I say through gritted teeth. God, I wish I could deal with anyone but him, but since it's for Amanda, I'll do it. "I'd like to revisit our negotiations."

"Ah, why the sudden change of heart?" Kent asks, and I hear the creak of a chair, like he's leaning back and putting his feet up. "Last time we talked, you said that the property was way too much work for the price – which has gone up, by the way. Property values in Blackwood Falls have skyrocketed in the last few years, which I should thank you for, by the way."

"Don't thank me," I growl, before remembering this is likely the most important business deal I'll ever make. "That's the development companies coming in and building all those luxury apartments."

"Well, they wouldn't be here if it weren't for you," he says, far too jovial for my liking. "So, like I say, why the change of heart?"

"Just call it preservation," I say, pinching the bridge of my nose. "The house has good bones. I'd hate to see it fall apart."

"My current tenants don't have any problems with it," Kent says, and my blood boils.

"Maybe," I say, unable to keep my anger from seeping into my tone, "they just don't have any better options."

There's a pause, and for a moment, I think the bastard has hung up on me. Then, he says, "Damn, Eric. Sounds like you've grown a conscious all of a sudden."

"Just name your price," I say, not wanting to indulge him any further. I have more than just purchasing this house to worry about. "I'll come wherever you want to meet, cash in hand."

"You're serious?" Kent asks after another long pause.

"I wouldn't be calling if I wasn't," I reply. "I don't have time to sit and talk. Just text me all the details and I'll be there. I'd prefer if we get this done today." With that, I hang up on him. I instruct my driver to head to the bank before I start my search for home health care – only the best for Amanda's family.

I'm well aware of the fact that I don't come off as a good person, that I'm mean and rough around the edges, but I want to be good to Amanda.

There's no use in denying it. I'm falling for her, and when I do something, I go all in.

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Amanda

The next morning, I'm pulled out of a fitful sleep.

Eric is the first and only thought in my head.

Despite my exhaustion from the long workday, the...

extracurricular activities with Eric, and taking care of my grandmother when I got home, I just tossed and turned on the couch, dissecting every interaction between the two of us.

Looking around the cluttered room, I can't find the source of the noise that disturbed me. Maybe I had fallen asleep and it was a dream. Just as I'm resting my head on my pillow, I hear it again. Someone's knocking at the door.

My blood runs cold. Is it the landlord? Rent isn't due yet, but maybe he's come to collect early. Or, maybe, I've lost track of the days and I'm already late on the payment. Maybe the payment went up again.

Scrambling to my feet, I run a hand haphazardly through my blonde hair, hoping that I don't look too bedraggled. Then, I cross the room to the front door. I take a deep breath before I ease it open, letting it catch on the chain lock.

My worst fears are realized when I see my landlord standing there, his hands in his pockets, a self-satisfied smile on his face. For him to be looking at me like that... What day is it? Is it really the first of the month?

Eric's right to stay out of my life. I'm a mess, and Mr. Pierce's showing up at my door is just proof of that. It was stupid of me to think that I could handle any sort of romantic relationship, let alone one with a man who has so much more money that I do.

This is humiliating.

"I'm so sorry," I say to my landlord, my face burning as my mind goes at a mile a minute trying to find excuses. "I... I didn't realize– It's just– Things have been– I'll have rent to you as soon as I get my paycheck, I promise."

Mr. Pierce laughs, and I feel even worse about this whole situation. Maybe this is it. Maybe I'm being evicted. I glance over my shoulder to make sure that my mom and grandma are still in their rooms. The last thing I need after yesterday is yet another witness to my embarrassing fuckups.

"Amanda," a familiar voice says, making my worry spiral even more. At first, I'm convinced it's just my mind playing tricks on me. Maybe this whole thing is just a hyperrealistic dream after all, and I am managing to get a few minutes of sleep. Then, Eric steps into my view.

This couldn't get any worse. Why is he here? He must have asked about me or-

"You don't have to worry about rent anymore," Eric says, pushing Mr. Pierce aside. "You own this house now."

"Wh-what?" I say, "I didn't— I didn't buy the house, I'm-"

Mr. Pierce laughs, something I've noticed he does a lot, even if the situation doesn't call for it—especially if the situation doesn't call for it, if I'm being honest. Through his guffawing he says, "I knew your face would be priceless. Anyway," he claps his

hand on Eric's shoulder, "this guy bought the property but put down your name as the owner. I just stopped by to thank you for being an excellent tenant."

I open and close my mouth, feeling like a fish out of water. Is there even a proper response to this information? Now I'm praying that it's not a dream, even though seems too good to be true. I close the door to undo the chain lock, and when I open it, both men are still there in front of me.

My now ex-landlord offers me his hand. Numbly, I reach forward to shake it.

He says, "It was a pleasure working with you, Miss Morrison." He releases my hand and glances between Eric and me.

I can only imagine what kind of woman he thinks I am, or what kind of arrangement he thinks Eric and I have.

"I'll head out now. I'm sure you two have plenty to talk about."

After giving me a wink, Mr. Pierce leaves with a pep in his step.Considering how much prices have gone up, I realize he must have made a small fortune off of Eric in this deal.

I wonder how much it cost him, and how the sale happened so quickly.

Considering banks aren't open this early, it must have been a cash deal.

Did Eric really do that for me?

As soon as Mr. Pierce's car pulls away, I look at Eric, tears swimming in my eyes, and croak out, "Why?"

He shrugs as though he didn't just spend an exorbitant amount of money on a house that he immediately put in my name. Then, after a moment of contemplation, he says, "Isn't it obvious?"

I shake my head, because in truth, I can't come up with a single logical explanation for this.

If he hadn't put the house in my name, I might be able to accept the situation – in that case, it would just be good business, adding another property to his portfolio.

As it is, he stands to gain nothing from this.

"Your grandmother," he says, his gaze piercing through me, "she needs a safe place to live. I looked into buying this house a few years ago, and I know all the issues that are going on in there."

"So you..." I start, trailing off as I still fail to understand.

"I'll cover the cost of repairs, of course," he says with a shrug, like spending that kind of money is nothing to him. Though, in all fairness, it probably is. "And I'll make sure your mom and your grandmother have somewhere nice to stay while things are being fixed."

I'm not aware that the tears that were welling in my eyes have started to fall until Eric reaches out to wipe them away.

His touch is soft, so much softer than he was at any point yesterday.

It's like that sliver of vulnerability I saw in the back of his SUV is right below the surface, waiting for me to unearth it.

"But why would you do all this for me?" I finally ask, my voice thick with emotion. "I– It's so much money. And time. You're not... You're not getting rent out of us... I just don't get it. You could have just walked away and never seen me again. I'm not... I'm not your responsibility."

"I couldn't have done that," Eric says, the conviction in his tone startling me. "Amanda, I could never walk away from you. Don't you get it?"

"Eric..."

Perhaps it's a good thing that I don't know how to finish that sentence, because he lunges forward and kisses me. The touch of his lips steals all of the air from my lungs, leaving me lightheaded. When he pulls back, I sway toward him, my body chasing the contact.

"I love you, Amanda," he says, waiting until our eyes lock.

A fiery passion burns in his pupils. It ignites a similar one deep in my gut.

"I love you more than I've loved anyone or anything.

I did this because I love you. It doesn't matter if I get anything out of this, just knowing that your family is happy and well taken care of is enough for me."

"I–" I begin, but now that he's started talking, he can't seem to stop.

"And I know this place is small. You probably don't have your own space.

" He pauses to glance at my makeshift bed on the couch.

"I want you to move in with me. There's more than enough room.

You could have your own bedroom, your own wing of the house if you wanted.

But I won't lie to you. I want you as close to me as possible.

I don't want you to be out of my sight."

"Eric," I say, finally gaining my voice again. "Eric, there's nothing I want more than that. I... I have to tell my family, though."

"It's still pretty early," he says, resting his hands on my hips and squeezing lightly. "You should let them sleep a little longer."

My cheeks get even hotter when I realize I'm acting like a child on Christmas morning. Can you blame me, though? I'm a homeowner! I won't have to worry about rent ever again! And, Eric said he's going to take care of the repairs. And it's all because...

He loves me.

"You love me," I say, the words feeling foreign in my mouth.

"I do," he chuckles, finding humor in the fact that I just realized the meaning of his words.

"I love you, too," I say, feeling giddy as the words leave my mouth. "Eric, I love you."

With a smile on his face, he pulls me in for another kiss. He says, "Good. We love each other." He kisses me again, long and lingering. "Now, what are we going to do about that?" "Uh..." I say, a little lightheaded as the revelation continues to swirl around in my mind.

"Don't worry, little girl," he says, his voice husky, seductive with a mix of amusement. "I'll do all the thinking for both of us from now on."

That kind of statement would have upset me if it came from anyone else, but I trust Eric. There's something comforting about knowing that he's going to take care of me. There's also something very, very arousing about that fact.

"Come on," he says, shifting his grasp from my hips to one of my hands.

He starts to lead me off the front porch, and I go willingly.

I'd follow him anywhere. "Let's get back to my place so I can show you just how much I love you.

Then, when it's not so early, we'll come back and you can tell your family the good news."

"I like the sound of that," I say as we walk.

And I really, really do. I've never liked the sound of anything more.

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Eric

Keeping my hands off of Amanda on the way to my house is torture.

More than once, I curse myself for not waking my driver to have him escort me.

Although, since this was a last-minute arrangement, arranging his services would have meant a later arrival time, and the sight of Amanda with messy hair first thing in the morning is something I wouldn't have missed for the world.

Still, I only need one hand to drive. So, as I pilot us through the streets of Blackwood Falls, I keep one hand on her thigh. Occasionally, I give her a little squeeze to remind her of what awaits us as soon as I get her alone – as soon as I get her home .

When I get the car into the driveway, I barely get it into park before I'm jumping out. Amanda isn't far behind me. As I'm rounding the front of the car to wrench open her door, she's already closing it, an excited smile on her face.

Needing to get her inside faster, I scoop her up and carry her to the front door.

My newly healed shoulder aches slightly, but I ignore it.

Whatever damage I sustain by carrying her inside this one time, I'll be able to correct during those physical therapy sessions I've been prescribed, and it will have been more than worth it.

She giggles the whole time, gasping with delight when I open the door with one hand.

When I get inside, I stop moving for a moment to kiss her passionately.

Her arms tighten around my neck as she tries to get even closer, and I can feel her smiling against my lips as I deepen the kiss, just for a few seconds.

"I love you," I tell her, pulling away as I start toward the stairs. "And I can't wait to get inside your tight, wet pussy, little girl."

"Please, daddy," she whines, prompting me to go up the stairs even faster.

Inside my bedroom with the door kicked shut behind us, I drop her onto the bed. Clearly just as eager as I am, she begins taking off her clothes – the pajamas she fell asleep in. I swoop in to help her before turning my attention to my own jeans and button-up shirt.

Once we're both naked, I position myself above her to kiss her deeply. My cock, which has been hard since we got into my car, presses against her thigh. I wonder if she knows what she's doing to me, if she knows that pressing that thigh against my length is driving me insane.

"You're mine," I tell her when I pull away from the kiss to look at that gorgeous face – the face I'll be waking up to for the rest of my life. The face of the woman I'm going to marry and pump full of my children. "All fuckin' mine."

"I'm yours," she confirms, voice breathy and needy. "I love you."

God, I need to worship this girl.

So, I do just that. When I lean back in, I kiss her cheek instead of her lips, earning myself a curious noise from Amanda. It's delicious, and I keep going, hoping to hear more of that.

I plant incessant kisses along her jaw, nipping playfully where it meets her earlobe. She shivers, wrapping her arms around my shoulders as if to pull me closer. I know what she wants, but I need her to understand how important she is to me.

I slip down lower, giving attention to her neck, lingering when I come across a spot that makes her whine. I leave a mark, needing her to be publicly claimed. Then, as I begin to give her collarbones attention, I speak in a low tone.

"Daddy's always going to take care of you, little girl," I assure her.

I trail wet kisses down her sternum, soaking up the way she sighs with pleasure.

"And I have more surprises in store for you and the women that raised you, but right now, I want to show you how devoted I am to you. And to apologize for my reaction yesterday."

"You don't need to apologize, daddy," Amanda says, words dripping with love. I don't know if I'll ever get used to having someone speak to me like that.

"Maybe not," I muse, cupping one of her breasts, making her suck in a harsh breath in response. "But I want to. You make me want to be a better person, little girl. I want to make sure you know just how special you are. I'm going to remind you every single day."

Before she's able to say anything contrary, I close my mouth over her pert, pebbled nipple. With my thumb and forefinger, I tweak the other. Her body reacts beautifully. I could stay here doing this for the rest of the day. Hell, if I do this for too long, I might end up humping her leg like a dog.

"Daddy," she whimpers, her hips pushing up against me.

My girl wants more, and it would be cruel of me to withhold it.

Giving into her unspoken request, I release her tits from my attention and begin kissing my way down to where I know she wants my touch the most. I revel in the softness of her stomach and the way each of her shaky breaths are evident just below the skin. Then, I nip at her hip bones.

I want nothing more than to map out her entire body, to commit each curve to memory. The only thing stopping me from denying her what she wants for a little longer is the knowledge that I have all the time in the world with her. That doesn't stop me from lingering, though.

When I reach her inner thighs, I groan. Her pussy is dripping wet, and I haven't even touched her there yet. I hope she never stops being so sensitive. I hope I never stop finding ways to make her react like this.

"Fuck, you're so goddamn pretty down here," I say before leaning forward to swipe my tongue through her folds, letting her juices dance over my tastebuds. Still practically buried in her pussy, I say, "Going to drink you up every fuckin' day, little girl. So sweet."

I give her a few more licks, focusing my attention on that little bundle of nerves that drives her crazy. My hands rest on the outside of her thighs, feeling the way her legs shake as I pleasure her. Then, before I get close to bringing her to climax, I pull away, savoring her lingering taste.

"Are you ready for daddy's cock?" I ask as I crawl up her body, taking in the way she flushes all the way down to her chest.

I don't wait for her response before I put my mouth on hers again. I push my tongue into the warm, wet cavern, letting her taste for herself just how delicious she is. As I'm caressing her tongue with mine, I spread her legs and rest the tip of my cock against her entrance.

"I've been thinking about doing this again since we took you home yesterday," I groan as the first inch of my member slides into her pussy. "Thought about just taking you right there in the back of the car while we drove."

"I wanted that too," she manages to say, though her speech is stilted, like she's struggling to put her thoughts together coherently. "Wish... Wished the drive was longer."

I can't stop myself from plunging in the rest of the way. If yesterday is anything to go by, my girl likes it rough, and while I'd normally be happy to give it to her, I'm trying to hold back right now. I don't want to fuck her. I want to make love to her.

"Shit, baby, me too," I groan as her walls enclose me. "Don't have to worry about things like that anymore. You're always coming home to me. You're mine. All fuckin' mine."

"Uh huh," she whines, gripping onto my back as she lift her legs and wraps them around my hips, enticing me in further.

The roll of my hips is shallow, despite how badly I want to rail her. If I do that, neither of us will last very long. I can tell she's on the edge already, and I've been close to blowing since she took her clothes off. I want to drag this out as long as I can.

"God, you feel so good," I say, my lips still pressed against hers, our breath mingling between us. "This little pussy was made for me, wasn't it?"

She doesn't answer with words, but I don't expect her to. Instead, she lets out a long,

whimpering moan. The sound goes directly to my cock, and my hips start moving a little faster without my permission. When it comes to Amanda, I just can't hold back.

I can't believe I thought I was going to say goodbye to her after that first time. Twenty-four hours ago, I'd have called someone crazy if they suggested I'd want to settle down with a woman. It's funny how meeting the right person can change your worldview entirely.

"You're taking me so well, sweet girl," I praise, pushing her hair out of her face so I can gaze into those gorgeous, green eyes. Her legs tighten around my waist in response. "I just can't get enough of you, fuck."

"Mm, daddy," she whimpers, leaning up as if asking for more affection.

"You want a kiss?" I say, smirking slightly, bending down to oblige her request.

I kiss her more sweetly than I've ever kissed any of my other partners.

I put all of my emotions, even the ones I haven't figured out how to articulate yet, behind the movements.

The depths of my feelings for her... well, I may never find the right words to tell her how I feel, but I'll do whatever I can to show her.

My thrusts pick up in speed. She's squeezing around me, her body clearly teetering on the edge of release. It won't take much more to get her there, and the way her pussy is strangling my cock right now, I'll be right behind her.

"Daddy," she gasps, tilting her head away from me as she sucks in air. "Daddy."

"I'm right here, little girl," I assure her. "Daddy's got you."

The encouragement, though subtle, seems to be exactly what she needs. After a few more well-timed jabs of my hips, she's making a strangled sound and digging her short nails into my back. I feel her orgasm running through her half a second before she whimpers my name as though in warning.

"You sound so fucking good," I say, chasing my own release as I drive my length into her wildly. "Make such pretty fuckin' sounds when you cum all over my cock."

I'm right there, needing only a few more thrusts to get me to my orgasm. Then, Amanda whimpers, "I love you, daddy," and my climax slams into me, the words having a visceral effect on me.

I cum hard, filling my girl up with my seed. Wave after wave of pleasure washes over me. My entire body clenches as I'm taken by ecstasy. There's nothing else in this room, on this planet, than me and Amanda.

When my pleasure subsides, I pull out of her slowly. With immense gentleness, I place a kiss on her forehead. Then, I run a hand through her messy, sweaty hair as I climb off of her.

"I'll give you some time to recover," I tell her, grabbing her clothes from the floor. "Then we can head back to your place so you can tell your family the good news and change. We'll have to be quick, though. I have some interviews lined up for you today."

"Interviews?" she asks, not sitting up from where she's still lying there recovering.

"I've got a list of some of the best home health care nurses money can buy," I say with a shrug. "I decided not to pick one, though. It's your grandmother that needs the help, and you know her best." "Eric..." she says, pushing herself up with her elbows. "You don't have to do that."

"I want to," I reply, leaving no room for doubt. "Besides, if you're going to move in with me, there needs to be someone there to help care for your family. You can't spend every waking moment taking care of other people, Amanda; you need to let someone take care of you for a change."

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Four Years Later

Amanda

When I made the change to children's' nurse, I thought that my work days would be easier and less stressful.

For the most part that's true. The hours are shorter, and I'm much less likely to interact with single men – something that Eric was worried about when we first got together.

Sometimes, though, we have tough cases come through our doors.

Today was one of those days.

When I walk into the house, I check that our nanny is with our daughters, Elizabeth and Penelope.

Once I confirm that my girls are well-looked after, I breathe a sigh of relief.

There's nothing I want more right now than to turn my brain off for a little while and let someone else – my husband of three years – do the thinking.

It doesn't take me long to find Eric. He's tucked away in his office, pouring over some documents detailing his latest property purchase.

If I didn't know the man underneath the serious, intimidating mask, I might be afraid

to interrupt him.

I know that he has a soft spot for me and his girls, though.

"Daddy?" I say, my voice coming out even smaller than I expected. I guess I need his comfort even more than I anticipated.

His gaze lifts from his work immediately, his rough edges softening when he looks at me. He gets out of his seat quickly, crossing the room as he asks, "Oh, baby girl. Did you have a long day?"

My voice gets caught in my throat. Now that he's here, I feel my entire body relaxing. I know I don't need words now. So, I nod, and he wraps his arms around me, kissing my cheek with reverence.

"My poor girl," he murmurs, his words acting as a balm for the stress of my day. "Don't you worry. Daddy's going to take good care of you."

With that, he picks me up and carries me out of his office and into our bedroom. I feel safe in his arms, like the horrors of the world can't reach me. I almost don't want him to put me down when he reaches the edge of our mattress, but I want what's coming next even more.

"I've been thinking about you all day," Eric says, taking my hair out of its pink elastic. "If you weren't so busy saving lives, I'd bother you all day long."

"You never bother me, daddy," I say, feeling myself slip into the submissive space I can only enter when I'm with him.

He chuckles, giving me a long, lingering kiss. I melt into it, falling further under his spell. Sometimes, I long for this to be my entire life, to be completely his and to stay home away from the stress of my adult life.

"You're just too sweet to me, little girl," he practically coos, gently rubbing his thumb against my cheek. "Now, let's get you out of these clothes."

Eric takes his time stripping me, kissing each bit of skin he exposes. I sigh happily. Before I know it, I'm completely bare in front of him.

"Are you ready for daddy's cock, little girl?" he asks, already working himself out of his pants. My mouth waters when I realize he's already hard.

"Yes, please," I reply, unable to take my eyes off of him as he reveals his body to me.

"You're so polite for me, aren't you?" he asks as he lines himself up with my opening, positioning himself between my legs. He rubs the tip of his length through my wet folds, shuddering as he does. "And you're so fucking wet for me, too."

I whine in affirmation, pressing my hips up against him to beg for more of his member. He has mercy on me, quickly giving me what I want. As he slides inside, I moan, "Yes, daddy."

"That's it," he says through gritted teeth, his hips already working in and out of me slowly. "You tell daddy just how good you feel."

"Feel... full," I say, grasping for phrases to convey how satisfied he makes me. "And loved."

"That's because I love you very much," he says, pounding into me harder. "And I love your tight little pussy. I love how wet you get for me. I love that you walk into my office with those big, cute eyes calling me, 'daddy,' when you've had a bad day."

"Mm, daddy," I whimper, pleasure beginning to pool in my abdomen.

"Oh, I'm not done yet," he says, the angle of his hips changing slightly as he targets

my g-spot.

"I love how you insisted on keeping your nursing job because you wanted to help people. I love waking up to you every morning. I love watching you be a mother to our children. I love getting to see sides of you that no one else is allowed to see."

His words of adoration wash over me. It feels almost like I could drown in this kind of attention. I'd be happy to go out like that. No one makes me feel more loved and appreciated than Eric. No one ever did before him, either.

"You know what I love most of all, little girl?" he asks, bringing his mouth close to my ear. His breath dances across the sensitive skin there, and I feel my stomach tighten.

"Wh- what?" I manage to get out as my orgasm threatens to pull me out into the undertow.

"You, little girl," he replies, nipping at the most sensitive part of my neck. "I love you most of all."

I can't hold back my climax. It bowls me over, taking my voice with it. My mouth hangs open in a silent scream of pleasure. My body practically convulses as Eric works me through the most intense parts of my orgasm.

"Fuck, fuck," he curses, his thrusts becoming wild. "You're making daddy cum, little girl. Fuck– I–"

With an aborted groan, he falls over the edge with me. His cock twitches hard inside my pussy. Half a second later, he releases his load, filling me up even further. It makes the last pulses of my orgasm even more intense.

"How are you feeling, sweetheart?" he asks when he pulls out. "Any better?"

"Yes, daddy," I say, warmth blooming in my chest.

"Good," he says, pressing a kiss to my forehead before going to the dresser to get me something clean and comfortable to change into.

"Thank you," I say when he returns and starts dressing me.

"You don't need to thank me for taking care of you," he says, pulling plush shorts up my legs. "This is just as much a treat for me as it is for you."

I giggle at his overt kindness. He never shows this side of himself to anyone else. Everything he does for me and the girls makes me feel special.

"I have a little bit of work to finish up," he says apologetically, running his hand through my hair. "But it shouldn't take too long. Our nanny should be here for another few hours, too."

I hum, letting my eyes fall closed as he continues to stroke my locks.

If he hadn't already taken such good care of me, I'd push for him to leave his work for tomorrow.

I know that he'd do it for me. But I am feeling better now, and I suppose that waiting for him to finish won't be too terrible.

We have all night to do whatever we want together.

"I'll take care of dinner tonight," he assures me, taking care of a worry that didn't even have time to cross my mind.

"You think of everything," I say, smiling into the kiss he leans in to give me.

"Of course I do," he says as he retrieves his pants from the floor. "That's my job, isn't it?"

"Yeah," I say, settling myself against the pillows. "It is, daddy."

He gives me a final smile before heading for the door. Before he leaves, he looks over his shoulder and says, "I charged your tablet. You mentioned your favorite author's releasing a new book the other day. Maybe you can take some time to read it and relax."

Then, he leaves. I glance at my tablet sitting on the nightstand. When I pick it up, I can't help but think that he really does think of everything.

I'm in the process of purchasing the book when Eric pops his head into the room once again. When I glance up at him, he says, "I love you, little girl."

"I love you too, daddy."