



Sweet Surrender (Blue Collar #2)

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Category: LGBT+

Description: My brother thinks that my delicate tinkering as I create sweet masterpieces is a way to deal with the lingering trauma from my time overseas. Putting all my effort into pounding dough instead of faces is why everyone accepts the heavily tattooed and pierced bakery owner that I've become.

In reality, I bake for one reason.

Him.

The man who holds my heart.

The man who can make me kneel when I bow to no one.

The man who in the same breath can control my actions and then plead for my newest creation.

Jameson isn't just my heart and soul. He's the man who is keeping me together.

He's also my older brother's best friend.

And that makes him off-limits.

It's a good thing I'm ready to break the rules.

And when my brother drops a bombshell, Jameson will be the one to heal my fragile heart.

Sweet Surrender is an 18+ MM Brother's Best Friend Standalone in the Blue Collar Series with a fierce, tattooed baker, a small Dom with a sweet tooth, and a HEA.

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Chapter 1

WYATT

The dark chocolate ganache has to be perfect. Not just because it's my older brother's birthday and he requested this dessert but because my craft requires it. Few things keep my mind free of the nightmares from my time overseas, crafting baked delicacies being one of them. As stupid as it sounds, using my hands for something that requires a gentle touch brings me out of the darkness. Unfortunately, this is the second attempt at the ganache and I don't have enough ingredients to fail again.

My face twists in frustration as I craft it on top of the light buttercream frosting, moving slowly to recreate the exact drip pattern from the picture Reggie sent me. I'm not even sure why he cares about the cake when his entire party will be full of fraternity brothers with whom he still spends every waking moment. I swear he's forgotten that college ended over ten years ago.

I lay the bowl down after finishing the drip pattern, content with my creation.

A crash outside the kitchen has me cringing, eyes wide for a threat that doesn't exist. The door bursts open, Reggie staggering forward. I should have expected the party would start when the others arrived. They're almost always drunk or on an adrenaline high that I want to be nowhere near. "Lil bro!" He yells as he slaps my back.

A tendril of terror runs through me as I step out of reach so that he can't touch me again. There's been one too many discussions about my comfort level since I returned from my deployment but Reggie has never understood. Our younger brother, Axel,

has but he and Reggie don't speak after a falling out years ago. I'm the middle man but even then, I spend most of my time getting lost in my bakery in the city's heart.

Reggie has never respected my choices, not that I ever expected him to. I might have six inches and 50 lbs on him but I'll always still be the little brother that sold out for sugar.

“Aw, is that my cake? It's so fucking cute! Can you make some of those chocolate bombs too? We're inviting a few more of the guys over and we want to-”

I drown out his drunken request, waiting until he finds something more interesting outside the kitchen. The only reason I agreed to use his house for my cooking base was because there was a door to this space. I also miss my childhood home after my parents passed it down to the three of us. It made most sense for Reggie to have it as I had left for the military and Axel preferred something a little different. We bought out our shares and in return, Reggie wouldn't sell it. Nothing much has changed since we grew up here, such as the paisley walls and trim, which remind me of my mother's odd choices.

However, it now has a faint stench of rum, sex, and cigarettes.

“Get out, Reg.”

My throat constricts as the door opens again, Reggie's best friend leaning in the doorway. It feels like the world slows down as Jameson enters my space. He's dressed to impress, a light gray sweater and dress pants covering his small form. His dirty blonde hair adds to his attractive aura, neatly combed like he just came over from work. He probably did. He is a good six inches shorter than me, but most everyone is when I'm 6'5". Pale green eyes darken as they land on Reggie, Jameson growing increasingly annoyed before he drags my brother out into the living room.

There are several whispered words before I'm able to breathe again, Jameson returning a second later. "Hey, how are you holding up?" His soft voice has me completely relaxing as he steps up to me, placing a gentle hand on my waist. With all of Reggie's friends, I'm just the kid brother. The monster who bakes. The one who sold out for sugar. With Jameson, I'm so much more than that. He sees me and all the tortured emotions I try to keep under wraps.

Like Axel, Jameson understands how much I can handle. Sudden loud sounds and unexpected touches have grown to be a problem. His hand squeezes my torso until I let out a little breath and sag back against the counter. "Fuck."

"You should have told Reggie that you would drop the cake off. Why would you bake here when you knew there would be all this noise?" Jameson's voice is still soft, something I've noticed is only for me. Everyone else gets his business voice or the frat boy version of him that he can still slip into if needed. "You have nothing to prove, babe. Nothing. "

I wish it were that simple. I wish I believed it was that simple.

"It's fine. I'm almost done."

Jameson snorts. "No, you're not. Reggie mentioned something about chocolate bombs and I know he wants the decorative jello shots too. Why didn't you just get it catered and say you did it? He's drunk enough not to know the difference."

I gently push him to the side so I can grab a few ingredients from the fridge. "First, I won't disrespect my craft by asking someone else to cater this. Second, you would know the difference." A wide smile spreads across Jameson's face when I return with more chocolate, milk, and an egg. Unbeknownst to Reggie, Jameson is more than just my brother's best friend.

He's also mine.

My lifeline.

My heart and soul.

And also off limits.

Bros before hoes or whatever the saying is.

Jameson never seems to care, though, dragging me into sweet kisses or showing up at my apartment to shower me with romance and affection. I have to wonder when it'll no longer be exciting to keep me a secret, when Jameson will demand that I announce who's in my head, heart, and in my bed.

"You're right. I would know the difference which is why I came in here for a taste test. I always know you have 'mistakes'."

Just another reason why this man has my heart. What I call imperfections, he calls perfect. I'm surprised he isn't carrying around a little belly with all the sugar he eats from my leftover creations. I point to a small plate of chocolate cake and buttercream icing that was specifically set aside for him, Jameson hopping up onto the counter before dragging the plate into his lap.

"Fork, please. I am not a barbarian."

I snort as I rustle through a drawer and produce a utensil, Jameson digging in like he's starved.

"Jesus Christ. Wyatt, do you put drugs in this shit? It melts in your mouth, just disappears on my tongue. Is that rum? It's delicious."

My face warms at his praise but I'm used to his excitement over my creations. It's nice to have someone salivate for the things I take so much time with, encouraging me when I'm frustrated and praising me when I need it. Even when the door is closed and I'm on my knees for this man, there's never a harsh word out of his mouth.

I creep closer, loving the way Jameson gets lost in the sugar. His eyes widen almost comically, his entire face smiling as he sucks on the fork. The sounds that are falling from his lips are making my cock hard, reminding me what other things that skilled mouth can do. Jameson locks onto my thoughts almost immediately, trading the fork for my lips. His hand slips around the back of my neck and I lean against his side, the man thrusting his tongue into my mouth as he gets the right angle.

He tastes like chocolate and happiness and safety. He tastes like home if that can even be a flavor.

"You're sleeping with me tonight," Jameson mumbles against my lips as he pulls back. I clear my throat, raising an eyebrow at his suggestion. I wasn't planning on spending the night here, although I'm not a fan of driving in the dark and it's already pushing 7 pm. I should have planned better. "Just sleeping, babe. You need out of your head and I need to cuddle my man." His eyes dart to the kitchen door and he groans, the faint sound of someone calling his name stealing his attention. "Looks like I'm on Reggie duty."

Jameson hops down from the counter just before stuffing the rest of the scraps into his mouth. "As much as I want to tell your brother about us, I don't want him to find out when he's drunk."

"He'll crucify the both of us. Maybe me more than you for stealing away one of his best friends."

He laughs, shaking his head as he steps up to me again and wraps his arms around my

back. “Babe, two things. You’re one of my best friends too. Besides, do you really care if he were to find out? I could do things like this.” Jameson raises up on his toes to press another kiss to my lips. We’ve been hiding this thing for the better part of two months although the feelings started years ago.

We just never acted on it.

“No, I don’t think I care anymore.”

Six years ago when I graduated college, I didn’t want to anger Reggie. I said nothing before I deployed, hoping that my crush on Jameson would just disappear. But it didn’t—it hasn’t and now I can’t imagine a life that doesn’t have him in it. Jameson is right, though. It doesn’t matter what my brother thinks, even if his disapproval will hurt a little.

I also don’t want Reggie to find out when he’s drunk.

Jameson kisses me again before disappearing out into the living room. A part of me leaves with him before I start on the chocolate bombs but I can’t stop the smile spreading across my lips knowing that he’ll be in my bed tonight.

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Chapter 2

JAMESON

Reggie's 34th birthday party was just supposed to be a gathering of old-time friends, a moment in time when we could see a few of our former fraternity brothers between all our busy schedules. I should have known that it would devolve into drunken chaos. Reggie was and still is a child, through and through, skating through life without a care in the world. He excels in his sales career and even more so, the nightlife he partakes in. Although, I'm not entirely sure what he's selling this month. It could be anything; the man could sell anything to anyone.

I watch as Reggie jabs playfully at one of our mutual friends, both of them bordering between tipsy and drunk. The party barely started an hour ago and I already know there will be more than one blackout drunk passed out on the lawn or in the living room by the end of the night.

Reggie has done nothing to honor his parents' house. Sometimes, I wish that Wyatt or their younger brother, Axel fought for it or decided to sell it. At least it would be loved more than it is now. I think Wyatt's desserts are showing that kitchen more love than it has seen in years.

A heavy sigh falls from my lips as I step out onto the patio, relishing the warm air that hits my skin. A beer in hand, I try to circumvent the Reggie situation when he pulls me over to the patio seating. Ten years ago, I would have been right there with him, downing shots and making goofy comments to solidify my frat-boy personality. Now?

I can't.

I have someone I'm in love with. Someone who thinks they need me more than I need them. They're wrong. I can't breathe without Wyatt in my life and I've loved him far longer than he'll ever know.

"You're real chummy around my brother," Reggie spits out. His eyes are unfocused but his words are harsh. "What are you doing rescuing him from me?"

I recognize the hurt in his tone but it's unwarranted. "You know how uncomfortable Wyatt gets during your parties. The least you could have done was leave him be in the kitchen to finish preparing." I'm more worried about Wyatt driving than I am about Reggie's outburst in the kitchen. The constant requests have kept Wyatt here longer than he should have been and he despises driving at night. It's a good thing he's agreed to spend the night here.

"Look, I'm glad you're looking out for him. That's great but he's my brother. I know him very well and he's fine. He would have said something."

Wyatt will never say anything. He hates confrontation and after the falling out between Reggie and Axel, Wyatt always tempers his anger and swallows it down so far it nearly disappears. He doesn't want to lose anyone so he would rather forgo an emotional reaction if that means Reggie stays in his life.

I set my beer on the table in front of us before dragging a hand through my hair. "Reggie, I know you think you get it. That you just wanted to bring your brother into the fold and have him celebrate with you." I don't want to have this conversation when Reggie is drunk but fuck it, I'm done watching Wyatt get pushed to the side.

Reggie snorts, cutting in. "Is it so bad that I want family here to celebrate with me? Axel couldn't be fucking bothered but Wyatt came."

He makes it sound like his youngest brother is a problem, that Axel just decided that he wouldn't come. In reality, Reggie decided to play parent, Axel being just 18 when their parents passed away. Axel couldn't be his own person without Reggie having something to say about it. Silly banter between the brothers quickly morphed into heated conversations and Axel moving out of the family home.

I still remember their last argument, a few weeks after Wyatt had deployed, and the question Axel asked of Reggie. "You're not my parent. I want my older brother back, Reggie. Can you do that?" Reggie mumbled something about trying to look out for him and Axel left. That was the last time they spoke that I know of.

Axel is flourishing on the other side of the city and I've seen him a few times when Wyatt and I visit for dinner.

Realizing I haven't responded to Reggie's statement, I sift through my thoughts for the right words. "Reggie, we'll talk about this later. Enjoy your birthday."

"No, we're definitely talking about this now. Not everyone is here and I can see you've got that stupid brooding face on. Share with the class."

Reggie's going to drink himself into a stupor after this conversation. "Fine. This isn't the first time I've heard you try to blame your brothers for your shortcomings. You treat your family like they owe you their time and attention. Axel left because you were overbearing. He needed a brother, not another parent. And Wyatt? He's a sweet, tortured man who has a hard time being around you because you can't respect his boundaries. He doesn't ask for much and you still give him nothing." It actually hurts to see Reggie so disrespectful. If Wyatt wasn't so sweet, he would have cut Reggie off a long time ago.

My best friend snorts again, grabbing my beer to chug. He lets out a wild belch before someone across the lawn yells 'good one!'. "Wyatt isn't sweet, not with

shoulders like that. However, you definitely like him or some shit because you're always around when he is."

Reggie isn't wrong but I'm also always around because someone needs to advocate for the man.

"My brother is off limits, James."

As he has said many times, not that I've ever listened. Well, I tried to be respectful when we were much younger but it was so fucking hard watching Wyatt in his senior year. And then when he left for the military without so much as a goodbye, it nearly broke my heart. I thought that was his way of telling me this couldn't work. The day he came back, though, things changed. He sought my attention, the soft words of affection, and the gentle touches.

"Reggie, you always say the same thing." I push to my feet, ready to escape this conversation as more people show up. "You don't want any of your friends dating your brother but I'll tell you this. You don't get to dictate who your brother chooses. I'll also tell you that if you keep trying to tell Wyatt what he can and can't do, he'll leave just like Axel did." If Wyatt isn't able to pull away, I'll help him. He doesn't deserve the disrespect he cops around his brother.

Reggie's face scrunches up as he stumbles to his feet. He pokes me in the chest several times before speaking. "I don't appreciate what you're insinuating. Axel-"

"No. If you want to talk about this, we'll do it sober. Just know that Wyatt and Axel are not your fucking kids. They're your brothers. You want to look out for them? Great. Start by respecting some fucking boundaries." I stomp off to the cooler, needing another beer. This night is going to delve into madness, a few of my fraternity brothers I recognize yelling my name. I sift easily into my college persona, a goofy grin spreading across my lips as I embrace them.

This will be my last party. I can feel it.

I can't keep up the ruse anymore—that I care about what happened in college or that I enjoy reminiscing about days when we were younger.

My life is wrapped around that man inside the kitchen.

And I need him like I need water.

He gives me something no one else has.

His submission.

In a life where I feel wildly out of control, Wyatt offers me himself behind closed doors. He is mine to pleasure, to hold, and to take apart.

And watching as grown men stomp around the backyard like we're 20, I silently apologize to Wyatt.

I think I'm going to need more than a fucking cuddle tonight.

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Chapter 3

WYATT

“Stop wearing such tight pants,” Jameson grunts. He’s kneeling by my childhood bed as he struggles to undress me. It’s nearly midnight, the man half drunk, eyes unfocused even as he’s trying to take care of me. As the night continued on, Jameson stepped into the kitchen and pulled me up here. He realized all too quickly that I was over my social limit, veering on the edge of a panic attack as Reggie’s friends slipped in and out of the kitchen.

Now, I’m sitting on the edge of my bed, watching Jameson frustrate himself as he undresses me. He has always taken care of me but it’s funnier now with his lack of coordination. I tried to help a few moments ago but he just glared at me before fumbling with my belt again.

“Just give me a minute, alright?” Jameson blows out a deep breath, blinking rapidly as he stares at my cock. It thickens beneath his attention, pressing against my zipper. He cracks a small smile, his tongue darting out to lick his lips.

Jameson doesn’t play into his college persona often like my brother and his other friends do. I haven’t seen Jameson this drunk in years which means something is bothering him. His pale green eyes hold pain that wasn’t there a few hours ago. When Jameson reaches for the button on my jeans, I stay his hands. “Talk to me, Jay.”

His face scrunches up as he debates whether to fight my grip or listen to me. His shoulders sag as his head angles up, our eyes meeting. “I don’t want to talk about him

in this room, okay? Reggie doesn't get it. I'm not sure he ever will."

"You don't think he'll ever accept us?"

"I don't think he'll ever understand that his brand of protection is just self-centered control. I'm afraid that he will lose you too, that he won't understand until everyone's gone."

I haven't thought about it that way. Reggie pushed Axel away. That argument was brutal. My older brother didn't learn, though. He's still trying to control my choices or tell me what to do. It doesn't stick; I'm my own man but it doesn't hurt any less when he tells me that he's disappointed in me. I used to look up to him.

Not anymore.

And his blatant disrespect for my boundaries?

There's only so much I can take.

Jameson slips out of my hold and continues undressing me, doing a little fist pump when he successfully drags my pants down my legs. His gaze immediately drops to the bulge in my boxers. "God, I love you, Wyatt." His words are immediately followed with a groan as he sits back on his calves. "Fuck, I wanted that to be romantic."

I forgot how adorable Jameson is when he's drunk.

He uses my knees to gain purchase, admiring the tattoos covering my chest and arms. "Big spoon or little spoon?"

That's not even a debate. I fucking love Jameson trying to wrap himself around me

but tonight, I want to hold him. “Big spoon.”

“You got it. Right after I get an aspirin.”

He blinks a few times and then sighs, his entire body relaxing as if he’s shoving off the weight of the party. I lean toward the nightstand and open the drawer to sift through an old pile of pain medicine. I unearth an aspirin and swipe the water bottle from my nightstand.

I haven’t been in this room for months so there shouldn’t be anything usable in here save for the bed sheets. It takes me a few moments to realize that Jameson probably set everything up just in case, a thought cemented when my gaze snags on the nightlight plugged in by the door. I hand the aspirin to Jameson and watch him chug half the bottle before placing it back on the table.

“I love you too, James,” I say, needing him to hear it. The warm smile I get in response has butterflies flitting around my stomach as he pushes me back onto the mattress. Not soon enough he sheds his sweater and his pants, revealing the hidden figure I’ve fallen in love with. Where most of Reggie’s friends live in a gym, Jameson’s body is natural. He’s not bulked up, a little extra hugging his waist and arms.

Despite our bedroom banter, Jameson is fucking adorable.

It might be a weird thing to think, the man being four years older than me but even his smile is precious.

He slips into bed after me, snuggling up against my chest. Then he flips over and pushes his ass against my cock before dragging my arm around his waist. “I’ll fuck you in the morning, babe.” A few seconds later, I hear his light snore.

Classic Jameson.

To anyone else, he might seem inconsiderate but Jameson knows that his presence is everything I need. It helps keep the nightmares at bay, my gaze falling on the night light once again. It's a little grenade, neon green light shining from it.

It's the small things that make me fall deeper in love with the man currently pressed against my chest. The things that nobody sees or understands. None of this will ever make sense to Reggie.

But I can't let Jameson go.

I just have to work up the courage to say it in public.

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Chapter 4

JAMESON

I wake up with my face smashed into a muscular chest, the thick scent of pine and musk suffocating my nose. It's the best fucking thing to wake up to, especially with his arm banded around my back like I'm going to disappear in the middle of the night. He's told me too many times that I keep the nightmares at bay so if he thinks I'm ever leaving him, he has another thing coming.

I press a kiss to Wyatt's chest, watching him shuffle against me before relaxing again. "Morning, handsome," I purr as I pull away just enough to catch the sleepy look on his rugged face. "How did you sleep?" Reaching up, I run my fingers along his scruff, loving how soft it feels beneath my touch.

A rumble runs through his chest as he twists his head to kiss my palm. "I always sleep well when you're next to me." The deep honey tone of his voice warms me from the inside as he continues to kiss my palm. Needing more, I use my free hand to reach between us and give him a few experimental strokes. We probably shouldn't be doing this in Reggie's house but it's been a little while since I've had my man in my bed.

I also did promise Wyatt I'd fuck him in the morning.

His face scrunches up as his hips rock into my hand. "We shouldn't." His words contradict his movements as he buries his head in my shoulder, grunting every time I give him another stroke through his boxers. "Fuck, Reggie is across the hall."

“Probably drunk off his ass and won’t wake up for another hour.” I crack a smile, letting Wyatt know that if he wants to stop, I absolutely will. His comfort is more important than my need to be inside him. His comfort will always be more important.

“Fuck it. If he figures it out, I don’t care anymore. God, I need you more than whatever hang-ups he has.” He rolls onto his back, pulling me with him. There aren’t many times when Wyatt is dominant when we’re alone but the way his fingers dig into my hips as he grinds me down against him is everything.

He leans up to kiss me, his tongue thrusting into my mouth as we tangle together in a combination of passion and craving for each other. “Does this mean I get to show you off, babe?”

“Right after you fuck me.”

I chuckle. “You say such sweet words.” Not quickly enough, I shed our boxers and reach into the bedside table for lube. Thank fuck I remembered some last night. Even if Wyatt hadn’t stayed over, I would have used his bedroom rather than flopping onto the couch downstairs with the rest of them. I love them like brothers but they need to understand we aren’t in college anymore.

Wyatt grunts as I wrap my hand around his cock again, watching as I catalog every last ridge to his length. It curves slightly to the left, the girth filling my palm as he rocks his hips forward. His fingers sift into my hair as I start stroking him again before moving farther south to his puckered hole. He sucks in a deep breath and then relaxes.

I split the packet of lube open with my teeth and liberally coat my fingers before dipping back down to open him up. Wyatt bucks against the intrusion and I watch, entranced as he slowly falls apart. To everyone else, he’s a soldier, or a monster, someone unapproachable. To me? He’s my lover, my heart, my soul, and the man

that gives me all of him.

Unable to help myself, I dip my lips to his tip, sucking at his slit until a bead of precum lands on my tongue. The salty taste of my man fills my mouth as I continue to take what is mine until Wyatt's fingers tighten in my hair and he yanks me up for a kiss.

“As much as I want to spill down your throat, I want you inside me, James.”

“Roger that, Lieutenant.”

Wyatt chuckles at my stupidity but the sound is quickly switched out for a guttural moan, his hands moving to my ass as I thrust into him. His head falls back against the pillow, his lips parted as his body melts into the mattress. These are the moments I live for as I slowly pump into his thick ass, drinking in every grunt and moan that falls from his lips.

I lean forward to press a kiss to his chest, focusing on the way his cock drags against my torso, giving him the friction he needs. I brace myself on the mattress as I pick up my pace, loving the way he's basically fucking me from beneath, taking his pleasure.

“Come for me, babe. Give it to me.”

His fingers dig harder into my ass as he thrusts up, exploding all over my chest and stomach. I let myself go, pumping into him as his hole squeezes my cock until I can't help but unload in his ass. My hips are still snapping forward as he milks me of my release, his cum slathered between us.

“Fuck, no more, James.”

I laugh as I pull out and roll over onto my side, covered in his release. That wasn't

exactly how I imagined it but I'm not complaining. "As much as I'd like another round, both of us have places to be." Wyatt sighs as he pulls me closer and angles my head up to kiss me. Fuck it, I don't want to leave the bed just yet. "I don't think five more minutes would hurt, would it?"

He shakes his head as I throw an arm over his stomach, ignoring our mess for just a little bit longer with Wyatt at my side. I'll worry about starting my day after a few more kisses.

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Chapter 5

WYATT

I step out of the shower to see Jameson stuffing himself back into his pants, completely focused on making himself presentable all over again. We look like a bunch of teenagers trying to avoid the walk of shame but the wrinkled sweater he's slipping over his head and the clothes left for me to climb back into are very obvious.

Jameson also can't lie to save his soul. His face is an open book even if Reggie can't read him. I pass by him, wiggling my eyebrows before drying off and getting dressed as well. Jameson wasn't wrong that we both had places to be and I usually open my bakery around seven or eight in the morning. It's pushing eight thirty, not that I would have traded it for the time with Jameson.

"Call me later, babe," he whispers after me as I shuffle downstairs to grab my baking tools.

I manage a few muttered 'good mornings' and head nods, trying my best to avoid any awkward moments with my brother's friends. Sometimes I forget that he's the older brother with the way his friends are sprawled across the living room in a way that our mother would have had our hides for.

By the time I lug my shit out to the car, Reggie is leaning against the hood, his arms folded across his chest. He looks like he hasn't slept at all, large bags under his eyes as he tries to keep himself upright. "I'm surprised you stayed over, Wyatt."

I have no idea why he sounds so accusatory this early in the morning but ignoring him will be difficult when he's blocking my way. He disrespects my boundaries so often that even if I do explain why I slept over, he'll just brush it off. "It was dark when I was finished. You know that I don't drive late at night, Reggie."

Reggie snorts, following me as I open the passenger side door to place my bag on the seat. "Wouldn't be so you could spend more time with Jameson, would it? Oh, don't pull that shit. I see the way you two look at each other and he all but admitted that you two have a thing going on."

"Do you even care?" I ask, knowing that he's the only one bothered by it. I'm not even sure why. I haven't stolen Jameson from him.

"I told you my friends are off limits. You couldn't respect that?"

This time, it's my turn to laugh. Reggie knows nothing about respect. He does not deserve mine. "You can't force feelings or shove them away, not completely. I get that you were looking out for your naïve little brother all those years ago but I'm not him. Your concern is no longer welcome. It's stifling and not needed."

Reggie chews on his bottom lip, stepping away just enough for me to close the door. "So, you two do have something going on. Are you dating?"

I still don't know why this concerns my brother. Axel would be floored to know that I finally acted on my feelings. Reggie's energy feels hostile. "No, I'm not dating him. Not yet." It never really occurred to me that Jameson and I have never asked each other out. We find comfort in each other's presence and just went with the flow.

But words do have meaning.

And this question is one Jameson deserves to hear.

Reggie growls at me as I stomp back into the house, eyes peeled for Jameson. He's leaning back against the counter, scooping cereal into his mouth like he's out of time and somehow still not spilling milk all over his sweater. His brow raises at my entrance as I blow out a breath and gather the confidence to alert every last man in this house to who I belong.

He lays the bowl onto the counter behind him as I drag him into a rough kiss, Jameson easily giving in so that I can take what I need. Fuck, he's perfect. When I pull away, he's licking his lips, one of his hands slowly finding my throat and squeezing to bring me back to reality. "What's that for, babe?"

"Date me."

The shock on Jameson's face is almost comical before he gathers himself. "That wasn't what I was expecting this morning but absolutely. 100%. You sure about this?" His free hand slides to rest on my hip, squeezing in the same way the one around my neck does. I've never been submissive in public. There's never been a need to be but with Jameson, he'll have me melting in his hands every touch I get.

"100% sure."

A smile spreads across my lips as he pulls me forward for another kiss, this one much shorter. It tastes like Fruit Loops, Jameson sighing as he releases me. Then he pats my chest before I summon up the courage to walk back out. I know that my struggle with Reggie isn't over but for now, everyone knows and it feels like a weight off my shoulders.

Everyone knows that Jameson is mine.

That he's my boyfriend.

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Chapter 6

JAMESON

I watch Wyatt leave, every last muscle in his body pulled tight with anxiety. He still reminds me of the soldier that deployed a few years except for moments like this when he all but melts in my hands. I always see the teddy bear version of him rather than the tattooed beast everyone claims him to be. Don't get me wrong. The tattoos are an added bonus and I know there's more strength in his hands than there is in my entire body. However, I also know that Wyatt has a soft touch, one that creates delicious masterpieces.

The smile on my face quickly disappears when Reggie stalks over to me, his hands fisted at his sides. He reminds me of a petulant child that just lost an argument rather than a grown man about to hand me my ass for dating his brother. In either situation, it's not his choice who I or Wyatt dates. It never has been and it never will be.

Should I have mentioned something?

Probably.

But Wyatt has been at my side just as long as I've known Reggie. They were my family when I had none. I lean back against the counter and fold my arms across my chest. At this rate, I'll be late for work but it'll be worth it to have this conversation now. "What's your real problem with Wyatt and I, Reggie? Because you're not allowed to be angry that your brother is dating."

“But it’s you!” He jabs a finger into my chest. His controlling nature was something to look up to in college. It made him a great fraternity president but now? It makes him an ass. We’re in our mid-30s and he still acts like his words hold the same weight. “I told him you were off limits. I told you-”

I gently pry Reggie’s finger off my chest and shake my head. “Reggie, I don’t need your fucking permission to date your adult brother. You of all people have no business telling anyone what they can and can’t do when you are constantly disrespectful of everyone’s boundaries.” I’m done playing the friend who just goes along with everything. There have been times when I’ve kept my mouth shut and shouldn’t have. “I was going to mention Wyatt yesterday but you were so fucking nasty about the idea, I thought I’d spare your brother the ridicule that would come from my confession.”

“I am not nasty to him. Wyatt just needs a little more love.”

My head falls back as I laugh. “Do you not hear yourself? He’s been trying to get you , his own brother, to love him! But everything is always about what you need.” His eyebrows bend in confusion but I’m not done. Reggie needs to hear this and even if he still doesn’t understand, it has to come from me. “I love you. You are my best friend, Reggie. You’re basically my brother but you don’t even see what you’re losing right in front of you.”

"So you’d choose my little brother over me?"

I don’t understand why he worded it like that. Something twists in my head, that I should read into his words but I ignore it. “I’m not choosing anyone, Reggie. Once you get your head out of your ass, I’ll be right here. Excuse me, I’m late for work.”

I push past him, throwing a head nod to the few who are still here. They’re shocked by my harsh words but I don’t regret them. Hopefully, Reggie will understand before

there is no one left to love him.

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Chapter 7

WYATT

The morning starts off slow as I open up the bakery, flipping on the lights as I go and then strolling into the back to grab a fresh pair of clothes. Despite having an apartment on the other side of the city, I spend the occasional night in the back to rise early for all the delicacies that take more than just a gentle touch. The pale blue walls and marble floors bring a soft ambiance that contrasts my aura. It's become something of a commodity to visit the ex-military baker.

It helps that I still remember how to smile, even more so that I now have a boyfriend after pining after him for years. His silly grin plastered on his face as I left this morning is etched into my brain, nearly distracting me from removing the freshly baked bagels from the wood oven. A hiss slips through my lips as I grab them with my hands and quickly drop them on the counter, vigorously shaking my fingers to ward off the heat.

“Well, that's one way to grab them. Maybe try the metal utensils you bought for that shit?” Laughter follows the question as I turn to face the entrance, Axel strolling in like he has nothing better to do than bother me. He plops onto a stool on the other side of the counter, leaning forward to grab the bagel I just pulled from the oven. “Cinnamon cherry? You must have known I was coming.” Axel takes a large bite before unearthing a five-dollar bill and slapping it on the table.

For someone who just made fun of me for pulling the bagels out of the oven barehanded, Axel doesn't seem phased by the heat in the slightest.

I enjoy the moments he breaks off of his morning to spend with me, especially with such a fractured family. “You on your way in?”

Axel nods as he takes another large bite. He works in the heart of the city as a graphic designer, adding touches to the interior of homes and condos to the exact specifications of his clients. He loves every bit of it, bringing their dream spaces to life and the smile that is permanently on his face, especially after meeting his girlfriend makes me envious of his happiness.

My phone vibrates on the counter and I grab it before groaning at the ridiculously sweet text that pops up.

Jay 3

I can kiss you in public now.

There’s an awful amount of emojis after the text causing me to smile. Axel taps the table, silently requiring me to explain why I’m staring down at my phone like an idiot. “Reggie’s birthday party was last night.”

Axel grunts at the admission, stuffing more into his mouth until he looks like a little chipmunk. I procure a glass of water for him knowing that he’ll start choking in the next second. He always avoids a conversation with food—whether it’s to eat it, to choke on it, or to go make it. His girlfriend is the same fucking way but she’s a little more subtle with it.

I also didn’t mean to start the conversation with that. “I only went to make the dessert but it got late and I stayed over with Jay.” Axel’s eyes grow wide as he leans forward, pounding his chest as he starts choking. He drains the cup of water, waiting for me to continue. “We told Reggie this morning. Well, I kind of just marched into the kitchen and told Jay to date me.” A nervous chuckle falls from my lips because I had no idea

how Jameson would take that.

Would he reject me? Would he have told me that we needed to talk?

“And I can assume by that stupid smile on your face that you kissed the shit out of him after he said yes. Excellent. I finally have an older brother I don’t fucking hate.” Axel pumps his fist into the air as he taps the counter again. “Are we celebrating? When’s dinner?”

“Didn’t really get that far. I think we’ll figure something out. This is... new.”

“Fuck no, it isn’t. Jameson has been coming over to the house since you all were in high school. It’s too bad that I don’t still attend those dinners with Grams and Gramps but I swear, they already know you two are endgame.” He slides out his phone and starts punching in a number before laying it on the counter. I’m not expecting to hear my new official boyfriend on the other line.

“Hello, Axel. I’m assuming you’re sitting in front of my boyfriend right now about to give him shit for finally making a splash.”

“Well, yes. Actually. I also came to steal a bagel. When’s dinner? When are we celebrating? This calls for a celebration. Please tell me that you’re at least taking my brother out on a date.” Axel speaks a thousand words a minute, barely giving Jameson a moment to speak. When there’s finally a bit of silence, I hear Jameson’s laughter through the phone.

“There will be a lot of celebrations. However, we need to take this at our own pace. Whatever is comfortable for Wyatt works with me.”

My face warms at how absolutely selfless Jameson always is. It’s always what works for me. He works around my schedule, my needs, my desires, and my trauma. He

never pushes or demands answers and seems perfectly content with what I'm able to give. I'm beginning to wonder if there's something he needs that I'm not measuring up to.

Axel throws out an exaggerated sigh. "God, you guys are too fucking cute. Gag, really. I'll see you in a few days." Then my brother hangs up and hops off the stool. "Take it easy, Wyatt but god, I'm so happy for you. You deserve all of this and more. Also, you're a fucking saint for going to Reggie's party. I applaud you."

"Do you ever think you'll talk to him again, Axel?" I'm on the verge of cutting Reggie out of my life too but that's not a conversation I want to have with my younger brother right now.

"I've thought about it but no, I don't think so. Not unless I'm required to. He's messaged a few times but his apologies are always a front for something else. He asked me for money a few weeks ago and then decided it was appropriate to demand my interior design services to fix up Mom's house. No apology for how he acts with me. No apology for all the hateful words. Until I see some genuine change, I don't think it's going to work."

Axel waves goodbye and slips out the front without another word. I can't blame him, though. We've all tried so fucking hard to cater to Reggie within our boundaries and he just bulldozes right through them. It makes me wonder how many of Jameson's boundaries he's destroyed and how much of a fucking saint my boyfriend has to be to have stuck around for so long.

I dial Jameson, feeling the need to actually celebrate. After all, we've been working toward boyfriend status for a long time.

"Yes, babe? What's up? Ah, the dinner thing. Are you ready for something like that?"

To anyone else, Jameson sounds heartless. To me, it's the sweetest thing out of his mouth because he knows how much I hate spending time in public spaces where I can't control the outcome. We've ordered out and sat in parks or walked along beaches but never spent time in a restaurant. It isn't my scene and as much as Jameson tries to play the suave accountant, he prefers a burger over escargot.

"I think so. Can we try?"

"Absolutely. I'll find somewhere with a private booth but clean off your kitchen table just in case. Oh and package up that new green tea cake you made a few days ago. I can't stop dreaming about it."

How has it taken me this long to publicly claim him?

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Chapter 8

JAMESON

The day passes with very few incidents, every company's books lining up as they should. I don't audit the huge accounts so if anything does go wrong with the smaller accounts, they tend to be quick fixes. Something someone missed in a general audit or a few pennies off here and there. The closer it gets to 5 pm, the more excited I am to be spending my first-ever dinner date with Wyatt.

This has been years in the making and I've scoured every last restaurant in the city before finding a small Italian place a few blocks from his house. It's not usually busy on Monday evenings and I'm hoping it stays that way long enough for me to dote on my new boyfriend.

"Looks like someone took a new step, eh?" Kylie pops into my office, hugging a portfolio to her chest. She wiggles her eyebrows before plopping into the chair in front of my desk. "That big teddy bear of a baker, right? God, tell him to make more of those blueberry cupcakes. I'll pay double if they're out of season or whatever."

I snort. "Kylie, that's not how it works. I'm sure he'd be more than happy to know someone enjoys his creations and yes, I'll ask him."

"It's not fair that you're not 300 pounds with all the sugar I've seen you consume. You'll come in with all these treats and half of them are gone before they even hit the break room. And yet, you look like this ." She waves to my body and then sighs before placing the portfolio aside. "Jokes aside, I have something for you."

“It’s 4 pm, Kylie. Don’t give me anything. I have a date tonight.”

She sighs again. “Cancel it. This is big. Maybe not big but... whatever.”

“Then give it to-”

“I’m bringing it to you.”

I lean forward, intrigued that she would skip our boss and bring me a portfolio. Granted, it would trickle down to me anyway but I would have dealt with it tomorrow morning rather than tonight. I flip open the leather case and frown at the company letterhead that was sent to us a few weeks ago.

Hollandeck Automotive

“Why is this on my desk? Kylie, Eugene updated these numbers last week.” I flip through a few pages, my frown turning into pure disappointment as I realize nothing is adding up correctly. “How did Eugene miss this?”

Kylie stands up and flips to a certain page before pointing to the timestamp at the bottom. “He didn’t. The problem is that Hollandeck sent in two sets of paperwork hoping we wouldn’t notice. If we report this file as is, it’ll look like the company is pulling in more profit than they are. They’re inflating their value.”

I still don’t understand why this is my problem. “Kylie, take this to Eugene and he’ll fix it.”

She flips a few more pages and then points to the finance team. My heart drops into my stomach when I see a name that shouldn’t be there. Reginald Katz. “He’s had to sign in when he’s visited you a few times but I thought it was weird when he decided to work with Eugene and not you. You told me he was your best friend. You’re

dating his brother! Oh, don't look at me like that. I remember everything you tell me. Not in a creepy way." Kylie takes a deep breath and falls back into the chair. "I don't think this was a simple mistake and I know we're not supposed to do things like this but I would hate for your friend to get caught up in whatever this is."

I want to believe that Reggie just found a bad batch of friends but it's very clear on the paper that he's been lying to all of us. He's been in sales for as long as I can remember but part of a finance team? He doesn't know the first thing about money, let alone a company's. Reggie has called one too many times for a few extra dollars to pay utilities that I know no company in their right mind would take my best friend on.

"What do you want me to do with this, Kylie? I'm not taking Eugene's client from him." It feels harsh to categorize Reggie like that but in a professional setting, that's all he is.

"Just take a little look. Eugene is off today and this has to be submitted so I would have asked someone on the floor to submit it anyway. If the numbers aren't right, we'll have to speak with the company but I'd rather you be there to soften the blow."

She has the spirit but the wrong mindset. Outside of this building, Reggie is my best friend, bordering on acquaintance if he doesn't stop fucking blowing through people's boundaries. Inside this building, he's just a client. The pill I'm about to fucking deliver to his company is going to be harder to swallow coming from me than Eugene. Still, I can at least investigate it so that we know whether or not we can meet the deadline.

"I'll look into it. When are you leaving?"

"Probably around 6:30. Everyone's reports need to be submitted by 6 so I thought that would give me enough wiggle room."

I thank her as she skips out of my room with one last ‘congratulations’ and I dive right into a portfolio from my nightmares. The company sent in their documents on time but it looks like a few more important documents have since arrived, one as early as this morning. None of them have been filed by Eugene and since his work is spectacular, no one thought to double-check this particular portfolio.

However, it’s all wrong.

The new documents completely twist the narrative. The previous paperwork showed off a small mom-and-pop car shop, making a few tens of thousands in profit. This new paperwork details an entirely different narrative. They're bordering on mid-size with profits that would be outrageous for such a small shop. Something happened in the first quarter that makes the second quarter look like it’s a completely different company. I flip through the pages again, growing more irritated when I start seeing a pattern.

The finance group that has met with Eugene consists of Reggie and two other familiar names. It takes me an ungodly amount of time to figure out that we all came from the same fraternity and I probably saw them yesterday. This whole thing stinks.

The worst part is that I won’t make dinner, not with the way this portfolio is laid out.

Hopefully, Wyatt doesn’t hate me when I have to cancel.

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Chapter 9

WYATT

“Don’t hate me for this but I need to postpone dinner. Unless you want to have something later tonight. I’m going to be here a while.”

I want to be angry that our dinner plans have been spoiled but to be honest, I was going to call Jameson and ask if we could eat at the house anyway. There’ll be a day I feel comfortable spending it in public but I still feel drained from last night.

“It happens. Don’t worry about me. I’ll have something waiting for you at home.” I make sure that he knows I love him before hanging up as I quickly close up the bakery. Two slices of that green tea cake are packed away in a container and sitting in my front seat before I realize that I don’t really want to spend the evening at home. It’s barely 5 pm and I could make it to Jameson’s office before it’s dark outside if I hurry.

I scroll through a few websites and punch in a couple of entrees before speeding down the road to my destination. Jameson will have no problems driving me home and it’ll be an excuse to have him in my bed again.

My console lights up as Reggie’s number scrolls across the screen.

“Reggie,” I answer, without a hint of expression in my voice. I’m a little terrified he’ll berate me for shoving my relationship in his face this morning.

“Talk to James for me, yeah? Our portfolio should have been approved already and we still haven’t received a confirmation.”

I frown, trying to connect Reggie’s sales career with Jameson’s accounting firm. They have nothing in common or what little they do wouldn’t include Reggie. “You ask him. Why would I talk to him about your job?”

“Because he likes you. Maybe he’ll say something. Look, just do it for your brother, alright? Make it like another birthday present or some shit.”

Reggie abruptly hangs up just as I pull into the parking lot of a small restaurant that has quickly become my favorite. None of what my brother just said makes any sense to me and I won’t be talking to Jameson about it. Well, I won’t ask him to help but now I’m curious. Reggie has never been good with money and if he took his finances to an accounting firm, that spells trouble.

I think.

Ten minutes later, I’m signing in with security and led upstairs by the bubbly assistant I’ve met a few times before. “Oh, I’m so happy that you guys started dating. He’s been all smiles until an hour ago. Fuck, I shouldn’t have said that. He’ll be excited to see you.” She smiles wide and I step into Jameson’s office, holding up the Mediterranean dishes I picked up on the way.

Jameson glances up, worry etched into his features. His eyes immediately brighten at my arrival but it doesn’t take away from the original expression. The assistant leaves us alone as I slowly approach the desk and lay the dishes on the table. “Thought I could at least eat in here and then you drive us home?”

“You called it home. I like that and fuck yeah, I’m starving.” He eyes the boxes and then turns back to his paperwork before setting it aside. “I already told Kylie this isn’t

going to be done by 6:30 so there isn't as much of a rush. What'd you get?" He wiggles his fingers for me to hand him something and suddenly I wonder if he's even had lunch.

I unearth the Greek lamb kleftiko and the sweet potato hash that Jameson all but salivates over. The cake is in another container but he sees it and hides it in his drawer, ignoring my laugh. "Jay, no one is stealing that cake unless it's you."

"Doesn't matter. Still putting it there for safekeeping." His gaze darts back to the portfolio that's been shoved across his desk before he digs into the hash. His shoulders relax as a moan falls from his lips, his entire body wiggling as he enjoys his food. It's one of the most adorable things about Jameson and something I wouldn't trade for the world.

That look of worry is still there and I have a sinking feeling that it's connected to Reggie.

I slowly dig into my plate, chewing until the spiced lamb is basically mush on my tongue before Jameson notices. "What's going on? I'm really sorry I couldn't take you out and-"

"It's not that. I was about to call and ask if we could eat at home anyway." Jameson places his food on the table and steps around the corner to wrap his arms around my shoulders. I place my head on his chest, needing the comfort he's offering. "I don't know how to say this so I'll just come out with it. Is Reggie in trouble?"

"Why would you ask that?"

I pull back a little to meet his gaze. "Because he called me saying that the portfolio should have been approved already and that it isn't. I don't... he's in sales, right? Even if there was a problem, why would he have called me and not you?"

Uncertainty settles in my expression as Jameson just sighs. That's the third or fourth time he's done that since I arrived and I hate it.

"Because he didn't set the portfolio up with me, babe. He set it up with one of my coworkers who should have finished auditing it a few weeks ago. New paperwork came in and my coworker is out of the office. Kylie noticed who was part of the company and brought it to me. It's a super conflict of interest but I wanted to make sure that it was just a mistake or if we could explain what was in there without making a big deal about it."

He steps back and runs a hand down his face, groaning as his gaze falls back on the portfolio. I can't imagine the conflict between trying to be Reggie's friend and doing his job at the moment. "I'm guessing that it's a big deal," I say.

"Kind of. I have absolutely no idea what he's doing working in finance but I don't really think he is. Whatever is going on, it won't be pretty." He plops back into his chair and cradles the sweet potato hash against his chest as he takes another large bite. We don't talk for several minutes before I hand him his half of the main entrée. "Let's talk about something more interesting. Newest creation at the café. What is it?"

A wild grin splits across my lips as I swallow. "You'll have to visit to try it. I'm not spoiling that surprise."

"You're just trying to kill me. You know if I go in there, I won't leave. There's so many options and delicacies and... nope." He stuffs his mouth with a few more forkfuls before digging in his drawer for the cake. The way his eyes light up and he wiggles in his seat again makes me laugh as he holds up his hand for a clean fork.

I'm all too happy to supply it, Jameson immediately digging in. His head flops back against his chair, a moan filtering out into the small space. I can't help myself as I set

my plate down again and walk around the desk to plant a kiss on his lips. He tastes like spices and green tea, Jameson gently cupping my face to bring me closer.

The world slips away as I grip his armrest, leaning forward until the chair is scooting backward into the wall. Jameson doesn't stop as he draws me close again, discarding the cake on the table. I have to be something fucking amazing for him to choose me over sugar. My tongue runs along the seam of his lips until he opens, letting me direct this moment.

His hands fall to my waist, a wanton moan tearing from his throat that instantly makes my cock hard. I pull away just enough to stare at the door, making the most unprofessional decision to lock it and return to my boyfriend. He needs a moment of relief and I want to see him while I give him pleasure.

Jameson just watches me as I gesture for him to stand up and then I place him on his desk. It's relatively clean so I don't get the joy of swiping everything off to the floor. I'm also not wasting our food.

"What's going on in that head of yours, babe?"

I don't answer him as I drop to my knees, laughing when his breath hitches and his hands immediately go to my shoulders. I undo the button and zipper of his pants, watching as his cock thickens in my hand when I pull it out. "Needed a taste," I push out. He knows I'm fucking lying but it doesn't matter. If it gives him the strength to continue looking through that portfolio and possibly damn his best friend, I'll give it to him.

The moment my lips circle his tip, Jameson's hips buck toward me. I can't have him falling off so I place a firm hand on his thigh to keep him in place before I suck him in whole.

“Jesus Christ, babe.” His grunts spur me on as I start up a rhythm with my tongue, taking special care to suck on his tip, precum coating my tongue. I look up to see his jaw pulled tight, Jameson desperately trying to keep his sounds under control. “Right there. God, Wyatt you’re so fucking perfect. You take me so beautifully.” He groans again, his head falling back but his words continue to flow. “When we get home, I’m going to fill you just the way you need. Flatten you on the mattress and just go to town. Right there, babe. Your mouth is heaven.”

I ramp up my pace, loving the way Jameson’s eyes cross when he looks back down at me. His hips have started trying to meet my mouth, his breathing picking up and his stomach muscles beneath his shirt starting to tense. I know the exact moment he loses control because his grip on my shoulder tightens. His cum spills down my throat and I swallow every drop, loving the taste of my man.

I don’t stop sucking until he all but peels me off and drags me up to his lips. I’m not ready for the way he dominates the kiss, tasting himself as he devours me until my hands on his thighs tighten with a punishing grip. I shouldn’t have started this in here.

“Mmm, eat your food Wyatt or I’ll be bending you over this goddamn desk.”

“Can’t have that,” I chuckle as I straighten his clothes and help him back into his pants. I’m too wired to just sit and eat but I do it anyway, deciding that watching Jameson concentrate is more fun than egging him on. After all, he promised to take care of me the moment we get home.

I adjust myself in my pants and move to the small lounge at the edge of the room as Jameson opens the portfolio again. His smile disappears as he begins flipping through the papers and not even a bite of my green tea cake makes it return.

I hate that.

Chapter 10

JAMESON

The night ended on a sour note, the investigation into the portfolio taking a lot longer than I had hoped. It didn't help that I had to call Eugene on his fucking vacation to let him know what was going on so that it could be fixed immediately. He wasn't happy Kylie had given me the books but he understood. After that, however, I was drained.

Wyatt was just happy for me to crawl into his bed and play big spoon. It's not a chore with him. Nothing is. And holding him in my arms, what little I can reach with his massive shoulders keeps me sane. Especially when I get to wake up staring at his sharp features that contrast the softness of his personality.

I hadn't expected Wyatt to take charge last night but it just makes me love him all that much more. The moments when he sees I need a break from reality and actually does something about it. Maybe it's not healthy to soothe most of our problems with sex but it works for us.

For now.

And now that Wyatt is publicly mine, I plan on stealing a lot more kisses and touches and dragging him away from any and all gatherings so that I can fuck him senseless.

"Stop staring, Jay."

"But you're so fucking gorgeous." I slide up the bed a little to kiss the bridge of his

nose, smiling when he just groans as a response. “Come on. As much as I want to lay here for the rest of the day, we both have work. We can try that dinner thing again tonight.”

Wyatt sighs, his entire body deflating as he finally opens his eyes. “Can’t. Tuesday nights I hang with Gramps, remember? You’re invited, you know. You should come with me this time.” I remember several days when we spent vacations and weekends over at their grandparents’ house. After their parents died, I used to go over there all the time with Wyatt and Axel.

The visits slimmed down until it was just Wyatt spending time with his grandparents every week to keep them company. They enjoyed the baked goods their grandson brought and Wyatt enjoyed the lack of chaos and a good home-cooked meal. Somewhere in there, I stopped going as much as well. Whether it was timing or what, I don’t know.

I scoot a little closer and throw my arm around his waist. “You just want to show off your new boyfriend.”

Wyatt chuckles as he slowly sits up and stretches. I admire every last muscle carved into that man as his back cracks before weathering my expression. “I absolutely do want to show off my new boyfriend, not that they’d be surprised. They’ve told me more than once I needed to speak up.” He shrugs and then twists around for a kiss, a small pout on his lips.

And how can I deny that?

I draw him in, lightly tasting him until my phone rings on the nightstand. “I swear that everyone always wants to interrupt us. The entire world is conspiring against us, babe.” He laughs at the insinuation as I grab my phone and answer without looking at the screen. It takes me a minute with all the yelling to realize that it’s not my phone.

I pull it back and put it on speaker, frowning as Reggie spouts off a lot of angry words so early in the morning. It's barely 7:30 and this man is running on a motor.

"Did you even talk to James? Fucking hell, Wyatt! My boss is angry because he got a call yesterday that things didn't match up. We had everything in and on time and you couldn't even just speak to James about it? I trusted you."

His words don't even make any sense. Trusting his brother to speak to me about a matter that I'm not involved in and being mad when Wyatt doesn't do what he's told is a childish thing to do. Reggie is still yelling into the earpiece until he stops and asks if Wyatt is still listening.

"He is still listening, Reg. However, so am I, and if it was that fucking important, you should have called me. I had no idea you were in finance but you never meant for me to know if you were with Eugene. We don't even work in the same wing." I sit up as well, running my hands through my hair before I lean into the mouthpiece. "Whatever you thought you were asking me to do is fucking illegal which I'm sure you knew. When did you start working in finance?"

"Does it matter? We're late on our submission."

"Which is not my problem because the paperwork wasn't submitted to the firm correctly. So, speak with Eugene and get it squared away. I'm sure it's nothing." The panic in Reggie's voice tells me it's absolutely something and the nearly \$50,000 missing in receipts means it wasn't just an accident. "I mentioned yesterday that you were pushing everyone away and this isn't helping. Berating your brother for something that is out of his control is a step in the wrong direction. Fix your business and don't call so early in the morning."

I hang up on him and slip out of bed, all of that peaceful rest ruined by that call. Reggie is tied up in something and he's getting antsy. My problem is that he thought

he could get to me through his brother, which means that although he hasn't accepted us, he will use the connection.

Wyatt scoots out after me, walking into the kitchen and starting the coffee before speaking again. "Why do I feel like this is worse than just some misplaced money or the numbers being wrong in the portfolio?"

"Because it is." I lean back against the counter and fold my arms across my chest. "They're reporting way over what they made, possibly because it's a newer public company. If everyone thinks they're making more than they are, more people buy or invest or whatever the fuck Reggie needs them to. He's not the CEO or even the CFO of the company but he's listed in the documents so I have to believe that he knows what is going on." My jaw pulls tight as I try to think through my options.

I was never going to cut Reggie out of my life, not unless I had to or he crossed another boundary with Wyatt. The problem is that this illegal business he's working for could cost me my job if anyone thinks I'm working with him. I have no choice but to cut ties. Fuck this hurts.

The worst part is how this is going to affect Wyatt. I stare up at him, my boyfriend trying to understand the torrent of emotions running through my expression. His kind eyes soften my anxiety but it's going to be difficult breaking away when all Wyatt needs and wants is support.

I don't even have to say anything, though. Wyatt just knows.

He engulfs me in a large hug, patting my back several times. "Don't worry about me. You and Axel are all I need and I have you both. If Reggie wants to play games, then he'll have to figure it out on his own."

I sag against him, drawing comfort from him for once. "I don't understand how we

got here. We used to all be so close and now...” I huff out a breath, refusing to finish the sentence. Instead, I just hold Wyatt tight against me, loving that we don’t need words to show how we feel about each other. Even if the entire world is falling apart around us, Wyatt has always been my rock as I have been his.

I just hope this time it’s enough.

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Chapter 11

WYATT

My mind is a chaotic mess by the end of the day as Axel sets up the little cakes on the display. A frustrated growl leaves me when the cake spinner slips and I mess up a design for the umpteenth time. My breathing quickens as I stare at the buttercream disaster, about to swipe it across the counter when Axel comes to rescue me.

“Hey! Hey . Wyatt, fuck, look at me.” I’m pressed against a wall, a hand on my chest as someone tells me to breathe with them. It takes me a few moments to regain my composure before I look down at Axel who’s completely freaked out. “What the fuck is going on? You came in a little off today but I thought maybe James just didn’t fuck you hard enough. Did he hurt you?” His eyes widen and he turns to leave before I drag him back.

Jameson would never hurt me.

“No. It’s Reggie.”

“Just drop him. I did. Best thing I ever did.”

It’s not that easy. I’ve become so attached to everyone and everything regardless of my wellbeing. I don’t want to lose anyone else which is why it has been so fucking hard for me to leave Reggie behind. With this latest revelation though, I might have to. It makes sense that he keeps asking for money. It was never for house repairs or bills or any of the other billion things that he kept talking about. I just don’t

understand why .

“Talk to me, Wyatt. Let’s step outside real quick, okay? Do we need to call James?”

“No.” I stomp out the back door, thankful for the brisk air that hits me in the face. I nearly smashed some of my creations that actually came out okay and that would have made me angrier. “Reggie called me last night to ask me to talk to Jay about one of his portfolios. Jay couldn’t tell me much but whatever Reggie is doing, it’s not legal.”

Axel raises a brow as he lets out a low whistle. “That explains a lot. That’s also a fucking dangerous road to go down for a little extra cash. Jesus Christ. Let’s close up shop, grab James, and go over to Gramps and Grams’s house. They’ll enjoy the extra time.”

“Since when do you go on Tuesdays?”

“Since I decided I’d like to be there when you present James as your boyfriend. Wyatt, I know you. It’s your proudest moment to show him off as it should be. I also know that it’s going to shock the hell out of Grams and I need to see it. Okay, so I’m not psychic. James texted me an hour ago asking what flowers he needs to bring.”

I chuckle and slap Axel on the arm before reentering the café. Tonight is either going to be the best night in a while or it’s going to be the worst.

It’s worse than the worst.

We pull into the driveway, Jameson leaning forward to stare at the red vehicle in front of us. “Why the fuck is Reggie here?” None of us have to answer to know why. My Tuesday visits with our grandparents aren’t a secret. In fact, I used to all but broadcast it, trying to get Axel and Reggie to come and spend more time with them.

Axel finds time in his busy schedule on his own but I haven't known Reggie to make a trip an hour out of the city in the last several months.

Axel grumbles something unintelligible but he's obviously uncomfortable with this turn of events. So am I if I'm being honest. Jameson reaches over the console and squeezes my thigh, grinning at me to calm my nerves. Unfortunately, it does the opposite when I catch the uneasiness in his expression. We managed a few cutesy text messages over the last couple of hours before we picked him up but they dropped off the closer it got to 5 pm.

He's not working on Reggie's portfolio but he explained that there was a lot of yelling and several angry emails being passed back and forth that he was copied in on. It doesn't look good for my brother but it's his fault for getting himself into this mess.

"We go in and hope that Reggie is on his best behavior."

Axel groans. "I should have brought Laura so she could shield me from any shit Reggie tries. Scratch that. He would pull her apart. Nope. God, I call cooking duty. I need something to distract me." He peels out of the car, bouncing on his toes as he waits for us to do the same. I guess we're walking in as a united front although that makes it seem like we're ganging up on Reggie.

I swallow nervously as Jameson rounds the car and places his hands on my chest. "I need deep breaths from you, babe. There you go. I know finding out all of this isn't easy but Axel and I are right here. Your grandparents are still here for you. No one is leaving. Reggie just needs to get his act together." I want to believe all that and it makes it easier when James rises up on his tip toes and kisses me on the lips. "Now, let's go eat a home-cooked meal, avoid any heavy conversations, and then you get to show me what you brought for dessert."

I wiggle my brows, Axel slapping me across the chest and narrowly missing Jameson's head. "Your family is also eating dessert and we will not be eating that. I hope you brought something with like real cream. Wait! No. I meant like cake with icing. Fuck both of you."

Jameson and I are giggling like 12-year-old boys as we follow behind Axel, nearly forgetting that we'll be spending the evening with Reggie. This isn't how I planned to have a family reunion but so long as he doesn't try anything, it might be the first step to healing.

The first step past the foyer and I already know it's going to be a fucking shit show. Gramps and Gram rush toward us, laughing and hugging and kissing, even embracing Jameson without hesitation. It feels like when we were younger and our parents would drop us off.

"I didn't know all of you were coming! This is such a pleasant surprise," Grams muses. Her voice wobbles a little more than usual as she drags me into the kitchen, patting my hand several times before stealing the container out of the other. "I'll just put this in the fridge so we can all discover what it is later." A small smile plays on her lips as I follow her to help her with the door.

I hear one of Jameson's nervous laughs as Gramps turns to me. "I love everyone being here but Jamie hasn't been here in a year? What's the occasion?"

"We're dating, Gramps." I put every ounce of happiness into the statement, watching Jameson's face brighten at the same time. Publicly announcing it really does show him how much I love him. "It's only been a day or two since we officially announced it."

Jameson snorts. "You mean since you decided to kiss me in front of your brother and all his friends. Sure, yes, we've been dating since yesterday." He's trying real hard

not to laugh, Axel's hand plastered over his own face to hide his smile.

The only people not smiling are Grams and Reggie. I didn't expect Reggie to be happy for me but I thought Grams would. Shocked, but happy. She seems surprised and a little worried as she glances at Reggie and then Jameson before looking up at me. She taps my arm a few times and then walks over to Jameson. "You're supposed to be dating Reginald. What happened?"

I frown, wondering where the fuck she drew that conclusion. "Grams, what are you talking about? Reggie and Jay are best friends but they're not dating." I look between my brother and my boyfriend, trying to figure out where this information came from. "Reggie, have you been telling Grams lies?" Silence meets my question but I won't let this lie. I hate to ruin the dinner but this is important. This is the rest of my life I'm talking about.

The rest of my life.

Reggie growls at us before throwing his hands up and marching out to the back patio. Needing a resolution, I stalk after him when he whirls around and pokes me in the chest. "I told you to stay away from my fucking friends, especially James."

"Why was that so important for you? I'm a grown man and I don't need your permission to date Jameson. Sure, maybe I should have asked or told you when I started having feelings but I'm not obligated to." I steel my emotions, trying to draw on my confidence. I fucking hate being outside this late but I also don't want to argue. My hands fist at my side as Jameson comes alongside me, a firm hand settled on my lower back.

My brother hisses at the both of us and for a moment, I see a piece of him when we were younger rather than the man who just turned 34. "You were supposed to be mine. We did everything together. And then Wyatt started wedging himself in

between us. I told him to fucking stay away, Jameson.”

Jameson snorts and then catches himself when we realize Reggie believes his own words. “Reggie, we were never like that. We never dated. I never saw you that way. Wyatt didn’t wedge himself into anything. He was just as much my friend as yours. Why the fuck did you think any different?”

Unable to reel myself in, my fist clocks Reggie in the face before Axel ushers me inside. Our grandparents are confused but I’m too riled up to explain. Axel can do the honors. I’m going to go start on dinner just so I have something to occupy my hands. Otherwise, I’m going to waltz right back out there and hit my brother again.

Reggie wanted me to stay away not because they were his friends but because he had a crush on Jameson. He wanted me to stay away so he could confess? That’s fucking bullshit.

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Chapter 12

JAMESON

Furious doesn't even begin to explain what I feel. I stare at the man I used to call a friend, a best friend. He doesn't even look remorseful. He's in shock that Wyatt let his anger get the better of him but Reggie doesn't look sorry. In fact, Reggie looks like the whole world has wronged him and I bet he's blaming someone else for the portfolio I was gifted last night.

"Care to explain all this shit, Reg? Because from where I'm standing, you've chosen to be a very shitty person. What, so you're in love with me? Is that it?"

Reggie doesn't answer as he digs his toe into the ground, nursing his face with one hand. "It wasn't supposed to be like this, alright? You were my friend and that was that. You started looking at him, after him, always wanting him to be around when he was. That's not how it was supposed to be."

"Reg, we're 34-fucking-years-old. We're halfway to 40. Are you seriously trying to play this fucking game right now? If anyone is driving a wedge, it's you. It's always been you. Between Axel. Between Wyatt. Between me."

A look of horror passes through his expression. "What? I would never-"

"But you did. That's the point, Reg! You did. Every party and hangout, it's always about the booze and remembering the good old days. You never grew up and neither did any of our friends. You took your mother's house and you've basically ruined

whatever memories we all shared. You've disrespected everyone's boundaries unless it benefited you and now this shit with Hollandeck Automotive?"

Reggie steps up to me, jabbing me in the chest. It takes me a minute to realize that he's had a few beers even if Axel, Wyatt, and I just arrived. "I asked you all for help, specifically you, and you told me no."

"You said that shit was for bills. I thought you just couldn't handle your own expenses. I didn't think you were trying to defraud the government and what for? You were never good with money. How the fuck did you end up in all of this?" The sky crackles overhead as lightning zips across it, a perfect example of how I'm currently feeling.

"It's a long story."

"Well, figure it out because this shit isn't going to go away. What is going to go away are your brothers because they feel disrespected." Reggie tries to sidestep me but I push against his chest. "No fucking apology is going to save this. You just told Wyatt that your confession was worth more than he was. Be happy that all he did was punch your face."

"So you approve of his violence? I told you he wasn't some sweet fucking boy that needs to be looked after."

Reggie just doesn't understand. He digs himself into a hole and then happily buries himself without even knowing he's suffocating. "Let's get one thing straight. Your brother is the kindest man I've ever known. Wyatt's heart is able to love and accept everyone regardless of their circumstances but he has a hard time being around you. That should fucking tell you something. Figure it out, Reggie before they're all gone. And stop telling your grandparents lies. If Gramps didn't already know that we were going to end up together, this might have gone worse."

“So, you never-”

“Not once, Reggie. Not once. My eyes were always on Wyatt.” A harsh truth but one he needs to hear. The sky crackles again and I step inside, finding Wyatt standing by the front door. I wanted to make this work. I wanted to share my relationship with his family but it’ll happen in time. Not with Reggie, but definitely with the others. I also know that trying to force something tonight will be worse than coming back next week.

I dole out goodbye hugs, Gramps hugging me a little tighter and longer than usual. “You’re a good boy, James. I know it’s hard but you take care of them for me.”

“Them?”

“Axel and Wyatt. I’ll try and drill some sense into the other one.” He chuckles as he lets me go and I move to Wyatt’s side before throwing my hand out for him to take. Wyatt doesn’t hesitate and Axel walks out with me into the beginning droplets of what looks like a thunderstorm.

It isn’t until we get back into the car that someone speaks. Axel leans forward from the backseat, patting Wyatt’s shoulder. “For what it’s worth, Reggie deserved that hit. I hope it felt good.”

Wyatt lets out a heavy breath, his shoulders sagging in relief. “It felt really fucking good.” We all share a cautious laugh as we head across the city. I have no idea where tomorrow will take us but I’m just glad that I’ll have Wyatt in my arms at least for one more night.

Chapter 13

WYATT

“If you want to ask something babe, just do it. Staring at me like that gives me anxiety.” Jameson is currently peeling off rain-soaked clothes after we had to run from the parking lot into my apartment. We dropped Axel off fifteen minutes ago and are now stripping to share a much-needed warm shower. However, I can’t stop thinking about Reggie’s words.

Jameson sighs as he walks over to me by the sink. He helps me out of my shirt before pressing a kiss to my chest and then starts on my pants. It’s moments like this where he doesn’t speak, where Jameson just does , that I feel loved the same way when he holds me at night. By the time I’m under the steamy spray, the anxiety is gone and I just want to forget it ever happened.

“Fuck, I should have called-”

“I sent Gramps a message just before I came in here. All you need to do is relax and let me see your fist.” I begrudgingly let him take my hand in his, my back to the shower head as water cascades down my skin. Jameson is completely focused on my raw knuckles, although there’s barely any damage. I don’t even know why I let myself get worked up over that shit. We should have stayed. “Wyatt, I can hear you thinking. First off, your brother and I would have never worked. We are too similar and while I thought he made a great fraternity president, I never saw him as anything more than that. Second, if we had stayed, it wouldn’t have been comfortable for anyone. Your grandfather says he’s going to try and speak to Reggie but don’t hold

your breath.”

Jameson grabs a cloth and dabs a little soap on my hand before gently beginning to wash it. “How are you so calm about this?” He doesn’t answer me but the tremor in his hands tells me everything. He’s pissed. As he should be. My brother, his best friend, just told us why he’s been a dick for so long. I decide to change the subject. “Did he tell you about the money?”

“No, and I don’t really care. He’s made some awful choices but this is one he’s going to have to figure out on his own. Wyatt, can we talk about anything other than your brother right now?” The pain in his voice makes me realize that he’s not dealing with this well. We’ve both seen how awful he was to Axel and then to me but he’s never been awful to Jameson.

Not that I can remember.

I hum my response as Jameson begins washing my entire body. He works slowly and thoroughly, dragging the washcloth over every scar and wound. A year ago, I might have been thrust back into the nightmares but his touch brings warmth and acceptance. He loves me as I am, scars and all. He’s not scared of my anger and he doesn’t run away when the nightmares surface.

“I love you, Jameson.”

Just four words but they mean the world to me.

Jameson meets my eyes as I walk him back into the tiled wall, my hands moving to cup his cheeks. Then I bend down to kiss him, both of us a soapy mess. I don’t care, though. “Tomorrow, we’re going on a date. Tonight, you’re going to fuck me.”

“I am?”

“Yes. In all of this chaos, I want to still celebrate what I have and who my boyfriend is. Jameson, I don’t care what Reggie thinks or says. You’re mine and I want to show you off.”

“I think I can get behind that.”

We both break into laughter as he drags me down for another kiss. “I love you too, Wyatt. More than anything. More than words.”

Chapter 14

WYATT

For some reason, my heart is in my throat as we move into the bedroom. I've given myself over to Jameson more times than I can count but for some reason, this feels different. Heavier. Like all the emotions I've been holding back from dealing with Reggie are now forefront and center, threatening to spill over and ruin this moment.

Jameson is more than just my boyfriend. He's my lifeline and my heart. I want to celebrate this moment but I can't get out of my head now that he's here with me. And he's mine.

"Wyatt, babe, come here."

I swallow nervously and look up, confused when I see Jameson sitting on the edge of the mattress. I don't remember him even moving over there, the man is naked, his legs spread and waiting for me to join him. Water droplets spread across his shoulders, his hair flat against his face but those pale green eyes of his have never looked more fierce.

My body takes me to him as I fall to my knees effortlessly. Jameson wraps his arms around my shoulders, fingers playing with the hair at the base of my neck. My head falls to his chest as he holds me, a sense of peace running through me.

"I've got you. You know that right?" His body trembles, his hold tightening ever so slightly. He needs this release just as much as I do. What happened in the shower a

few moments ago was fun and light but we both need something the other can give.

He needs control.

I need to submit.

Jameson's touch becomes a little rougher as one of his hands sifts into my hair and drags my head back. Our eyes meet, his a torrent of anger, no doubt matching mine. There is also so much fucking love there that I melt all over again. His lips smash to mine, drawing a moan from the base of my throat.

This isn't just a kiss. It's a claiming. A fierce need for my submission while he tries to control the little piece of the world he's entitled to. It's only then that I taste the salt of his tears. It takes me a moment to realize he's not the only one crying. We've both lost someone tonight, someone we held dear. Someone who we thought could possibly change.

I press my hands to his chest, letting him direct this moment. Jameson pulls back, leaving me gasping for breath before gesturing for me to get into position. A small grin plays on my lips. It's been a while since this man has given in to his desires and truly taken over in the bedroom. Jameson stands and walks around me as I lean against the edge of the mattress, still on my knees.

Our size difference makes Jameson's desires a little more difficult but I've found that I absolutely enjoy letting him take control. Like now. My heart beats a little faster when I can't see Jameson.

"Hands on the mattress, babe." Jameson reappears at my side as he hovers his arm over mine, his fingers tangling with mine. I curl mine around his as his other hand settles at the back of my neck. My head falls forward as he squeezes, demanding me to relax. My breathing slows as I lean forward more, my chest leaning over the side

of the mattress.

Only then does Jameson steal back his hand and remove his touch from the back of my neck. Bereft of his touch, another moan pulls from my throat. My body lurches forward when he returns, lube sliding between my ass cheeks and rimming my hole. My fingers dig into the sheets as Jameson slowly starts to pump into my ass. A gentle hand on my waist keeps me from moving forward—not because I physically can’t move—but because the reminder of his touch tells me that he’s going to take care of me. That he’s going to take care of the both of us.

Not soon enough, I feel his cock pressing against my hole. His hands fall to either side of my chest as he uses the leverage of the bed to slide in. His forehead hits my shoulder when his hips meet my ass, his body still trembling with the emotions he’s holding onto.

“I love you so fucking much, Wyatt. I’m going to say it every fucking day for the rest of my life.”

He doesn’t give me a chance to speak, pulling out and then thrusting back in. This isn’t truly about pleasure. It’s about submission and letting him use me as he needs. All of the other times, it’s about exploration and sweetness and kisses.

This? It’s just raw, unfiltered passion.

Jameson pushes my back forward so that I’m resting against the mattress, my ass propped up in the air. He continues his ruthless path, the other hand digging into my waist as he uses me. His heavy breathing is the only thing I can hear as my orgasm nears.

“Fuck, you’re squeezing my cock just right. Touch yourself, Wyatt. I need you to come with me.” Both of his hands move to grip my waist as he hits just the right spot.

I wrap a hand around my neglected cock and start to stroke it, quickly timing it with each of Jameson's thrusts. I smear the precum along my length, spurring me toward the finish line just as Jameson growls, unloading in my ass.

I follow seconds later, stuttering through my release. Jameson is still thrusting, the squelch of his cum with every plunge into my ass driving me over the edge again. My body jerks as pleasure shoots through me until I'm just a puddle of limbs.

"You're perfect for me, Wyatt," Jameson whispers as he places a kiss to the middle of my back before pulling out. I stay put, my boyfriend taking his time to clean me up before helping me onto the bed.

Not soon enough he's wrapped around me, my head pressed against his chest. One of his legs is thrown over my side, Jameson unable to reach any lower but I don't fucking care. Being held like this is everything.

"Jameson, I love you too but it's more than just words. You're my light and my rock. You know exactly what I need. You call my imperfections perfect. It makes me love you more." The words are barely above a whisper as I try to catch my breath. We're both slicked with sweat and in dire need of another shower but I don't want to move from this spot.

Jameson tightens his arms around me. "I call them perfect because they are, Wyatt. You are perfect, no matter what anyone tells you, and not just because you give me sweets. Your heart is so big and you have so much room to love. You're patient and go out of your way to make others comfortable. You're selfless, Wyatt, and I don't deserve you."

Tears prick the edges of my eyes as he waits for me to look at him. The kiss he gives me is sweet and tender, the embrace promising me that this man will always be here for me.

“You do deserve me, Jay. You’re mine, remember?”

“Of course I am. Forever and always.”

Chapter 15

THE NEXT MORNING

JAMESON

Wyatt won't tell me what the surprise is. All I know is that I'm fucking salivating for something sweet while fielding calls from Reggie. There's been a few texts as he pleads for me to call him but I'm not doing that either. Gramps left a message that Reggie left soon after we did last night and that staying apart for the time being is better than trying to resolve things.

I wholeheartedly agree.

Axel hasn't checked in but I don't expect him to. His girlfriend is probably doing damage control the same way I did with Wyatt. I'm glad he has someone in all this mess.

"Got a moment?" Eugene peeks his head into my office, not waiting for my answer before slipping in and closing the door behind him. "Before I say anything else, I'm not happy Kylie brought you that portfolio. It's a huge conflict of interest. However, I know you're an honorable son of a bitch and a damn good auditor. That account is a fucking shit show. Those extra files wouldn't have been caught if you and Kylie hadn't been as meticulous as you were."

He plops into the chair in front of my desk and I just stare at him. "I was hoping that it wasn't that bad. Reggie isn't that horrible of a person but money isn't his thing. He

shouldn't be anywhere near that. Hell, none of those guys should be."

"Exactly. Apparently, it's just a fronting company for something else. It's not actually pulling in much money at all and what money it does drag in isn't from car sales. I called the CEO this morning to let him know that we'll no longer be working with their account but I had to report it. They're going to be investigated."

I sigh as I lean back in my chair and thread my fingers together behind my head. "And you're giving me a heads up because I know Reggie and they'll want to talk to me."

"Absolutely. In a way, Reggie saved your ass by going to me. You didn't officially touch that portfolio and while you did some research, your name isn't anywhere on any of those documents. You dodged a bullet, James."

I don't feel like I did. I feel like my entire life is about to implode. "What happens now?" I know what happens now. Reggie is going to find someone at his place of business, asking a bunch of questions in the next week. Depending on how deeply ingrained the fraud is, he and his friends are going to be hurting for years. My real question is what was the point?

I wave off Eugene and stuff a few papers in my bag. My boss was more than happy to give me the afternoon off after we explained the account. There wasn't even a discussion. He took one look at my face and told me not to come back after lunch, which works for me. Wyatt still won't tell me what my surprise is.

Hurrying, I speed down the road to the bakery, intent on taking him out to a quiet place for lunch when I get a text.

Are you here yet?

Just got here.

Use the key.

I frown as I slip out of the car and stare at the small shop. There's a 'closed' sign on the front. I try the door, not surprised to find it locked.

Where are you?

Use the key.

A smile plays on my lips as I sift through my keys to reveal the one key I haven't ever used. Wyatt handed it to me and Axel months ago, just in case but it's been hanging from the ring, abandoned for the most part. A tendril of excitement runs through me as I unlock the door and step inside. The door shuts behind me and automatically locks, a system Wyatt would have had to turn on.

Confusion sweeps through my expression as I stand in the empty shop, the soft blues winding around me not as calming as they usually are.

"Wyatt?"

Silence.

"Wyatt?" I call out again. My big burly soldier appears from the back, grinning at me over the counter. However, that isn't what steals my attention. It's the lack of clothing beneath his apron. I move closer until I can see his bottom half, my eyebrows raising near clean off my head. "Wyatt, what are you doing?"

"I thought we could bake together. It's quiet here." His smile is contagious as he holds out a hand for me to take, leading me around to stand beside him. "There's

something I wanted to try.”

“I’m going to make a fucking fool out of myself, babe. You can’t cook naked in front of me.”

Wyatt chuckles as he leans down to press a kiss on my forehead. “ Watch me. ”

Chapter 16

WYATT

Jameson can't keep his mouth closed as I hand him milk, cream cheese, and powdered sugar to whisk. His eyes keep dipping to my bare ass and then to my bare feet, an obvious safety hazard, and every other violation I can think of. It's a good thing I'm doing this just before the routine cleaning that I pay extra for every year.

I'm not sure what possessed me to do this but I love when his eyes are on me. It makes me feel powerful, important, but most of all beautiful. The scars and wounds don't bother him. The tattoos don't scare him off. And my height and bulk only make him love me more. The way he can bring me to my knees with one look is everything.

"If these cupcakes don't have any icing on them, they'll just be muffins. Mix , Jay."

He stutters and then glares at me. "How am I supposed to focus when you're standing here naked in front of me?" Jameson's cheeks are a beautiful rosy color, the man reaching down to adjust himself again as his eyes dip to my ass again. His attention is making me hard and I'm glad I already had the batter prepared when he arrived. "I can't do this."

I chuckle, handing him a whisk as I watch. He swallows, his Adam's apple bobbing up and down as he tries to concentrate. I can't help myself as I move behind him and slowly wrap my arms around his waist. Jameson clears his throat, still trying to mix the icing when I undo his pants and slip a hand inside to wrap around his cock.

“Fuck, babe. No. I’m not making icing. Shit.”

His hips buck forward, Jameson riding the sensation until his hand slips off the bowl and lands in the creamy mixture. He groans and then twists around before dragging me into a deep kiss. Icing smears along my cheek and chin, his hand moving lower to coat the front of my throat. “This is so fucking unsanitary.”

It absolutely is.

Which is why I drag him into the back to the small room I use as a bedroom. I haven’t stayed here in a while but it’s completely separate from the kitchen, with a personal washroom to boot. Jameson doesn’t hesitate as he attacks my lips again. His hands move around my back to undo the apron, the cloth only hanging around my neck.

“You’re terrible for trying to get me to cook while looking like this. I’m going to fuck you and it’s going to be a mess. Please tell me you have lube back here.”

I laugh at his urgency as I nod to the nightstand. He disappears for a moment before a packet of lube is between his teeth, Jameson smearing it on his clean hand. As much as I enjoy icing, I appreciate that he’s not going to use it to open me up.

Jameson rips the apron off me completely, kissing his way down my chest until he reaches my cock. I hiss when his hand wraps around it, the cold lube making me jolt forward. He doesn’t stop, though, dragging out my pleasure as he starts to stroke in erratic pulses that have my body hot and cold. I don’t know whether to thrust forward or pull away, my eyes rolling into the back of my head as an orgasm starts to build.

“Jay, fuck. Either give it to me or fuck me.”

“Babe, you’re not in control here.”

Funny enough, neither is Jameson. He's trying to be in control but he's losing himself to his desire. He turns me around before roughly stuffing his fingers between my cheeks. The bite of pain that comes with his touch is more than wanted, Jameson rimming my puckered hole several times before pushing inside. I meet his fingers, slowly rocking against them as my cock drags against the mattress. The friction is perfect as Jameson fucks into me with his fingers, adding more until he's four fingers deep.

"On the bed, babe."

Being so much taller than him, my fantasies of him fucking me against a wall or over the edge of a couch arm aren't plausible. However, I fucking love it when he flattens me onto a mattress and just takes what he needs. He quickly undresses and climbs on after me, sliding in almost immediately.

Jameson is pressed up against my back, his hands on my waist. I feel consumed by him as he starts thrusting into me, grunting with every plunge into my ass. My fingers curl into the pillows as I stuff my face into it, muffling my screams of pleasure. The walls in this place are not soundproof and even if the door is locked, the neighboring stores will absolutely be able to hear what's going on.

"You feel so fucking good, babe but you're going to have to wash everything. There's icing everywhere."

I know. I can feel the creamy mess sticking between me and the pillow. It's also slathered down my chest and now on my back as Jameson presses his hand between my shoulder blades for purchase. It doesn't matter though. I got what I wanted—my boyfriend to lose control with me. He's fucking into me with punishing strokes and when I push back, he hits that one spot that has me coating the sheets and my stomach.

His thrusts become sloppy as he nears his end, spilling into my ass before he flops onto my back. “Fucking hell. You did that shit on purpose.”

I mumble a yes as shocks of pleasure run through me, my cock still twitching as if it wants to go another round.

“Best lunch date ever, though. 10 out of 10, would do again.”

I snort as he rolls off of me, his cum pooling between my thighs. I twist to look over at him, a sloppy grin on his lips as he wiggles his eyebrows. I have no idea where that energy comes from, especially when he gestures to the small bathroom. “Round two?”

“Seriously, Jay?”

He doesn’t answer me. Just climbs off the bed and holds his hand out for me to join him. And who am I to say no?

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Source Creation Date: July 16, 2025, 9:44 am

Chapter 17

WYATT

That afternoon turned into a night between the two of us. We couldn't keep our hands off of each other, stumbling into his apartment and shedding our clothes for another couple of rounds. I'm not sure what changed but it doesn't seem like anything did. That's when I realized I stopped putting Reggie first in my life. That was the first day I allowed myself to be me.

I turned off my phone and decided to enjoy the life I had curated and the man that brought me joy. Over the last few days, I haven't been able to stop smiling. Between Axel showing up to detail about his latest project or Jameson stopping in for kisses and sweets, it feels almost perfect.

Nights we spend together at my place or his but the drive is cumbersome. It's too soon to ask him to move in but sleeping without him isn't something I'm looking forward to. It's been us against the world for months and it feels right. Perfect.

The bell over my café door rings and I look up, surprised to see Jameson strolling in to plop on a chair. The office is too far to spend lunch with me but he's here. In front of me. And the way his smile doesn't completely reach his eyes tells me something is off. I finish serving the customer in front of me before turning to him. "Hey, what is going on?"

"Have you talked to Axel today?"

“This morning. He came in for a bagel like he usually does. I was surprised you weren’t here. Why?” I tilt my head to the side and reach across the counter to take his hands in mine. His head falls as he lets out a heavy sigh before pulling away from me. “Jay, you’re scaring me. What is going on?”

“Your fucking brother had the bright idea to publicize all this shit.” He flops back and runs his hand through his hair before meeting my gaze. “Babe, I just wanted to make sure you hadn’t seen it but Reggie has lost his mind.” Jameson is obviously warring with something but I don’t know what he means by Reggie has taken all this public. My phone buzzes in my back pocket and I frown, unsure if I want to see it.

I have to face it, though. Reggie won’t just go away and we didn’t leave things on a good note a few nights ago. I dust the lingering flour off my hands and push the dough I was working on earlier to the side. A few customers interrupt the moment, giggling about the cute cupcakes before scurrying off to their next destination. Then I pull out my phone, my nonexpression morphing into horror at the tagged posts.

I open Facebook and scroll through the comments of the first post, wondering why Reggie thought this was a good idea. The second post isn’t any better. “Jay, why is he so adamant about saying I stole you? You said there wasn’t anything between you, that you never dated or so much as made a pass at him. And the other post, that you abandoned him?”

“It’s worse than that. Babe, there’s going to be an investigation into Reggie’s side business with the car sales company but since I’m his friend and I work at the company he hired as an auditor, they’re going to want to talk to me. That post makes it look like I fucking knew and he knows that.”

My heart sinks into my stomach as I slide my phone back into my pocket. Most of the comments are siding with Reggie; they’re his friends after all but there are a few just wondering what’s going on. Reggie has always been pretty laid back so for these

‘confession’ posts to appear right now, it’s not doing anyone a favor. “Do you know why he’s doing it?”

“He’s scrambling for attention. I told him he would lose us and he thinks this will bring us back. It won’t.” Jameson sighs as he pushes to his feet. “Wyatt, I know how much family means to you. I really do but I can’t do this with him. He’s going to cost me my job at this rate and whatever friendship was between us is no longer there. I understand a crush and being hurt that I never noticed him that way, but this? This is uncalled for. I’m cutting him off, Wyatt.”

I can see that it hurts Jameson to chop off that friendship. They’ve been friends for over 20 years. However, it’s been peaceful without Reggie’s snarky texts and asking for money. “After I found out he was doing all of this because he liked you, I’ve ignored him. He disrespected me because he thought I took you from him.”

Jameson lets out a bitter laugh. “Babe, I was never his. I called him before I walked in here but we’re going to meet. He has to know this won’t work, that I can’t be friends with him if this is how he acts.”

“Do you think any of this would have happened if we hadn’t said anything? If he hadn’t found out that we were dating?” I hate to believe that. I can’t give Jameson up but if it would have kept Reggie from doing all of this, I might have held onto our secret for a little longer.

He shakes his head, climbing up on the stool to reach over and steal a kiss. I’d call him adorable if it weren’t for the circumstances. “Reggie already knew. You know how hard it is for me to keep a secret. Every time you walk into a room, my eyes were right there with you. You were going to be at a party? So was I. He already fucking knew before I said anything, Wyatt. I think if we hadn’t said something, it would have been worse. We can’t take it back now and I’m not going to. I get to tell everyone you’re mine and I’m going to enjoy it.” Jameson kisses me again, doling

out the attention and passion he believes I deserve.

There's a few cheers in the café that I try to ignore as Jameson leaves. It's the first time anyone outside of my family has seen me with my boyfriend, with my man. No one ridiculed us for being together. No one told us that it couldn't work. They cheered. Someone yells 'go get 'em'. Someone else raises their mug and nods at me.

They're happy for me.

I don't know why I didn't confess publicly sooner.

Chapter 18

JAMESON

Reggie is dead. That's all there is to it. The last few days at work have been hell, fielding calls and speaking with an investigator, trying to prove that I had no fucking clue what Reggie is up to. Thank fuck I never handed him a few dollars when he asked. They've been through my phone and my apartment and so far, I've come up clean. I'm off the hook but my boss said to take a day or two off to clear my head.

I didn't tell Wyatt because he deserves all the peace he could get.

However, after the Facebook posts, I needed to make sure Wyatt was okay. I'm going to beat Reggie's ass for airing out his dirty laundry. Saying that Wyatt swooped in and stole his boyfriend is a low blow. I've never fantasized about time with Reggie, even when many of the fraternity brothers did. Reggie is stubborn while also lazy. I need someone to submit. I need someone who needs me. I need someone... like Wyatt.

As selfish as it is, Wyatt and I work. Reggie and I never would have.

I barely make it to their old house before Reggie is at my door and yanking it open. He drags me out and into a hug, mumbling something about 'oh thank god' as if I've come to rescue him. I peel him off and sock him in the face like I've been wanting to do for the past few days. "Tell me what the fuck is wrong with you before I leave, Reggie. Fraud is bad enough but threatening posts on Facebook? Some of those comments are from our fraternity brothers threatening to hurt Wyatt. Are you fucking

mad?” Reggie staggers forward and I punch him again.

He's going to bruise in the morning but I don't fucking care. Reggie holds his cheek, a trickle of blood running down his chin. “You don't understand. I told both of you!”

“And that's not an acceptable reason for all this shit. Let's start with the money. You realize you're going to fucking jail for that? Eugene did a little more digging and it seems that you're not even selling cars. Do you even work as a salesman, Reg? Or is that all a cover-up with the brothers as well?” I'm furious that men I still share a fraternity legacy with would stoop this low. The payout couldn't have even been that high for whatever the fuck they're doing.

“It's just for a little extra cash, alright? I'm not as successful as the rest of you and I needed to survive. Selling shit only goes so far before they fire you for excessive partying. I was the life of that place but one too many drunk mornings and now I'm not useful. I made more money than every piece of shit in there but I'm the problem.” He grimaces as he rubs his cheek a little harder. No doubt he's going to believe that his shortcomings are my fault.

I hate him for it.

“You are the problem, Reg. Don't you see that? You are the problem. You have always been the problem. Your attitude toward everything is the reason you no longer have anyone standing beside you. You're not as important as you think you are and we're no longer in fucking college.” I punch him again for good measure, aiming for the opposite cheek. Reggie stumbles to the ground before crawling to his feet again.

“You don't believe that.”

“What don't I believe? Because I sure as hell believe the fact that you tried to ostracize your brother for a fucking crush. If you loved me so much, why not say

something? Huh? Just tell me. When did you know that I liked Wyatt?"

Reggie clears his throat. "Before he deployed. But you were supposed to be mine."

"I'm not supposed to be anyone's. I chose to be Wyatt's and he chose to be mine. End of story. Take down the fucking posts and lose my number, Reggie." My hands fist at my side, knuckles raw. Reggie frowns as if he doesn't understand why I'm so furious. He reaches forward and I step back so that he can't touch me.

"Why-"

"You've hurt every person you've ever claimed to love. You push them away and then wonder why they don't want to be around. You've disrespected the man I'm in love with and you've threatened my job by making it seem I knew about your stupid ventures. You don't care about anyone but yourself and it's going to make you end up alone." I open my mouth to keep going, needing to tell him absolutely everything I feel when police sirens race through the neighborhood, two cars pulling up directly behind mine.

An officer steps out, glancing between the two of us, his hand on his belt. "Mr. Katz?" I point to Reggie as his face drains of color. "Reginald Katz, you're under arrest for fraud. Anything you say, can or-" I wasn't expecting this. My threat was just that... a threat. However, a few days of investigation obviously pulled up that Reggie was one of the main players.

The officer moves toward the man who used to be my best friend, still reading his Miranda rights as he's cuffed right in front of me. The sadness and despair in Reggie's face guts me because I'm sure he had it planned that everything would go his way. In the end, he's going to suffer for his inability to respect the world around him.

As they drag him away, a piece of my heart breaks. I may not want to associate with him but years of a friendship are now broken, irreparable. The Reggie I knew is no longer here and it hurts that I've lost that part of me. A shuddering breath falls from my lips as I fall back against my car, running my hands through my hair. The first of several tears escapes.

I thought cutting Reggie off would be easy.

It wasn't supposed to be this hard.

Chapter 19

WYATT

Axel showed up at the house with Laura an hour ago with beer and pizza. I'm not complaining and I get to hang out with the woman who is absolutely going to be my sister-in-law. She's a replica of Axel in almost every way aside from the fact that she's smarter than he is. She also knows it and lords it over his head as often as she can. Currently, they're discussing something about Marvel comics and from what I can tell, Laura is winning.

Axel is getting flustered, his face turning bright red as he huffs with frustration. Her sweet kisses always bring him back and it's like watching two high schoolers on their first date. They're awkward as fuck but their love is so pure.

I glance at the clock. It's been almost two hours since Jameson left to speak with Reggie. Unable to concentrate at the bakery, Axel came and packed me up and dragged me home to relax. I don't need the money from my shop and spending time with my younger brother is relaxing. I'm just antsy that Jameson isn't back yet.

"Stop worrying. I'm sure he's just punching Reggie's daylights out so that he finally understands and stops being a turd. That Facebook post was hateful but it's already down." Axel leans over the back of the couch and shakes his phone at me. "I spoke to Meta and all that bullshit, reported the post and poof! Gone."

I narrow my eyes at him because that sounds like bullshit.

“Fine. Reggie is unoriginal and I figured out his password and took it down. I might have also changed his password so that he couldn’t get back in. Now, what’s for dessert? I know you have shit in your fridge.”

I bark out a laugh as I sit on one of the ottomans in the living room beside them and fold my arms across my chest. “I thought Jay was the sweet tooth.”

“Oh, he is. I want one piece. He’d eat the entire cake. Why isn’t he back yet?”

As if asking for him is a beacon, Jameson opens the door, a dark expression overshadowing him. He stalks toward me and I drag him closer, my head against his chest. If I was sitting anywhere else, it wouldn’t work but I hold him tight, Jameson doling out several kisses to the top of my head. “I didn’t expect it to fucking hurt. They just took him.” My entire body tenses and then relaxes. “An officer arrested him for fraud.”

I hear Axel and Laura gasp but I can’t think beyond that. For as many years as Reggie didn’t understand me or didn’t even try, I thought finally telling him I’d had enough would make all this right. Instead, it feels unfinished. The man I used to look up to, my protector, the one who taught me everything is no longer here to berate me for my choices or tell me not to hang out with his friends.

I’ve wanted his overbearing touch gone for so fucking long that it feels weird that he is. Most likely because I didn’t want him to hurt. I just wanted him to understand. I cling to Jameson, not sure what to feel. Anger? Happiness? Sadness?

I just feel... empty.

I want to cheer that maybe Reggie will finally learn his lesson but not like this. Never like this.

Time passes but I'm only focused on holding the one person who has kept me grounded in this world. The one who has seen me when no one else has. The one who has constantly put me first. The one who has made me want to submit to him on my knees.

Too soon, I pull away, all of us in our heads with the revelation. Jameson leads me over to the couch beside Axel and Laura, situating us in a way so that I'm leaning on him. I slide down until my head is in his lap and one of his hands rests on my head as I spread out. Laura chuckles as she climbs into Axel's lap to make space.

"Reggie is looking at a few years if he's convicted. I have no idea why he thought that was the road to go down and before either of you say it," Jameson glares at me and then Axel, "Neither of you are responsible for this. I know he's asked for money several times but not giving it to him has actually absolved you of any responsibility in this case. I don't know any of the details, just that at some point Reggie fell off the wagon. I wish I had caught it or seen at what point we started to lose him to all this."

"You're not responsible either, Jay," I whisper. I reach up to caress his neck before he bends down for a soft kiss. "If we're not guilty of Reggie's choices, neither are you."

Axel tightens his hold on his girlfriend before sticking his chin over her shoulder. "As much as I hate to admit it, this isn't how I wanted Reggie to learn a lesson. It feels weird and I hope this isn't the end of things. I still need him to own up to everything else but... fuck, I don't know."

I don't either.

"They should let us speak to him in a few days if everything works out. All we can do for now is move forward. One step at a time." Jameson's hand trembles as he continues to smooth down what little hair I have. I feel the same way but there's an entire future out there for us. One that won't demean my relationship and as much as

it hurts that Reggie won't be part of it, I won't have to worry about the disrespect and the lack of boundaries.

"So... movie?" Axel pipes up. My younger brother did always know how to break up the awkwardness in the room. "Because Laura and I were discussing Marvel and I think we should-"

Laura snorts, "Absolutely not. We're not watching that one. It's not even first!"

They start bickering again, falling off the couch into a fit of giggles as we watch. Jameson's trembling soon lessens until the rage and confusion he's feeling make way for peace. I drag him down into another kiss, one of his hands sliding around my waist to cup my ass. I moan into his mouth as I roll toward him, needing everything he's offering.

"Get a room, you two!" Axel yells.

"We're in one," Jameson mumbles against my lips before continuing to devour my mouth, making an obscene show of digging his fingers into my ass. I throw in an extra moan or two before rolling off of him. Both Axel and Laura are red-faced at our display but I ignore them as I choose a movie and click play. It takes them a few seconds to realize I didn't choose anything Marvel.

Axel groans, "Seriously?"

I just shrug before resuming my position beside Jameson. "My house, my rules."

"We at least get cake, right?" Laura asks. She bats her eyes sweetly at me.

"Cake?" Jameson perks up and I nearly fall to the floor with the way he leans forward. Well, now I have to get it. Watching him wiggle around eating my sweets is

my absolute favorite thing. And the sweet kisses I'll get afterward?

Yes, please.

WYATT

Life has been perfect. Almost too perfect since Reggie's nonsense was dragged out of our life a month ago. We haven't been able to speak to or see Reggie since he was arrested and he must have used his one phone call on someone else. Not that I've minded. His five-year sentence will give him the time to truly think about all the damage he's caused.

Waking up to Jameson in my bed every morning and then perfecting my craft is all I truly care about.

Movie nights with Axel and his now fiancé have been just the additive I need, rounding out the peace that I have so desperately craved. And the walks along the boardwalk with Jameson's hand in mine or the quick lunch dates in the back of an empty diner are everything. He smiles so wide for me, radiating a happiness that I think we've both been missing.

And then at night when he slowly takes me apart and demands my submission, I can't help but fall more in love with him.

Tonight though, there's something different.

Something I've been waiting for a long fucking time to do.

My phone buzzes on the table and I grumble about having to share my attention with the cream boiling on the stove and my device.

Axel

Did you do the deed yet?

You make it sound like I'm about to have sex for the first time

Maybe you are. I don't know. We don't discuss these things.

Laura says I shouldn't be texting you but I'm nosy.

Then go focus on her

This is Laura and that's what I said. Have a great night, Wyatt.

I steel my nerves as I continue to stir the cream and then pour in the chocolate. All of this has to be perfect. Once the chocolate and cream are fully mixed, I pour it into little molds, making sure that each one is filled just so. Jameson says he doesn't care but I do. It means everything to pour my heart and soul into my craft.

Especially for a night like tonight.

A stupid grin takes over my face as I set it in the fridge and then turn back to my masterpiece on the table. For me, it's full of imperfections and failures, the bits of cake, chocolate, and other delicacies that didn't work. I've been saving them for the past few days, reconstructing them into a cake of their own.

It's perfectly imperfect and it's everything we are.

The door opens and I look up to see Jameson standing there, his eyes comically wide as they meet the sweets on the table. Then they move to me, absolute love staring back at me. "It's not Valentine's Day, is it?" He checks his phone and then sighs before moving farther inside. He kicks off his shoes and drops his bag as if it's a

weight off his shoulders.

Jameson ignores the sugar, approaching me first with a full-bodied kiss that leaves me panting for more. I chase his lips even as he pulls away, his attention returning to the table. I don't mind warring with sugar for his attention. "I wanted to do something special. You always enjoyed the bits and pieces that I called mistakes."

The cake is bent into a little heart, different colors and shapes making it the most eccentric delicacy I've ever made.

"It's gorgeous."

He moves a little closer and then gasps as my true intentions become clear. Jameson reaches to remove the small metal piece from the middle and holds up the key to my apartment. "You want me to move in? I've basically been in your bed every night since you asked me to date you." We both share a chuckle at that haphazard confession. It was rushed but perfect.

"And I want more than that. I want you here permanently, Jay. No traveling between apartments. No driving all over the goddamn city to make this work. Whether it's your apartment we're keeping or mine, I don't care. I want all of you." There. I said it.

Jameson smiles up at me, a joke I'm not privy to dancing in his eyes. "And if I told you that I found the perfect place to live?" He retrieves his bag and pulls out a small folder. "For everything Reggie did, he did one thing right." He hands me the paperwork and I slowly flip through the pages.

There's no way.

"Why are Axel and I's names still on the deed for our parent's house?"

“You might have made a deal with your brother about your portion but he never updated the deed. The house is yours and Axel’s and your younger brother already agreed that it’s yours if you want it. We’ll take care of the legal papers later but I thought that it might be nice to cherish the one place you truly loved with a kitchen that needs the kind of care only you can give it. You loved baking in that kitchen, Wyatt. I’ve seen you flourish over the last month but growing up, seeing you beside your parents while you created masterpieces out of nothing? Those smiles were second to none.”

I don’t even know what to say. Here I was thinking Jameson would say no. His apartment is closer to his job but here he is once again thinking of me.

“And you? What about the firm and everything else? The commute is going to suck.”

“Knowing that you’ll be around when I get home makes it all worth it. Wyatt, yes, I’ll move in with you. Let’s take back your family home. How’s that sound?”

“It sounds perfect.”

Jameson drags me down for another kiss, this time not letting me go. I know I’ll be second on his mind when he remembers there’s an entire cake waiting for him to devour. I don’t mind. Not when it’s Jameson.