



# Tangled Souls (Bratva Souls Duet #2)

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**Category:** Romance

**Description:** I signed up for a business grant. What I didn't expect was to get a filthy-mouthed hockey enforcer with a protective streak watching my every move.

We are her strength...forever.

None of us was prepared for the storm that is our woman to blow into our lives. She came in with meekness wrapped around her as protection, but the steel in her spine was easy to see. You just had to look close enough.

Vanquishing her demons was only the start. Now that her light shines upon our city, the rats are scurrying and trying to find shelter. But what runs must be caught, and we have always been predators.

Taking over Seattle was never going to be easy, and we expected more battles ahead. What we didn't foresee was having so much more to lose. Bitterness and rage have corrupted the dark corners of this city. Now those who have been hidden should expect retribution in the light.

What they didn't count on was how fierce we would defend what is ours. Our city. Our woman. Our lives.

Tangled together, our souls are strongest together. The sins that strangled our city for too long will not find solace here.

We will fight those who oppose us and keep our woman safe. Anything less will make us unworthy of our queen and we're never letting her go.

**Total Pages (Source):** 27

# Page 1

*Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:29 am*

MIKHAIL

I can feel my father's ire from the afterlife. I've spent so damn long putting all the pieces into place to get revenge for my father's death. With a sneer, I turn away from the weak men who I have surrounded myself with.

Even my cousin, Adam, is an idiot. He wasn't raised in this life, and it shows. If I didn't have the need for more manpower, and if he weren't so easy to manipulate, he wouldn't be here.

"I just don't know what you're waiting for," Adam whines.

And not for the first time.

When I glare at him, he cowers back and away from me slightly. As he fucking should.

"I told you. We need a little more time," I grit out through my teeth.

"I've been hearing you say that for months now," he pouts.

Before I can think twice about it, I backhand him which causes him to stumble as his head whips to the side.

His mouth opens in surprise when he looks back at me.

Even with all the plans we've already put in place and the amount of blood which has

already been shed, he seems to think this is some sort of fucked up movie instead of real life.

“We can’t go at Volkov directly,” I tell him. Again. “We have to destabilize his power base and then go after his weakness.”

He looks at me like he expects me to apologize for hitting him.

I won’t. His mother, my father’s sister, made him weak.

If taking a few slaps to the face, like a little bitch, toughens him up then so be it.

It’s not my fault that his mother wanted to keep him far away from the life and power my father cultivated.

There’s no way he’s escaping this life now. Either he’s going to get himself killed from his own stupidity or he’ll become expendable to me. I don’t really care which happens at this point.

I look toward a few of my other men and barely swallow down my groan of annoyance. I’m not even sure what all their names are. Why would I care when they’ll be replaced as soon as they’re caught by the mercenaries working for Volkov or step out of line and piss me off?

Being the one left standing at the end of all of this is all I care about.

“What is his weakness?”

With a roll of my eyes, I pin my cousin with a hard stare. “The woman. Pussy is every man’s weakness. Volkov made a mistake by putting a ring on the bitch’s finger.”

“I thought that was all about the contract with Chambers?” Adam has the fucking gall to look genuinely confused. “He doesn’t really care about her.”

I pull my gun out and level it in his direction before I can think twice about it. His hands go up in surrender, but he doesn’t move. I’m not sure if it’s smart of him or the stupidest thing he could do.

“I’m only going to say this one more time,” I ground out the words, pissed because he’s not getting it. “Chambers was dead long before Volkov married that whore. If he didn’t care, he would have cut her loose after the failed ambush Lev should have been able to pull off with the help of Chambers.”

Adam doesn’t look convinced, but I don’t need him to buy into what I know is true. A man like Kirill would not have married her if he didn’t want to. Chambers was always trying to pawn her on whoever he could think off.

That Richard bastard even got my father to agree that I would marry that shy, skittish, waste of a pussy. I caught glimpses of her sometimes when dad dragged me over to that mausoleum disguised as a house. Finding out there was an agreement about marrying that girl pissed me off.

When I found out, I was sitting in the back seat and brooding next to my father. Before I knew what was happening, his hand was wrapped around my neck and his dark eyes were boring into mine.

“You look at that girl and think she’s just a pawn, but it’s only because you’re no fucking better than her father and have no vision,” he snarled. “I don’t give a fuck if you like it, but you will marry her when the time comes. Richard is useful even though he’s insufferable.”

“I’m not marrying her. She’s a child,” I gave it right back to him, no longer afraid of

the man.

When you grow up terrorized and broken down to be rebuilt into a savage weapon, there were times when I wasn't willing to bow down. Not even for the blood loyalty that pumped through my veins.

My father, Anatoly, threw his head back and roared with laughter. Only once he calmed down did he release me, but I knew that didn't mean the danger had passed. Not when dealing with a man like him.

"She won't be a child forever," he pointed out with a casual shrug.

His voice turned darker, "And who the fuck cares if she is?" I curled my lip, but he wasn't done.

"You just have to marry her. Whatever else you do with her once you've put her in her new cage is up to you.

You could spend your nights slicing her skin off for all I care. "

Even though there was mischief in his voice, his eyes glittered with truth in his suggestion. He was hoping that is exactly what I would do.

And I couldn't think about anything else for a long time. As time passed, she was no longer a girl. When she was in college, I heard whispers about her growing into a woman worth looking twice at.

But I made a point to never see her again.

My father's men talked, and I never felt possessive when it came to their whispers. I figured one day she'd end up being passed around to anyone who wanted her. It

would break her even faster.

Before the marriage could be brought up in any serious way, my father was killed and Volkov took over.

There was no way I was going to walk away from everything my father built. Too much of my sweat, blood, and time had already been used to build what we had. Letting it go wasn't even an option.

And I had to avenge my father's death as I stepped into his shoes. Nothing less would be acceptable.

It's time to put my plans in motion. I've been waiting and moving everything into place, but the time for waiting is over.

"I'll get my revenge," I murmur, not caring whether Adam hears me or not. He's expendable.

As long as Volkov's blood is on my hands, I'll accept whatever collateral damage there may be.

## Page 2

*Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:29 am*

MAXIM

I look over at where our gorgeous wife is surrounded by the old ladies of the Devil's Saints Motorcycle Club and Kirby, the woman who has tamed Wolfe, Dominic, and Hendrix.

She has a huge smile on her face and her laughter rings out.

It gives me a feeling of lightness I haven't been able to get used to in the weeks since she came into our lives.

Oaklynn is glowing and it's wonderful to see her relaxing while surrounded by women. The fact that these women all hold their own with their men, no matter how many there are, only makes me a little nervous because Oaklynn doesn't need any partners in crime. Friendship? Sure.

Hopefully, they won't get into too much trouble.

My eyes travel down my woman's body and my breath gets caught in my throat again.

Just like it did when I first saw her standing at the end of the aisle today.

If only Wolfe hadn't been next to her and kissing her on the cheek.

But I'm sure as fuck not going to do anything to take family away from her.

There is something classic and old Hollywood about her in her dress. Effortless. Soft, but strong.

I've been tantalized by the slit in the dress since the moment she started walking down the aisle toward us. She probably planned it that way. The tease.

Rites, the VP of the DSMC who has claimed Navy along with Crucify, an enforcer, and Spark, the Prez, sidles up next to me with a huge grin on his face and his eyes trained on his woman.

One thing I've learned about these bikers is that when they fall for their woman, they fall hard and don't look back.

"It takes a strong woman to take on men like us," there's a seriousness in his voice that isn't like the man normally.

Even while he takes care of those around him, which means always having his eyes open, he does it without taking himself or anything too seriously.

"The problem is being possessive when it comes to a strong woman. It's not easy to balance the two. "

"What's your trick?" I find myself asking the question without even realizing it.

When the hell did Rites become a font of wisdom? I almost laugh at myself because I would never have thought I'd see the day when I first met him.

"Orgasms," he deadpans.

After a heartbeat, we both laugh, the sound cutting through our wedding reception and drawing attention. Not that I give a shit.



I look over towards the women and meet Oaklynn's brown eyes.

Her cheeks are flushed as if she knows exactly what we're discussing.

Maybe she does, considering the snippets of conversations I've walked into when she's with these women over the last few months.

Those women are not shy about their men and how much pleasure they enjoy.

They're bawdy broads. And I love it for our woman.

"I'm not sure if I want to slit your throat or assure you that our woman is more than happy in the orgasm department," I speak out of the side of my mouth while not taking my eyes off Oaklynn.

Rites chuckles before slapping my back and striding towards the women.

He plants a kiss on Navy which has her clinging to his cut.

Even from a distance I can tell how breathless she is when he pulls back, plants a kiss on her forehead, and turns toward the bar after making sure she's steady on her feet.

A drink sounds damn good.

The ladies are giggling, Navy still looking a little stunned, and I wink at our woman as I make my way to the bar as well. It's not easy to stop myself from heading toward her.

Everything about her teases my senses and no matter how many times I've had her, I'll never get enough. Tonight is going to be a little different and knowing it has caused tension to zip between us throughout the reception.

We've spent the last two months building our relationship, making our love something stronger without the shadow of any expectations, especially the ones Chambers put on his daughter.

Watching our woman come into herself and becoming even stronger has been a blessing.

I can't remember the last time I felt like anything in this life is a blessing.

Until her.

Oaklynn.

Our woman.

While we've been making Oaklynn our center, our heart, we haven't taken her all together. I'm not even sure when we agreed to wait, but it happened with silent understanding.

Tonight, that is all changing.

"I'm about to throw her over my shoulder and run away with her, whether you fuckers follow or not," Baker growls as he comes up next to me and nods toward the bartender as she delivers the whiskey I didn't even need to ask for.

"What can I get for you?" The question is purred by the bartender as she leans over the bar toward Baker as if we're not at our fucking wedding reception.

I glare at the woman, but her focus is completely on Baker. Fucking hell, we were all announced as the grooms.

Was she not paying attention? Or does she just not care?

Baker's whiskey eyes darken as he looks over the bartender. She must think it's a look of appreciation because she practically preens. It takes a special person to ignore the disgust in a man's eyes, but she's pulling it off without an issue.

I would cringe if I didn't have such great seats for the entertainment.

"This is my wedding reception," Baker's voice is ice cold.

The woman scoffs and rolls her eyes before folding her arms under her tits to press them up while leaning fully against the bar.

"It can't be real. The four of you with only her?

"She shakes her head with disapproval. "You should be able to find a little fun," she tries to sound seductive but falls short.

Way fucking short.

"You're out of fucking line," Baker growls.

I can feel the anger coming off of him. The fact that this woman hasn't backed off and apologized profusely makes her extremely stupid or just that desperate. I'm not sure which would be worse.

While taking a sip of my drink, I watch, enthralled, as a hand tipped with red fingernails appears over Baker's shoulder. I almost choke on whiskey when Oaklynn's face appears, her eyes trained on the bartender with a focus which should have the woman rearing back and putting her head down.

“Baker,” our woman purrs, “is there an issue over here?”

She may be directing her question at Baker, but her eyes never leave the woman. At least the bartender has the sense to stand up and drop her arms, no longer trying to make her tits spill out of the top of her uniform.

“Nope,” Baker pops the p, “no issue on my end. I’m more than capable of popping an over inflated ego and sense of self-worth.”

“Oh,” Oaklynn coos, “I know you are, but who doesn’t want to enjoy a show on their wedding day?”

She still doesn’t look away from the bartender who has now taken a few steps back. It’s the first smart thing she’s done.

Our woman practically glides around Baker to stand in front of him.

“Have a little class,” she tsks while looking beyond disappointed at the bartender.

“Hitting on the groom, no matter if there is one or more than one, during the reception? It’s just trashy behavior.

” She narrows her eyes and leans forward, her voice dropping to a menacing tone, “Don’t you have work to do? ”

The bartender scurries off only to be almost instantly replaced by an older gentleman. “Can I get you anything Mrs. Volkov? Maybe some champagne?”

Oaklynn’s smile turns kind and generous instead of predatorial.

“I’d love a whiskey, and it looks like my husband needs one as well.

” She nods her head toward Baker because the flirty bartender, who has no idea she’ll be blacklisted before the reception is even over, didn’t do her job.

“Mixing champagne at this point will push me right over the line into messy.”

The man chuckles under his breath before quickly delivering our woman’s drink along with Baker’s. I can’t tear my eyes away from her as she takes a sip. My cock is so hard that it’s become painful.

The only thing preventing me from reaching down and adjusting myself is knowing the guys will give me shit for it. Talk about never hearing the end of it.

“ Zolotse ,” I murmur, “you have no idea how fucking sexy that was.”

She winks at me and leans back into Baker’s chest. He runs his nose up the length of her neck not helping how turned on I am as I watch her shiver in response.

“Little Bee,” Baker murmurs against her skin, just loud enough that I can hear, “you called me your husband.”

“Well, that’s what you are,” her tone is matter of fact. Her brown eyes meet mine looking molten with her need. “You are too.”

I hold my hand up to show off my wedding ring, one which I wear with pride. “And damn happy about it.”

Glancing around, it doesn’t take me but a second to see Kirill and Huck making their way toward us. The way Kirill’s jaw is set tells me just how on edge he is.

I’m kind of surprised we lasted this long. Not only has our woman been teasing us, but the need for us to claim her together has grown every day while we’ve been

planning our wedding. Now, the time has come.

After downing the rest of my drink, I nod toward Oaklynn's. She follows suit, understanding my silent communication as her eyes sparkle with curiosity and desire. The way she's looking at me, like I'm about to make all of her fantasies come true, has me swallowing hard.

I've never been the kind of man to be nervous about taking a woman to bed, but this is different. Tonight, we'll be sealing our vows and making our woman the center of our family. Mostly I'm relieved that it's finally happening.

But a small part of me is scared.

What if it's too much for her?

What if we push her too hard?

What if having her between us, with all of us focused on her at the same time, isn't something she wants?

Before I can spiral any more, Oaklynn's smaller body is pressed against mine with her hands cradling my jaw. She comes into focus in front of me slowly, the fear trying to pull my mind into a place I didn't even know existed.

"You don't need to worry, Maxim," her voice is soft and coaxing. "Tonight is going to be perfect. I'm not sure why we've waited for all of us to be together, but this is right."

My doubts drift away as I grip her hips and lift her up and over my shoulder, my movements slow and smooth because I don't want to jostle her too much. I nod toward Baker who pulls his phone out and sends a message quickly before falling into

step beside me.

We meet up with Kirill and Huck just as the sound of the rotors of a helicopter start up. There was no way that we were going to last during the drive home, so I made sure there was a better, faster, form of transportation available for us.

Oaklynn giggles and I smooth a hand over her ass, not giving a fuck who is watching. Kirill smirks at me before he turns and waves at our guests. They'll stay and party the night away, just as it should be.

Now, it's time to get our woman home.

It's a damn good thing we thought ahead and made sure our place had a large enough space to land a helicopter. None of us thought we'd be using it to get home after our wedding, but why look a gift horse in the mouth?

I only put Oaklynn down when our ride comes into view. Her eyes are wide and full of surprise as she looks at me with a huge smile on her face.

"I've never been in a helicopter before," she shouts slightly to make sure we can hear her over the noise of the blades slicing through the air, the anticipation building with every rotation.

"There are going to be a lot of firsts tonight, Solnishko ," Kirill's voice slices through the noise easily. "Are you ready?"

She squeezes her thighs together and nods sharply. "I'm more than ready, husbands. Take me home."

With her hand firmly in mine, I lead her toward the helicopter which will make this trip in a matter of minutes. I have a feeling it still won't be fast enough.

## Page 3

*Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:29 am*

OAKLYNN

If these past few months have taught me anything it's that life will never be boring with my men.

A helicopter ride home from the vineyard where the wedding and reception took place shouldn't have surprised me, but it did.

Somehow these men just keep me wondering what is happening next, but without even a hint of anxiety.

Knowing that danger lurks around every corner when it comes to my men and the world we live in doesn't instill fear in me. Why should it? I have four men who will burn the world down to protect me and keep me happy.

Honestly, I feel bad for anyone who comes after us. They'll find out quickly that I'm not the weakness they probably assume I am. I'll protect the backs of my men while they charge deeper into the darkness. Then I'll pull them back from the brink and surround them with light.

If we're all covered in blood when that happens, then it's just the way it is.

Before I can step through the back door, I'm scooped up into a pair of strong arms. The sudden movement has a yelp of surprise coming from me. I look up with wide eyes to find Kirill's dark eyes dancing with amusement as he looks down at me.

"You didn't think we'd forget a very important tradition, did you, wife?" His voice



has dropped lower than it normally is, the sound skittering across my skin and leaving goosebumps behind.

“Since Kirill is your husband on paper, he’s carrying you over the threshold, but soon you’ll be in all of our arms,” Maxim’s voice is strained.

The desire in his eyes makes my breath hitch. We’ve been waiting for this moment for months. It wasn’t something we talked about and I’m not even sure why. The fact that we’re all going to be together in bed for the first time tonight, on our wedding night, feels right.

There’s not a doubt in my mind that my men love me for me. This marriage is the farthest thing from a contractual agreement. The love we’ve found together is real and deep. Somehow, I’ve fallen in love again and again with my men.

We’ve talked. We’ve played. We’ve dreamed.

My fingers play with Kirill’s hairline on the back of his neck as I look at each of my men. There’s no doubt or hesitation on their faces, just excitement and desire. My heart starts to pound harder in my chest as I’m carried through the house and up the stairs.

“I feel badly that you’re not getting a honeymoon, Solnishko ,” Kirill sighs just as he steps into the room which has been mine, and only mine, since I first moved in.

After tonight that won’t be true anymore. We’ll be in this room, in this huge bed, together. Everyone is keeping their rooms and closets for now because needing space shouldn’t be a fight, and these men have lived in their own rooms for a long time.

It’s not like there aren’t plenty of rooms for the all the babies these men keep hinting at wanting to plant in me. It’s both terrifying and thrilling.

“I don’t want a honeymoon.” It’s not the first time I’ve assured my men, especially Kirill, that I’m not at all put out with not going on some trip to spend days in bed.

“I love my bed and that’s about all we’d see anyway if we went somewhere else.

Why bother?” I tilt my head to the side slightly and ask, again, “Are you going to travel for business?”

“Yes, Solnishko ,” Kirill responds. Even though he holds it back, I can hear the eye roll in his voice. “And you’ll always travel with us.”

I wiggle a little to be let down, which he does while sliding me down his body. He doesn’t move away from me, and I can feel the heat coming off him even through his clothing.

“Then we’ll just treat every trip like a honeymoon. I’m not worried about it. I don’t need some trip to celebrate marrying the men who own my heart.” I can’t help but smile when they let out little groans of approval at the thought of owning me; I know how to get under my men’s skin. I love it.

I’m ready for more. I need it. My body is craving the men surrounding me and I’m beyond ready to give myself to them fully. Together.

“Did I tell you how sexy you look today?” I look around as my men close in on me. “All of you.”

Then there are hands on me. Everywhere. Kirill’s hand wraps around my neck, the grip he has on me tilting my head back to ensure I don’t look away from him.

The tips of Huck’s fingers gently run up and down my arm.

Maxim's hand grips one of my hips and then it feels like he gets lost in the feel of the fabric of my dress sliding over my skin.

Baker lets out a growl and the feeling of him running his finger up and down my zipper is a tease that has the fine hairs on my body standing on edge.

"If we're talking about sexy, then all we need to discuss is this dress," there's an edge in Maxim's voice. He groans, "You've been teasing us since the moment we saw you at the end of the aisle. What a vision."

When I glance over at Maxim, his eyes close for a moment as if he's seeing the moment replay again in his mind. My heart warms at the memory. It wasn't long ago, but it became a moment which will stay with me for the rest of my life.

Baker unzipping me is like a sinful whisper as he buries his face in my hair and takes a deep breath.

The moment I feel the dress give a little, I let my arms drop and give a small shimmy.

The soft fabric slides over my body like water, and I'm left in a g-string I should have just gone without considering the coverage is practically nonexistent.

"Holy fuck, Sweet Girl," Huck grits out through his teeth, "are you wearing stockings?"

I look his way and wink. Their gazes feel like caresses against my skin. My thighs squeeze together but does nothing to alleviate the ache inside of me. Knowing the amount of pleasure that I can have with each of my men, and thinking about it being magnified, has me practically panting.

Kirill lets out a low chuckle as he grips my chin between his thumb and forefinger.

“You look sexy as fuck, wife,” his voice is a low rumble.

Before I can even think about how to respond, his mouth is taking mine in a kiss that has my toes curling in my heels. My expensive designer heels, which are more comfortable than they should be. My men spoil me.

“I’m going to enjoy watching you fall apart between the guys,” he murmurs against my lips. “Then I’m going to take you myself. By the time we’re done with you, and sleep claims you, your voice will be hoarse from screaming your husband’s names.”

I shiver, even with the heat from their bodies surrounding me, because his words are so much more than a naughty suggestion. They’re a promise. One the glint in his eyes tells me he is going to follow through on until I can’t keep my eyes open any longer.

Kirill steps back, releasing his hold on me as he does, and steps over to a chair in the corner of the room. It’s the same chair I’ve curled up in with a book more times than I can count over the last two months. When I’m sitting there it looks like a cozy nook.

With Kirill sitting in it? It looks like a throne.

My men shift slightly to ensure Kirill can see me easily.

When Maxim holds his hand out for me, I don’t hesitate to slip my hand into it.

After kissing my knuckles slowly, as if my body needs to be warmed up more than it already is after the hours of foreplay we’ve been engaging in, while fully clothed and enjoying our wedding reception, he raises our joined hands above my head.

With him leading my movements, he spins me in a slow circle.

Whether it’s for his benefit or mine, I don’t know. It doesn’t matter anyway.

“Fuck,” Barker breathes out. How can one word hold so much reverence and awe?

Even with all the time we’ve spent together, it’s not always easy to wrap my mind around the way these men want me, the way they love me, the way they’re devoted to me. Not after all the shit my father drilled into my head about my place and my worth.

But with these men, nothing is like the future my father sketched out. I’m beyond grateful for it, but I’m still learning to trust the freedom I have to exist in the light instead of the darkness and sadness my father wrapped around me.

“I’ve been looking forward to sharing you with my brothers,” Huck’s voice is filled with barely contained desire.

When I glance over at him, his eyes are like melted chocolate. His arm feels like lightning when he wraps it around my waist and hauls me against his chest. As he slams his mouth down on mine, the stubble from his short facial hair abrades my skin and makes me feel alive.

All my men make me feel that way.

I get lost in kissing Huck, not caring about what is going on around me. Which is why I let out a shocked sound when Baker’s bare skin presses against my side. How do I know it’s him? I have no idea, but there’s no doubt in my mind.

Baker leans in and nips my earlobe and whispers, “Need to feel my skin against yours, Little Bee.”

Huck releases me and I’m spun until my naked breasts are pressed against the warm flesh of Maxim’s chest. Baker takes the opportunity presented and plasters his chest against my back which allows me to feel the throbbing of his cock against my lower

back.

The moan that comes out of me is wanton as I rub against the two men who have me sandwiched between them.

“Oh, Zolotse ,” for the first time Maxim’s nickname for me feels like a threat, a delicious one, as it falls from his lips.

As he rips the thin fabric of my g-string from my body, not even bothering to try to undress me, I let out a loud gasp.

“You have no idea how much I’m looking forward to sinking into your soaking wet cunt for the first time as my wife. ”

I shiver in his arms and glance over my shoulder at Baker, wondering if he’s behind me for a reason. The cocky man smirks at me and I feel my arousal slick my thighs in response. “That’s right,” he confirms without me needing to ask, “I’ll be sinking into your tight ass.”

## Page 4

*Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:29 am*

“And you’ll be swallowing my cock and my cum like a good girl,” Huck rasps.

When I look toward Huck it’s to find him just as naked as Maxim and Baker. Holy hotness. It’s almost too much and I get lightheaded for a moment.

“Breathe,” Baker commands softly against the shell of my ear. “You will be taking us all tonight. We will be claiming you together,” there’s no room for argument or uncertainty in his tone, “and showing you just how much we need you as our center, our everything. Our. Wife.”

“Husbands,” I groan, “I need you.”

Then I’m floating. But not really. Maxim carries me to the bed, not flinching as my heels fall from my feet and clatter against the hardwood covering the floor.

When he lays me out on the soft fabric of the duvet, the only things I’m still wearing are my stockings and my jewelry, including the engagement ring and wedding band I’ll never take off.

My eyes flit down to the ring on Maxim’s finger, the same ring all my men are wearing. I can’t help but smile knowing these men are mine now. Maybe not completely legally, but the commitment we made to each other is binding because we made it with our souls and hearts.

Maxim presses his lips against mine in a kiss which is over far too quickly, but then he’s skimming the tip of his nose down my body.

I try to shift so his mouth heads to my nipple, but he only chuckles against my skin.

The warmth of his breath has my hips lifting in search of something, anything. But there's no relief to be found.

When he settles between my spread thighs, Huck and Baker flank me on either side, their bodies laid out like a fucking buffet. I can feel Kirill's eyes on me, and it only makes me wetter.

I don't know how they manage to coordinate it, but the three men surrounding me move as one. Maxim dives between my thighs, his tongue sliding up my slit. I barely hear his groan over the sound of Baker and Huck sucking my nipples deeper into their mouths.

It's a cacophony. A symphony? A fucking catastrophe of pleasure and overindulgent overload.

Baker bites down on my nipple and my hips jolt. Maxim's hands wrap around my hips and hold me down against the bed. Huck's hands slide over my skin while swirling the tip of his tongue around the hardened peak of my nipple. It's too much.

"More," the plea falls from my lips, but my voice doesn't sound like my own. Not even a little bit. It's huskier, needier, like my soul is voicing my deepest and darkest needs.

Because wasn't I just thinking this is all too much?

Two fingers plunge inside of my pussy as Maxim sucks my clit into his mouth. The gasp I let out is met with a tortured groan from Kirill.

Fuck. I almost forgot he was watching over us. I glance his way to find his dark,



intense eyes locked onto me. He doesn't miss anything, and I can feel the way he's taking me in.

I've never considered being watched before. Voyeurism and exhibitionism weren't on my radar. I don't think I would like it in any other circumstance. But with my men? It's sexy as hell.

Maxim's fingers curl just right, and stars dance across my vision. The building of my orgasm isn't slow. One moment I'm a panting mess, trying to hold onto my control. It's impossible when Maxim's teeth scrape across my clit as Baker's teeth sink into the tender flesh on the underside of my breast.

My orgasm slams into me and I don't even realize how loudly I'm shouting my pleasure, my muscles tight and my hips fighting against Maxim's hold on them, until I'm coming back down. Peeling my eyes open is a herculean task, but then I'm blinking, my eyes locked on the ceiling and my lungs burning.

"What the hell was that?" The question comes out as a hoarse croak. "I think my soul just left my body," I breathe out, totally awed.

Huck chuckles and kisses along my rib cage, first down toward my waist and then back up until he's hovering above me.

"That's the power of having all of your men taking you.

" My eyes flick toward Kirill and Huck smirks and nods.

"Yes, even him. He might not be touching you physically, but he's still here and taking in every beautiful second. "

My cheeks heat and Huck kisses me. I'm expecting him to be feral with the way he

takes my lips, but it's the complete opposite.

The way he kisses me is sweet and gentle, bringing me down and making it feel like I have the room to breathe and for my body to come to center.

I didn't even realize I needed him to kiss me with such love.

"You good, Sweet Girl?" His eyes search mine and when I nod, his eyes darken and the small smile that was on his face moments ago turns downright sinful.

"Good because we're not nearly done with you yet.

" His eyes dart down toward my lips, and I can't help but lick them.

He groans, "Can't wait to have your plump lips wrapped around my cock. "

"Fuck," Maxim growls. "You better move, Huck, because I need to bury myself inside of her sweet cunt."

Huck chuckles, but pecks my lips again, probably just to piss Maxim off, before he moves back.

Then all I can see is Maxim. His eyes are serious but glinting with mischief as he covers my body with his own.

The underside of his shaft slides between my pussy lips and he grinds against my clit.

The friction is fucking perfect and makes the need I have for my men, for him, hit me full force again.

I arch my back, wanting more of our skin touching while forgetting everything but

the way he makes my body sing.

Without warning, Maxim pulls back just enough for the head of his cock to slide between my pussy lips. He doesn't ease inside of me slowly. No, but with Maxim I would expect no less than him slamming into me with one hard thrust.

"Maxim," my lips move, but his name is almost silent as it comes from me.

Or maybe that's just because his groan of pleasure is so loud it practically vibrates the air around me. His fingers dig into my hips before he flips us so he's underneath me.

He smirks up at me, "I have the best seat in the fucking house, Zolotse . I'm going to get a front row seat to Baker easing into your ass and you taking Huck's cock into your throat."

Baker presses his head against my back, and I jump a little. My eyes are wide as I look at him over my shoulder because I'm not even sure when he moved. Granted, I was distracted. Very distracted.

"Don't tell him that my position is the best because I'll be fucking your tight ass and making you scream," Baker murmurs against the shell of my ear and I melt back against him.

These men are going to push me to my limits, but I wouldn't want it any other way.

"Show me what you got, husband," I tease him and watch his eyes turn feral.

The only thing I can do is brace for the ride.

## Page 5

*Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:29 am*

HUCK

Waiting on the sidelines is almost killing me, but I know it'll be worth it when the three of us take our woman for the first time as Kirill watches her every reaction. I glance his way and see the way he's focused on our wife.

Wife.

Fuck. I'm not sure there will ever be a time when that doesn't feel right...

or real. Finding a woman strong enough to stand with us, her head held high like the queen she is, wasn't something I was sure would happen.

I figured the hope, one I quietly held deep in my heart, would never become a reality.

As Maxim grips our woman's hips and starts to move her up and down his cock, I'm mesmerized by the way her hips move to grind down on him when she's filled to the hilt. Her body flushes and I can't stop myself from gripping the base of my cock and stroking slowly.

Oaklynn's eyes pop open when Baker's arms wrap around her and grip her tits. I can see the way he's squeezing her from the way his fingers flex against her skin. It's hot as hell.

When her lust filled eyes find me, they sweep down my body and lock on to where I'm stroking my dick. The way she licks her lips has me almost forgetting to wait until Baker's inside of her before I slide into her mouth. And what a mouth it is.

My mind flashes back to the first time I took her into my secret office, and she showed me how much she appreciated my willingness to share with her. Her mouth was fucking perfect then. Since then, I've gotten to explore every inch of her body, but this feels different. It feels like more.

Because we're claiming her together.

"Lean forward and brace," Baker growls.

He grabs the lube from where he's placed it on the bed next to him. I don't have to watch to know what is happening, especially when Oaklynn sucks in a breath and stills. The way her body freezes is just like when prey figures out that a predator has them in their sights.

As I'm watching Baker's movements, knowing he's getting her ready to take his cock, I jump as Oaklynn's tongue slides along the crown of my cock and collects the pre-cum beading there. My eyes are wide as I look down to find her smirking.

"Gotta pay attention, Huck," Maxim's voice is strained, but also filled with amusement.

Our woman teases me with the tip of her tongue.

What she doesn't do is take me into her mouth and giving me the relief my cock desperately needs.

Every swipe of her tongue makes me want to bury my length in her throat, but I hold back.

She's going to need to be able to breathe as Baker breaches her ass.

But then I'm not going to hold back.

None of us are.

Baker must back off a little because Maxim grips Oaklynn's hips and uses the grip he has on her to move her up and down on his cock. I'm sure he's struggling right now because I know how tight she is. It's hard holding back from chasing your pleasure while buried inside of her.

How the least patient of us got the chance to be buried inside of her sweet pussy first is beyond me. Oaklynn leaves a sweet, and far too fucking chaste, kiss on the tip of my dick and I let out a low groan of need.

"Fuck," I grunt, "need your mouth, Oaklynn." I look over her shoulder to find Baker taking a deep breath as he reaches up and grips her shoulder for leverage. "You need to get inside of her now. Maxim looks like he's about to lose his fucking mind."

Oaklynn's chuckle is breathless as she allows Baker to lean her forward and Maxim stills. She tenses but then relaxes almost immediately.

If we were good men, we would tell her that she can tell us she doesn't want this, and we wouldn't push her. But we aren't good men. We are going to take her together before Kirill stakes his own claim. Before the night is over, we'll have her in more ways than she can imagine.

Our woman breathes out, "I'm ready."

Baker grunts as he adjusts behind her as his fingers tighten on her shoulder. "That's right," he growls, "let me in."

Oaklynn's eyebrows pull together as her fingers dig into Maxim's chest. Her

breathing becomes deep and a little labored.

“Fuck,” Baker whispers, “your ass is so tight.”

Maxim’s hands slide up her ribcage until he’s cupping her tits. He uses his thumbs and forefingers to roll her hard nipples between them before pinching them. When she jolts in response, both Baker and Oaklynn let out a strangled sound.

“Look at you,” I praise our woman, “you’re taking them both so good.”

As Baker’s hips meet our woman’s perfect ass, he lets out a long breath. “Damn, Little Bee. You feel so good,” he murmurs.

“I need to move. My dick is screaming at me right now,” Maxim pants, his hands squeezing our woman’s tits.

“Move,” Oaklynn pleads.

When her glassy eyes meet mine, I know she’s almost completely lost in her pleasure. The fact that she’s looking to me, for me, to be the last to fill her holes, does something to me. A warmth fills me that only my woman can make me feel.

The things this woman does to me knocks me on my ass and makes me want to be a better man. A better man for her at least. Good for her and good are not the same thing.

Maxim and Baker start to move together, one of them filling her while the other retreats. I feel fucking giddy at the thought of having her lips wrapped around me.

Just when I feel like I won’t be able to wait another moment, Baker uses his grip on Oaklynn’s shoulder and angles her upper body toward my cock. “Huck needs you to

wrap your lips around him,” he grits out through his teeth.

I grip the base of my cock and let out a moan from deep in my chest as she sucks me into her warm, wet mouth. When my fingers dive into her hair, I can’t help but grip the strands tightly and hold her head in place. Moving my hips slowly, I allow her to get into a rhythm with the three of us.

Oaklynn moans, the sound traveling throughout my entire body, making my dick throb with the vibrations. Her eyes lock with mine and I get lost in her deep dark pools of desire and sin.

Something changes in the way the guys move, they start to fill her at the same time and our woman goes fucking wild. I start fucking her mouth, moving in time with them. All of her holes being filled at the same time feels like it multiplies the connection between us.

The moans and groans coming out of us ramps the tension up and my balls are already drawing up with every swipe of her tongue, every plunge into her mouth, every labored breath, and the kiss of the back of her throat against the tip of my cock.

“Your cunt is squeezing me so fucking tight, Zolotse ,” Maxim’s voice sounds far away, but it could just be because of the way the sound of the blood rushing through my veins is taking over.

All I can feel is Oaklynn’s lips wrapped around my cock and the warmth of her mouth. When her teeth barely scrape along my shaft, I almost jump out of my skin. A thread of fear weaves through me in a way I’ve never experienced before.

My fingers tighten and I wrench our woman’s head back slightly. In warning? In encouragement?



I have no fucking idea.

I'm not sure it matters.

My balls draw up and it feels like we're all getting closer to something. Something big. My vision tunnels and the only thing I can see is Oaklynn in front of me and the way her dazed eyes are begging for more.

"She needs more," I rasp.

"Fuck," Baker's drawn-out groan echoes around us.

We all move faster. Maxim starts to power upward, fucking her harder. Baker's knuckles turn white as his grip tightens on our woman. I know he'll leave bruises behind, and I can't wait to see them.

I'll kiss them later. Soothe them.

Soothe her.

Take care of her.

Our wife.

"That's right," Maxim coaxes, "I can feel how close you are. You're going to coat my cock in your arousal and use your sweet cunt to squeeze my length, your body begging me for your cum."

I pull out of her mouth and stroke my length. She opens her mouth, presenting her tongue to me like an offering. It's too much.

“You want to swallow my cum, Sweet Girl?”

As she nods the plea in her eyes burns even brighter. Every time the guys slam into her, she lets out the sexiest fucking noises.

“Huck,” she lets out a gasping moan.

The first spirt of my cum lands on her tongue and I can’t help but slide just the crown past her lips. She sucks on me like my dick is a damn straw. It has me seeing stars.

She swallows every bit of my cum and I move back, giving her over to Maxim and Baker. They don’t miss a fucking beat as their hands grip and roam, stroke and savor. They move faster, filling her as one. They fuck her harder, giving her exactly what she needs.

Her head falls back onto her shoulders and it’s the most gorgeous thing I’ve ever seen.

She’s stunning and I can’t tear my eyes away. I can feel the way her pleasure builds. With each breath. With each thrust. With each flex.

Oaklynn slams back, her thighs shaking and her lungs stalling. I watch her orgasm wash over her body. Freezing and freeing her at the same time. I can almost feel the way her body would be clenching me right now. A phantom. A memory. A promise.

Then the bubble pops. Baker growls as he plunges as deep as he can into our woman’s ass. Maxim roars, his hands shooting out and clamping down on her hips to hold her down and in place.

“Yes,” Baker hisses, “your ass getting even tighter makes me feel like I can’t fucking breathe, Little Bee.”

Our woman's body goes boneless, and she collapses on Maxim's chest. She doesn't flinch when Baker pulls out of her slowly, his chest heaving as he tries to calm down. His large hands run up and down our woman's back.

I can't help myself and reach over, pushing her hair out of her face, hoping to soothe her with my touch. The contented smile on her face, like she's been given the keys to a chocolate factory, graces her face and has me want to take her again already.

But it's not our time now.

As Baker slides off the bed, his hands lingering a moment longer than necessary, Kirill steps closer. He kneels with his dark eyes locked on our woman as I shift to give him some room.

"Oh, my sexy Solnishko," his voice is husky. "We're not nearly done with you."

Oaklynn's eyes pop open. The smile she shoots at Kirill is tired.

He reaches over and picks her up and off Maxim who lets out a grunt as his cock slides out of our woman. Kirill uses his grip on her to maneuver her right where he wants her—on her hands and knees in front of him.

Her shoulders hit the mattress, her arms stretching out in front of her and her fingers flexing against the plush bedding. I slip from the bed and move around to the other side so I can see her face to watch her expressions as she's experiencing the kind of bliss I know Kirill is about to give her.

She'll only have to hold on and listen to her body. Kirill will take care of the rest.

Kirill leans over her body, covering her frame with his, enveloping her, caging her. "I'm going to fuck you hard and fast, Oaklynn," he growls against the shell of her

ear. "I'll worship you later."

"Please," the word is broken on her lips and wrapped with need.

Movement out of the corner of my eye has me looking toward Baker who is dropping a towel on the floor and then kneeling on the bed in front of our woman, getting the front row seat I'm desperate for. I move next to him, Maxim mirroring our movements.

Oaklynn tilts her head back and looks between us, something sinful crossing her features before her mouth drops open and she screams out when Kirill lines up and slams inside of her pussy in one, hard thrust. As if her pussy hasn't already been pounded.

Kirill doesn't give a fuck. I wouldn't either.

"Yes," she hisses the word, the sound trailing off into a moan.

Kirill isn't gentle. He isn't soft. He gives her exactly what she needs.

And that is a rough fucking.

She's barely able to hold onto the sheets, her body jolting forward every time he fills her. He uses his grip on her hips to pull her back toward him as he thrusts forward. It's brutal.

And so fucking beautiful.

"Next time, we'll all be taking you together. I can't stand by and watch again," Kirill admits, the growled words sounding like they're being ripped from him.

“Oh,” she groans, the sound bordering on pain. “Kirill,” she keens, “I can’t.”

“You can,” he demands. “You will.”

“Show your husband what a good wife you are,” I rasp the words.

Something shatters inside of our woman—our wife—with my words.

Her body arches and she screams, the sound jagged and filled with painful and blissful pleasure. She comes undone, but Kirill doesn’t stop. He fucks her through her orgasm.

Just as it starts to wane, just as her featherlike soul floats back down, Kirill’s growl fills the room, and he slams into her. She tries to lurch forward, but his hold on her won’t allow it.

Her body twitches as Kirill’s seems to vibrate. When she slumps against the bed, his hands release her slowly. His touch becomes gentle instead of punishingly possessive.

We surround her, giving her our praise with whispered awe filled words, murmurs that will never be remembered, but will always be felt. She stretches like a cat seeking more, seeking comfort.

And we’re right there to give it to her. We’ll never stop.

## Page 6

*Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:29 am*

KIRILL

After taking a few days off and a long weekend, which wasn't nearly long enough, being back at work and stuck behind my desk makes me want to rage and burn down the entire building. At least then I could easily excuse being at home with our wife instead. But here I am.

Without any more answers than I had a day ago, a week ago, fucking months ago.

Everything with Mikhail makes it feel like I'm chasing my tail and it's been this way for far too long. With Oaklynn in our lives, the pressure for this to be done, for the man who is desperate for power in this city to be eradicated, has only increased.

It feels like I have the weight of the world on my shoulders. The responsibility to keep my family alive has never felt this heavy before.

I know it's because it matters so much more now, but that doesn't make it any easier to manage.

My eyes are narrowed on Hendrix at the moment and have been since he's stepped forward as the mouthpiece for his team today.

It's possible he hasn't earned my ire, but I'm not going to admit that out loud.

Not now. I need to direct this frustration somewhere, right or wrong, and he's in my crosshairs.

“What you’re saying is that we still don’t have any idea where Mikhail is or what he’s doing?” The growled question feels like it comes from deep inside of me, from the beast I’ve been working hard to keep under control.

But now it’s virtually impossible.

Even the thought of our woman, of her softness and her strength, does nothing to soothe the feral creature inside of me. He wants out. Desperately.

Maybe the only solution to this problem is to take out the entire fucking city. Let it burn while keeping our woman safe.

Hendrix rubs his hand over his face, the frustration in his eyes matching my own. “I know it’s not what you want to hear, Kirill,” there’s a placating note in his tone which has my fingers twitching to reach for my gun.

I don’t.

Barely.

He holds his hands up in surrender. It does nothing to quench the fire burning in my gut.

“Now we have a weakness, one which has been made very public.” My voice turns ice cold and deadly, “The wedding being made public on social media and in the papers was necessary, but it doesn’t sit right with me.”

“We needed something to draw him out. He won’t be able to deal with the pressure. You know it was the right call,” Hendrix points out.

“I don’t have to like it.”

“No,” he concedes, “you don’t. With Chambers and Lev being put down, you marrying Oaklynn is going to feel like another hit to his ego.”

“That is assuming he knew that he was the one who was supposed to marry our woman in the first place,” I’m barely able to get the words out of my mouth.

I hate them so fucking much. The thought of our woman, our Oaklynn, being married to an animal like Mikhail makes the edges of my vision blur a little as anger threatens to take me under the surface. It would be so easy to drown in the feeling, the rage, but I fight against the undertow.

It won’t do me any good to have my emotions overrun. Not right now.

I’ve always prided myself on being levelheaded and being able to anticipate what is coming my way, but with Oaklynn in the mix I feel out of my depth.

“You didn’t have to marry her so quickly,” Hendrix points out.

I tilt my head to the side and assess the man, wondering what the fuck he’s thinking. “Are you trying to get Kirby pissed at me?”

He grins, but it’s not nice by any stretch of the imagination. “Why would she be pissed at you?”

Like he doesn’t fucking know.

“You know,” I make a dismissive motion with my hand as if my words are casual when they are anything but, “if I were to send you home to her in a body bag.”

Hendrix barks out a laugh, but there’s no trace of amusement in the sound. I’m very aware that the man in front of me, the one who has never backed down from a fight



or a dangerous situation, is more than willing to walk through fire. That was how he was forged in the first fucking place.

Then there's the fact that he's highly trained. He might be an asset, but that doesn't mean he's not being an asshole right now.

Might as well be one back.

"But, then again, she does have two other men. Maybe you're expendable to her," I muse.

Hendrix doesn't rise to the occasion, his face remaining a neutral mask. His eyes don't even flare in anger.

I know it's not because he doesn't care. I've watched him, along with Dominic and Wolfe, with Kirby.

He's just not letting me push his buttons. It's pissing me off.

"I get it, you don't want a target on Oaklynn's back." Hendrix's voice is measured and steady. "But the reality is that the moment she came here to see you and tell you what her father as up to, she was put in danger. Don't pretend like you didn't know the risks."

"Fuck off, Hendrix," I growl, my voice filled with a threat I know he won't heed.

"I'm not going to blow sunshine up your ass, Volkov," Hendrix barks. "I'm also not saying anything you don't already know."

Baker grunts under his breath, "Fucking hell."

When I look at him, he's running a hand over the back of his head, clearly agitated with my behavior. I can't say I blame him. I'm acting like a fucking asshole, but I can't help it.

"This shit needs to end. And soon," I bark the words.

"I'm not disagreeing," Hendrix tries to placate me.

"No, but you aren't doing a fucking thing to smoke Mikhail out," I challenge him.

He stiffens slightly, showing the first crack in his armor.

"I'm going to call our woman and get her ass down here," Maxim states like he's talking about the color of the sky, "it seems like you could use some stress relief, brother." He grumbles, more to himself than anyone else, "One would think you'd be relaxed considering the number of times you filled our woman since the wedding. "

I snap my head around to glare at my brother as Hendrix tries to smother a smile with his hand. It doesn't work.

Assholes.

I'm surrounded by pricks who don't seem to feel the same thing I do. The noose tightening. The danger approaching. The darkness encroaching.

Can't they see? Our woman is in danger.

Yes, I'm aware I brought the danger right to her. It might be my fault that our woman can't go anywhere without an escort, which will be true even after Mikhail is finally taken care of, but I'm not going to apologize for it.

At least not in front of Hendrix.

Maybe the rest of them.

But that's only because I can't seem to stop myself from softening when I'm around our woman. She brings it out in me, and I can't help it. It's one of the reasons desperation is clawing at me. I want our woman to be safe and right now that is the last thing she is.

"Don't talk about her like that," I grit the words out through my teeth, my eyes locked on my brother.

Maxim holds up his hands, but the smirk on his face tells me he's far from sorry. And now I'm thinking about sinking my cock into our woman's tight, wet cunt. Even after shaking my head in the attempt to dispel the thoughts, they plague me.

"But now you're thinking about it," Maxim singsongs like a fucking court jester.

He kind of is. Even though I'm still on edge, I can feel some of the anger dissipating. Not enough, not nearly enough, but some.

After a few deep breaths, my vision becomes sharper, and I can look at Hendrix without wanting to launch myself at him to beat him until his blood is coating me. I might not like the fact that there hasn't been nearly enough to find about Mikhail, but the man, and his men, are family.

Damn it.

"Shut it," I command Maxim even though there's no real heat behind the words.

"You are right about something, Kirill," Hendrix pulls my attention back to him with

his words.

He shares an uneasy look with Wolfe who has been quiet during this meeting which isn't like him. Dominic is the same stoic presence he normally is.

When I arch an eyebrow in question at Hendrix, he sighs and admits, "You do have a weakness now."

"Oaklynn knows how to take care of herself," Baker points out.

Baker has assessed her in and out of the ring many times in the last few months. Watching when they spar is like watching foreplay and it does normally end with them naked, but that doesn't mean she's not capable of hurting someone when she needs to.

She's sparred with all of us at least once. It put my mind at ease, but my heart is still pounding in my chest at the thought of her being in danger.

"She shouldn't have to take care of herself," my words are tortured and ragged.

"No," Baker agrees, "she shouldn't. But my point is that she can. And she has protection as well. Just in case."

Hendrix nods, knowing all of this already. He's gotten in the ring and sparred with Oaklynn as well. As impressed with our woman as I am, the thought of her needing to use those skills has my gut pitching from one side and then the other.

"I think we need to use it," Hendrix throws out there casually.

My eyes are not the only ones which snap to him. The only people who don't look surprised right now are Wolfe and Dominic.

“Explain,” I bark.

“We put Oaklynn in controlled environments and get her out in public. No more hiding her away.”

“We haven’t been hiding her away,” Huck tries to defend us.

Hendrix doesn’t look at all impressed with Huck’s bullshit. And we all know that is exactly what it is—bullshit.

“Okay,” there’s no judgement in Hendrix’s tone, “you’ve been taking your time and getting to know her.

But the fact is that before she met the four of you, she was active within the community.

She spent time volunteering with various charities and helped to organize charity functions.

” He shrugs one shoulder as if he’s not asking us to knowingly put our woman in danger.

“I’m not saying you wrap her in neon or anything, I’m just suggesting that she goes back to business as usual. ”

I’m shaking my head before I’ve even given myself a chance to process his words.

On the surface, I can appreciate the fact that he’s making sense. But my heart is pounding in my chest, and my gut is twisting uncomfortably.

Putting our woman out there, into the world, while knowing Mikhail is looking for

any opportunity to weaken us, to hurt us? It doesn't feel right.

I clench my hands together in fists and fight my instincts to hurt Hendrix for even suggesting such a thing.

Baker sighs, the sound labored and filled with regret. "You know our woman is not going to allow us to keep her locked away in some tower like she's a fucking Disney princess," he points out.

Unhelpfully.

I shoot the man a look which has made more than one man piss himself before. He's not the least bit affected by it. And that only pisses me off more.

"That doesn't mean we use her as bait," I roar the words.

They might be right about this, and I know Oaklynn would probably go along with it, but that doesn't mean I need to like it.

When I get my hands on Mikhail, I'll finally be able to put this all to rest and move forward. That cockroach has been a problem for far too long.

It's past time for him to die.

## Page 7

*Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:29 am*

BAKER

My tablet gives a soft ding, alerting me that Oaklynn is on her way up in the elevator.

Even though I've been thoroughly entertained by Kirill on the verge of losing his mind, I've been watching our wife's progress since she left the house.

Even though I'm surprised about her coming to see us, I'm still beyond thrilled.

After spending so much time with her since the wedding, leaving her at home this morning came as a shock. I'm addicted to everything Oaklynn. Her soft skin. The way she smells, like vanilla and cinnamon. Every smile she gives us which I collect like raindrops.

I'm damn glad she took it upon herself to come in and see us. There was no way I was going to be able to make it all day without a moment with her. Maybe she was having just as much of a problem as I was.

Honestly, even with this pissing match between Kirill and Hendrix going on, I was thinking about ways to slip away for a little while to go and see our woman.

Now, I don't need to.

As Kirill tries to calm himself down, not liking the idea of using Oaklynn to smoke Mikhail and his bastard goons out of hiding, I stand and stride out of the room. No one's paying attention to me; they're all waiting for Kirill to vault his desk and wrap his hands around Hendrix's throat.

I'm hoping he can get his shit together because Oaklynn would be pissed. She considers Kirby and her men family. She would rip pieces of Kirill's flesh from his body if he hurt Hendrix. Kirill would let her too.

The man is soft for our woman.

Not that I have much room to talk. I'm just as bad if not worse.

She just has that kind of effect on us. There isn't a damn thing I wouldn't do to make our woman happy.

When the elevator starts to open, I watch Betty sit up a little straighter. For the last few months, she's been better. She's been focusing on her job while not throwing her half nude self at us. I don't trust it and I'm not the only one.

Oaklynn's smile is fake as fuck when her eyes land on Betty. I have to swallow down a chuckle, glad I stayed just behind the reception desk and Betty has no idea I'm here.

"Oaklynn," Betty's voice is saccharine to the point that it makes my gums ache.

Our woman, our queen, stands tall. Her shoulders are pulled back and her chin held high.

Her gorgeous hair is down in soft waves falling around her shoulders and down her back.

She's wearing a dress which hugs each one of her curves while also being professional and polished.

Everything about her screams luxury and I love it.



The deep green color is gorgeous on her and would make anyone looking at her think of money.

Betty's eyes narrow into a glare which would make a lesser woman tremble. But our woman doesn't even flinch. Instead, the smile on her face becomes wider and predatory.

She can smell blood in the water and Betty has no idea.

"Betty," Oaklynn tsks and shakes her head in disappointment. "Kirill," she purrs his name, knowing full well that Betty isn't allowed to use it, "was very clear with you. Wasn't he?"

I can hear how hard Betty swallows. Maybe she's finally recognizing the danger she's in, but I doubt she'll be smart enough to heed it.

"I'm not sure what you're referring to," Betty tries to deflect. Poorly.

"It's Mrs. Volkov to you, Betty," our woman's voice drips condescension.

I'm here for it. Before I step out and make my presence known, I reach down and adjust my rock-hard cock in my pants. It's a problem I've gotten used to since Oaklynn has come into our lives. There's nothing to do about it other than bury myself deep inside our woman.

Maybe Wolfe and the guys can leave so we can enact one of the fantasies I've had since the first time Oaklynn walked into Kirill's office. Bending her over the expensive as fuck desk Kirill has is something I will make happen at some point.

I can only hope it'll be today.

Betty clears her throat and nods. “Of course, Mrs. Volkov. I apologize.”

Even though she’s trying to sound contrite, I can hear the bite in Betty’s words. It sets my teeth on edge. We’ve been keeping an eye on her, but my gut is telling me we need to look closer.

A woman like Betty doesn’t spend as long as she’s worked for us trying to get into our pants and give up as easily as she, seemingly, has. It would be so much easier to just kill her, even though we don’t like harming women.

If she’s a threat to our peace, to our heart, to the woman who makes us whole, then you better believe her life will be forfeit. Nothing will save her from me. Or any of us.

When I take a step out of the shadows, Oaklynn’s brown eyes snap up to meet mine. I don’t see any surprise written on her face and I can’t help but smirk. There’s no doubt in my mind that she knew I was there the entire time.

Fuck, I love when our woman puts on a show. And when it involves her making a power move? I’m a goner.

“Little Bee,” I growl and hold my hand out for our woman to take. It’s been far too long since I’ve touched her.

Betty spins around in her chair so fast that the momentum takes her too far and she has to grip her desk and turn back toward me. Her eyes are big and full of fear. When I give her a cold look, it’s clear she knows I heard the entire exchange.

Her days are numbered. Even if the worst she gets is being fired.

“Baker,” Oaklynn’s voice is husky as she steps closer and slides her hand into mine.

My eyes close automatically and I take a moment and soak up the way it feels to be touching her again. Her hand is so small and delicate. And when my large mitt is wrapped around it, I'm reminded of just how gentle I need to be with her.

Except when she's naked and writhing for us. Then our woman becomes eternal fire, one with a burn you only have the option to welcome and revel in.

"Were you watching my progress from the time I left the house?" There's a flirtatious deliberateness in her voice and I can't help but smile.

Sometimes the performance is necessary.

The information Oaklynn just gave Betty is vast, but I doubt the woman will look beyond her own selfishness to see it.

"Of course I was, wife. How could I not?" I use our joined hands to pull her closer to me and wrap my other arm around her waist, anchoring her to me. "I missed you," I murmur just for her.

Her brown eyes are full of understanding and a yearning that I feel down to my soul. "I know," she whispers, "I missed you too. It's why I'm here."

I don't bother looking at Betty again; I don't need to. Oaklynn doesn't look her way either. I should not hike up our woman's skirt and press her against the wall.

But it's fucking tempting.

Oaklynn gives my hand a squeeze as she teases me, "Whatever you're thinking will have to wait for later."

There's nothing that could wipe the grin off my face. I wiggle my eyebrows at her

comically because there's no reason to try and hide what I was thinking. Her laughter makes it feel like I'm soaring.

I open Kirill's office door and step aside so Oaklynn can enter first since I know no one poses a threat to her inside this room. No, the only thing which might be a danger to her is the overload of testosterone.

"Oh," Oaklynn's voice is light, "it seems like there are some big emotions going on in this room right now."

When I step in behind our woman, Kirill's jaw has gone slack. He's frozen in place where he's standing behind his desk. His hands are planted on the top, his large frame looming across the surface and towards where Hendrix is sitting.

Maxim doesn't even try to hide his reaction as he snickers.

Oaklynn's gaze is locked onto Kirill and I'm sure she's read the room effectively and efficiently. The way her eyes are narrowed has warning bells going off in my head. There's no doubt that she's not impressed by his behavior and the stance he's taken.

I also know our woman isn't going to outwardly call him on his bullshit. Not right now at least.

She moves through the office with a grace which has my dick throbbing. She's so damn sexy and I almost can't stand it. The moment she rounds Kirill's desk and places her hand on his shoulder; he straightens and relaxes.

I watch as her lips move, but I'm not close enough to hear what she's saying. The next thing I know, Kirill is sitting in his chair and pulling our woman down onto his lap.

“You came right on time,” Wolfe’s voice is filled with amusement.

Oaklynn shoots him a look that is unamused with a side of sassy as fuck. I have to take my seat again, just to hide how much our woman being here has affected me.

She makes a humming sound as she melts back against Kirill, forcing him to put all his attention on her. It’s amusing as hell to watch the way he calms down.

“I came here for a reason,” Oaklynn informs the room.

“Not just to see us?” Maxim teases with a smirk.

“Well,” Oaklynn flashes a big smile his way, “it’s a nice bonus.”

“Solnishko ,” Kirill’s voice is a low rasp, “what can we do for you?”

“I’ve been contacted about a charity event.

” She makes eye contact with Huck, Maxim, and me, probably trying to gauge our reactions.

“They’re having a fundraiser soon and would like me to sit on the organizing committee.

While I’ve never worked with this charity before, they know I’ve been involved in various events in the past.” She sighs and rubs her hand up and down Kirill’s arm.

“I think they also want the Volkov name backing them.”

“What’s the charity?” Kirill inquires.

“Heart and Home. Their goal is to provide affordable housing for people who need it. I’m sure part of why they want me to help is because of the realty arm of Volkov Enterprises.

” She glances at him and bites her lip before squaring her shoulders.

“I’d like to get involved. I used to do a lot in the city to help people, but I’ve fallen down on that in the last two months. I need to get back to it.”

Kirill runs his hand through his hair and heaves a heavy sigh. “I’m not sure if that’s such a good idea.”

Oaklynn narrows her eyes at him, and I can see the fire ignite inside of her. She’s not going to back down and she sure as fuck is not going to allow to be told no.

“Well,” Hendrix claps and stands up while motioning for Dominic and Wolfe, “I think that’s our cue.” He locks eyes with Kirill and gives a slight nod. “Let us know how and if we’re needed for support.”

I try not to bristle because I’m more than capable of making sure our woman is safe, but I know it’s coming from a good place. That doesn’t mean I won’t take the opportunity to land a punch if I get the chance.

Hendrix doesn’t hesitate to walk around the desk and kiss Oaklynn on the cheek. My hands clench in response, but then Dominic and Wolfe do the same. When Wolfe, my brother, smirks and winks at me, all I can do is flip him off.

These guys have become family to our woman. I can’t kill them even though they might as well have the reaper looking over their shoulder at the moment.

Once the door is closed behind the guys, Oaklynn stands up and moves away from

Kirill. His mouth drops open, and his eyes go wide.

She rounds on him, her voice ice cold and dripping venom, “Just so I’m clear, I wasn’t asking for permission.

I thought it would be nice for me to come down here and include you, but I was not asking for your approval.

” She stands up straighter, indignance written all over her.

“I will be going to the meeting, and I will be helping to organize the charity event. Whether you support me or not is on you.”

Kirill stands up and yanks Oaklynn against his chest. “I’ll always support you,” he growls. “I just want to keep you safe.”

Oaklynn’s smile is soft as she nods. “I understand, but I won’t just be put in a new prison. Just because it’s gilded doesn’t make it any less of a cage.”

“Oaklynn,” he whispers, his voice filled with pain, “I never want to do that to you.”

“Prove it,” she challenges him.

He takes her mouth in a brutal kiss. It’s all need and desperation, desire and want. They’re both breathless when he pulls back, a soft smile on his face. Even though Kirill is struggling with the idea of Oaklynn being out in the city, he wants to make our woman happy.

I stride closer to the pair and grip our woman’s hips to turn her toward me. The kiss I give her is softer, gentler, but no less fierce. I want her to feel the love I have for her.

“Love you, Little Bee,” I murmur against her lips.

Then Maxim and Huck pull her between them. They take her mouth one after the other, claiming her again just like Kirill and I have.

My gut is screaming at me as a feeling of deep dread settles there. The idea of our woman being out there makes me sick, but she needs this. I’m not going to be the one to take it away from her.

I’ll just have to make sure our woman is safe. Always.



## Page 8

*Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:29 am*

OAKLYNN

I'm sitting in the conference room of Heart and Home, which has been working diligently to get people into the houses they need.

Housing costs are steep in Seattle, but people still need places to live.

Heart and Home is all about making the process easier to navigate and supplementing monetarily when needed.

It's a charity that has done a lot of great work. Since they contacted me a few days ago, I've done my homework on them. The worst part about being involved now is that I wish I had found this charity sooner.

My men don't know it, but I have plans to get the realty arm of Volkov Enterprises involved. I think managing a property built with this charity in mind would really help some people who need it. I want that.

Even though there were a lot of things I wish would have been different while growing up, I'm more than aware of how much I was given and the privilege I was afforded. While I wasn't without worry, having a roof over my head was never a concern. Neither was food.

The simplest of things can be taken for granted when you've never had them plague your mind and weigh on your heart.

The meeting has been going on for a while now and it's been fun to be able to bring

the contacts I've made in the past into the mix when looking toward the gala being put together.

It's going to be a fancy night, but that's what these kinds of events are all about.

You spend some money while other goods and services are donated for the night, and you get a lot in return.

As long as Heart and Home gets the money they need to help people, I'll feel like I accomplished something.

Being able to add to this meeting and strengthening the upcoming event has pride warming me from the inside out. I've missed this over the last few months.

Having a purpose is invaluable and it feels like I'm getting back to that. But I also know there is a lot more for me to do, a lot more that I can do. This is a great first step to finding out what comes next.

This meeting would be perfect if the man next to me, who barely slid into his seat as the meeting began, would stop giving me a side eye. Either he's interested in me or he's creepy as fuck. I'm not sure which one and I really don't care to find out.

He leans closer to me without warning, "I didn't get the chance to meet you earlier. I'm Adam Peterson."

"Oaklynn," I tell him quietly.

I don't blow sunshine up his ass and tell him it's nice to meet him. I don't think it is.

"Thank you for coming in. I'll have an email sent out that goes over what was discussed and all the final decisions along with tasks people will be taking care of.

We'll have one more meeting before the gala.

I'm looking forward to seeing this come to fruition to keep Heart and Home helping the people who need us. ”

I give the Director of Development, Angela, a small smile, and a nod.

We were able to chat before the meeting started.

I came early because I wanted to meet her and learn about the charity from someone who is passionate about it.

The moment I met Angela, I knew how much what they do here means to her.

The way she spoke about Heart and Home made me feel inspired and I sat down looking forward to finding out how I could help.

I've had some thoughts about how Kirill's business can get involved, but I'm not going to bring it up before I speak to the guys. What I did offer up was the contacts I've made and the experience I've built in putting events like this together. And it's not Angela's first rodeo either.

My plan was to talk to Angela after the meeting, but that was before this Adam twit sat down next to me. Now all I want to do is get home. I'm sure my men are pacing the living room like caged lions just waiting to pounce the moment I walk through the door.

How I got out of the house for the meeting without one of them with me is a mystery. I thought for sure one of them would insist, if not all four of them. But they let me leave and Maxim told me he'd have dinner ready for me when I get home.

I have no doubt the bodyguard in the room with me, who isn't the only man guarding me on my little adventure, has already let my men know things are wrapping up here.

"I'm not the kind of man to let an opportunity go," Adam leans even closer to me.

If he's trying to intimidate me, it's not going to work. Even though I want to, I don't lean away from him. It sure as fuck is not an invitation, but my gut is screaming at me that this guy is trouble.

"And what opportunity is that?" My voice is too nice, but he doesn't catch on if the smile on his face is anything to go by.

I tilt my head to the side slightly and widen my eyes while reaching up and brushing my hair off my shoulder.

And do I use the hand with my giant rock on it?

You better fucking believe it. "The opportunity to help a lot of people with the event?"

Adam blinks once and then his eyebrows pull together in a fake as fuck look of concern. "Of course that is the goal. Everyone should have a roof over their head."

The man has the opportunity to end it right there, but why would he? He thinks he has one of those panty dropping smiles which gets him whatever woman he wants. The poor, delusional idiot.

"But that's not the opportunity I was talking about," he winks. "I was talking about making the acquaintance of a beautiful woman. I'm going to take you to get a drink."

My eyebrow shoots up and I grin from ear to ear. I can't help it. Sometimes men are

too easy.

“I’m sorry, I believe you’re working under an incorrect assumption. Or maybe you’re being willfully obtuse.” I narrow my eyes as if I’m studying the specimen in front of me with real interest. I hold my hand up and wiggle my ring finger. “I’m very happily married.”

“Even happily married women need to grab a drink,” his words practically ooze out of his mouth.

I scrunch my nose up. “I didn’t use my full name earlier because it wasn’t necessary and you were being so rude to try and hold this little tête-à-tête. I’m Oaklynn Volkov.”

Not one single emotion flickers across his face. It sets me instantly on edge. If Adam belongs in this kind of meeting, one which relies on people who know people who will donate and attend to make this gala worth the time for the charity, then he would recognize my last name.

It might be a new development, but I’m still a Volkov.

I was long before we got married. I became a Volkov the moment my men saw me even though I didn’t know it at the time. My men knew it. Then I walked myself right into Kirill’s office and ensured it became my reality.

“Honey,” Adam leans into me, “it doesn’t matter what your last name is. Not to me.”

Before Adam knows what is happening, I’ve slipped a knife from my purse and have the tip touching his balls. The entire time I have a huge smile on my face, one that he’s starting to see isn’t as sweet as he was hoping it would be.

“I don’t know what your game is, Adam,” I spit is name like it’s disgusting, “but I don’t really care.”

“Maybe you should care,” his voice is a rasp, his words complete bluster. “You’re the one who has no idea the danger you’re in.” He scoffs, “You’re the one with the target on your back. I’m not.”

“Because you think you have some big bad man protecting you?” My question is a taunt; one I know he can feel to his bones with the way his eyes widen just enough.

“I don’t care who you think you have at your back.

I know who is at mine, but the difference between you and I is that I don’t need someone bigger to support me.

I’m dangerous, all,” I increase the pressure of the tip of my knife and his eyes dart down, “on my own.”

The attitude is gone, and I can practically smell the fear coming from him now. I fucking love it.

I turn the knife slightly and pat his crotch with the flat side of it. Seeing the beads of sweat form on his brow has me feeling bubbly.

“I’m sure I’ll be seeing you soon, Adam Peterson.”

Before he gets the chance to say anything, I remove the knife, stand up, and step away from the table in one fluid movement. He sits there, stunned.

When I look at the man who was stationed against the wall behind me, I give a nod and head tilt toward the man. I don’t need to call Kirill to know he’s going to want to

talk to this guy.

Not only was there something off about him, but he clearly knew who I was and still tried to chat me up. There's no way he has enough power to not care about the Volkov name. I want to find out why that is, and so will our men.

As I stride out of the room, my back straight and my chin held high, I don't need to look back. I know my bodyguard has fallen into step behind me. When I slide into the back seat of the car, my bodyguard hops in behind the wheel.

Kirill answers on the first ring, "Is there something wrong, Solnishko ?"

The worry in his voice makes me wish I could tell him everything is fine. But I'm not going to lie to him.

"A guy sat next to me at the meeting. He tried to chat me up," I inform him.

Kirill growls, "He was hitting on you?"

I roll my eyes and try not to be annoyed.

"He wasn't really interested." He scoffs like my words are ridiculous, but I ignore it.

"I think he got close to me on purpose. I didn't use my last name when I first told him my name, but when I did, to try and back him off, he wasn't surprised at all.

There was just something about the interaction. My instincts were screaming at me."

"What's this fuckers name?"

I giggle, the possessiveness in Kirill's question making a shiver roll down my spine. I

need to get home. Sooner rather than later.

“I signaled for him to be picked up,” I assure Kirill. “I’ll be home soon. I just didn’t want you to hear about our new guest before I had a chance to say something.”

“If that happened, I would be spanking your ass until it’s red and difficult for you to sit down for a few days,” Kirill rasps.

My heart starts to pound harder and it’s difficult to concentrate for a moment. A shake of my head helps a little, but not nearly enough. If it were up to my men, they’d have me bent over most flat surfaces. If not to give me a spanking, then to shove their hard cock inside of me.

I’d be good either way.

“I’ll be home soon, husband,” I purr. “I love you.”

The rest of the ride is quiet, and I replay my interactions with Adam the entire time. Something was off with him. Something big.

I’m sure my men will find out who he is, what his agenda is and if there’s a connection to Mikhail.

As much as I don’t want to see danger around every corner, I’m not going to be naïve about the reality I find myself in either.

Ignoring my instincts could get someone killed and I’ll be damned if it happens to one of my men.

Not while I have the power to change it.



Far too often men underestimate women. I have used it to my advantage most of my life, but no more. There is no reason for me to pretend to be less than I am now that I'm a Volkov.

The moment we pull up in front of the house, the front door slams open and Huck is out the door, yanking my door open, and hauling me against his chest before I even realize it.

He's practically vibrating with anger, and I melt into him.

It's not just anger I can feel coming from him though; the rage is only a cover.

For his fear.

"I'm okay," I assure Huck. I chuckle softly and murmur, "The idiot is lucky he still has his balls."

Huck pulls back from me and stares at me with wide eyes. When I look beyond his shoulders, not quite as broad as the rest of my men but no less strong, I find Baker, Maxim, and Kirill watching me with expectant eyes and a fuck ton of relief.

"After I told him my full name, he said my name didn't matter to him.

" My men suck in a sharp breath and their gazes turn feral.

I bat my eyelashes at them innocently, my words belying the way I'm looking at them.

"In response I slipped a knife from my purse and pressed the tip against his balls. That got his attention even though he tried to act tough."

Maxim throws his head back and laughs. Then he's pulling me from Huck's arms, his laughter surrounding us as he lifts me into his arms bridal style and heads back into the house.

"Life is never dull with you, Zolotse ," amusement fills his words, "and I am grateful as fuck for it."

Kirill slides his phone from his pocket, looks at a message and then tucks it away again as Maxim sits down with me on his lap. He gives me a nod, and I know they have Adam in the new warehouse basement torture room.

If Mikhail thought a bomb was going to slow my men down, then he really didn't understand who he was going up against. That warehouse was only the one they used most often. But my men are nothing if they aren't prepared.

For anything.

"Now," Kirill's voice has an edge to it as he sits down opposite us, needing to see me as I speak, "tell us everything and don't leave out even the most insignificant detail.

We'll need to know before we go and have our own," he pauses as if I don't know they're going to spill his blood, "conversation with him."

I snort while trying to keep my laughter at bay. But that doesn't stop me from telling them everything. They deserve to know and I'm not going to hide a damn thing.

Not when lives are at stake.

Not when they will do anything to protect our family.

Not when I'll stand shoulder to shoulder with them and do the same.

## Page 9

*Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:29 am*

KIRILL

I need Oaklynn. I need to feel her, to assure myself that she's safe and whole. The only problem is that my blood is boiling, and I don't know if I can control myself.

The need to go down to our new warehouse and find out why this Adam fool thought it would be a good idea to approach our woman while at a charity event meeting is riding me hard. As much as I want to make him bleed, the need to be with our woman, to stay at her side, is even stronger.

I've never felt more divided in my needs and I'm not sure what to do about it.

Oaklynn locks eyes with me from her perch on Maxim's lap. I don't know what she can see on my face, but it has her standing and gliding across the room towards me. Every time I watch our woman, her grace and the way she carries herself has a way of always taking my breath away.

I don't deserve her. There is too much blood soaking my soul. There is too much darkness in my heart.

But she doesn't seem to notice. Or maybe she just doesn't care.

Either way, she's mine and I'm not letting her go. I'll just do the best I can to be a better man for her.

Her small hands cup my face and her touch grounds me; it's not enough. Her brown eyes are locked with my dark ones which are probably promising pain and

retribution.

“It’s not your fault, Kirill,” her words are meant to be soothing but the fire inside of me continues to burn.

“It is my fucking fault,” I spit the words. “I didn’t want you going to that meeting and then when you do go, which I knew was going to be a problem, someone approached you and threatened you.”

Oaklynn tilts her head to the side, her eyes searching mine. I know what she’ll find there. Devastation. Fear. Confusion. Undying love. Possession.

“I’m not a doll you can put on a shelf, Kirill,” her words are shards of glass which rip against my skin, leaving tatters in their wake.

“I won’t allow it. Never fucking again.” She shakes her head, the movement curt and final.

“I would have gone to that meeting with or without your permission. Knowing about Mikhail and the threat he poses doesn’t change that I am going to live my life.

I wasn’t unprotected; someone was standing at my back, and I was able to handle the situation. ”

“You shouldn’t have to handle a situation in the fucking first place,” I roar the words.

Oaklynn doesn’t flinch. She doesn’t cower in fear. She doesn’t even fucking blink.

“Maxim, Huck, and Baker,” she addresses the guys who are watching us closely without dropping my gaze, “you three need to go and talk to that Adam fool. Find out what you need to find out. Kirill and I will be here when you get home.” She leans

forward, her nose touching mine, and commands, “Follow me.”

When she turns and strides out of the room and toward the stairs without looking back the only thing I can do is stand up and follow her. I know if I were to look at the guys then I’d see the smug as fuck looks on their faces. So, I don’t.

I’m about to be put in my place. It’s not something I’m used to. The guys have tried over the years, but with Oaklynn it’s different. She’s the only one who could get away with giving any of us orders the way she just did.

Pride blooms in my chest, leaving warmth in its wake. But it doesn’t touch the fear sliding through my veins.

What if he was more unassuming and hadn’t set off her instincts? What if he hadn’t said a word and just waited for the right moment to grab her? What if anything happened differently?

Every step I take toward her room, the room we’ve all imposed upon since the wedding because it feels like a sanctuary, feels heavy. Even though they’re silent steps, I can feel them reverberate through my body.

When I step through the door it’s to find Oaklynn just finishing unzipping her dress. The fabric slides down her body, caressing her skin as it does. The lace panties and bra she’s wearing are blood red. Violent. Dangerous.

Her eyes are dark and filled with challenge as she looks at me over her shoulder.

“You’re going to take what you need; I’ll absorb it all.

Then you’re going to let it go. I’m fine and was more than capable of taking care of myself.

” When she turns, the way her tits are presented in scraps of red lace is momentarily distracting.

Her voice takes on an edge, one as sharp as the knife tucked away in her purse, “Unless you don’t believe I’m capable of standing beside you?

Maybe you don’t think I’m strong enough? ”

“No,” I bark, “you are strong enough. You’re the strongest woman I’ve ever met. I don’t doubt your abilities to take care of yourself,” my tone is harsh even though my words are meant to be soft, they feel soft in my heart.

“Really?” She reaches behind her back and unclips her bra, the lace slipping away and falling in a heap at her feet.

Next, she slips from her shoes without looking away from me.

When she slides her panties down over her hips and allows them to drop, my mouth starts to water.

“Love is not always responsibility; it isn’t always penance.

More often than not, it’s trust. Do you trust me, Kirill? ”

“I trust you, Solnishko ,” the words are coarse and broken.

“But you’re angry. You feel like you failed me,” it’s not a question, it’s a statement of fact.

“I did.”

Her brown eyes narrow. “No,” the word lands like a bomb between us.

And then I can’t stay still. I close the distance between us in two steps, my hands gripping her body far too tightly. She doesn’t complain.

No, her eyes flare with something like triumph, a victory she revels in.

“Hands and knees,” I command, the words dark and smokey.

The tendrils of the demand wrap around our woman, but she welcomes it. With a smirk, she turns and does my bidding.

I practically rip the clothes from my body, hardly able to wait and needing to show our woman exactly who owns her. Needing to claim her. Again.

No matter how many times I do, I have a feeling it’ll never be enough.

My cock is throbbing by the time I’m standing naked behind her. She doesn’t look at me over her shoulder, she keeps her eyes forward, but she wiggles her ass in invitation.

She might as well wave a flag in front of a bull.

With a growl, I step up to the edge of the bed. It’s the perfect height for the quick fuck that I already know won’t be enough to take the edge off this feeling burning inside of me. The fear.

One hand grips her hip while the other slides up the middle of her back. I grab a swath of her hair and wrap it around my fist. With a tug, I force her body to bow, loving the whimper of need that falls from her lips.

I can see how wet she is, her arousal shimmering in the low light in the room as it coats her needy pussy lips. She needs this just as much as I do.

My eyes slide closed, and I force myself to take a deep breath, needing to center myself and keep ahold of my control, at least a sliver of it. “Are you sure?” My question is a low rasp; one filled with restrained need.

“Give me your anger, Kirill,” her words are sharp.

They rip through the tenuous hold I have on my control.

And I’m lost.

I watch earnestly as the head of my cock kisses her entrance. The moment it does, I punch my hips forward and fill her. Hard.

And I let go.

I slam into her without care or thought. I’m not fucking her for pleasure. My movements are filled with desperate devotion and fueled by a rage I’ve never experienced before.

My eyes stay locked on the way her cunt opens up for me, stretching around my shaft as she coats me with her arousal. She’s so fucking wet for me, but every brutal thrust, every time I hit the back of her channel without care for whether I’m hurting her or not, she gets even wetter.

It feels like I’m floating. Above the clouds. Above the atmosphere. Above the stars.

I’m amongst the galaxies, so small and insignificant. I’m not what matters.



She is.

Our wife.

She's all that matters.

"He could have hurt you," I grit the words out. "He could have taken you from us."

Fear starts to cloud my vision, turning it hazy. My heart pounds harder with every thrust, her body accepting me and trying to hold me in place with how tight her pussy is clamping down around my cock.

"Kirill," she keens, "more."

The grip I have on her hair tightens and I force her to arch her back and heed the way I'm directing her body. Molding her beauty with my hands makes time stand still and race through my soul at the same time.

I'm a panting mess as I fuck our wife harder and faster. The sound of our skin slapping together is obscene and on the edge of barbaric. I've never heard anything sexier in my life.

"Yes," the word starts as a whisper, but it builds as she repeats it. A mantra, the plea stringing together with an underscore of pain.

"I'm never letting you go, Oaklynn," I grunt. "If you're put in danger again, I'm punishing you."

I know, underneath it all, that I'm being ridiculous.

I just don't give a fuck.

“I’ll leave my handprint on your ass and the memory of my fingers around your throat if you’re ever in another situation like you were tonight.”

Oaklynn pushes back against me, meeting every one of my thrusts and spurring me on to give her more. Chasing her own pleasure while pushing mine.

Fear crawls up my back before wrapping itself around me completely. I can’t deny what tonight made me feel. There’s no way I can experience that helplessness again.

Never fucking again.

“Touch yourself,” I growl.

Her arm shakes when she balances on it so she can slide her hand between her thighs, her fingers going straight to her clit. The way her nails scrape across my shaft as I fuck her, has my eyes slamming closed.

I tip my head back and stop fucking breathing while trying to hold off from shooting my cum deep inside our woman. She’s going to come first. She has to.

“I’m gonna come,” her breathless warning feels like starlight; the words shimmering around us.

“Squeeze my cock, show me how much you like me using you and showing you who you belong to,” I grit out through my teeth.

Sweat is coating me, and my dick is so painfully hard that I don’t know if I want to fuck her harder or cry. My balls are heavy, and my spine is tingling, warning me of just how close I am to blowing my load.

When her breath hitches and I can feel her orgasm start to wash over her, I release her

hip and spank one of her ass cheeks and then the other. Hard.

She screams, her body locking up as she squeezes me even tighter and comes.

I slam into her a few more times before I bury myself as deep inside of her as I can. Her shoulders fall toward the bed, and I follow her down, the grip I have on her hair ensuring that the movement is slow. Suspended. In my fucking control.

Her pussy walls milk my shaft, and I grunt, “I can feel your body begging me for my cum. Soon I’ll be planting my baby in your womb, nothing will stop me from knocking you up. You’ll look so fucking sexy round with our baby.”

I’m not even sure where those words come from, but as spurt after spurt of my cum paint her walls, all I can picture is that fucking implant in her arm which is preventing me from breeding her right now.

I hate that fucking implant.

The moment the last of my cum fills her, I let go of her hair and she slumps to the side. I crawl behind her and pull her against my front. Needing to feel her body against mine.

When she rolls over, a small groan escapes her body. Moving isn’t easy because her body feels boneless. I can’t help but feel smug as fuck.

But the smirk on my face disappears when I meet our wife’s gaze. “It’s okay to be scared, Kirill.”

Her words feel like a bullet to the chest. I’ve never been allowed to be weak, to be vulnerable. But I know it’s different with Oaklynn. With her everything is different.

She'll never judge me.

She'll never look at me differently.

She'll never think less of me.

"I can't lose you," my voice is like gravel, and I clear my throat, hoping my next words sound smoother. "I won't lose you." I take a deep breath and let it out slowly. "I was scared when you called me, and I hated it. Being helpless isn't something I can handle."

Her thumb runs between my eyebrows, smoothing the skin there. My face instantly relaxes, and I can breathe a little easier.

"I'm right here," she assures me. "I'm safe and I had the situation handled." She looks away and bites her bottom lip before she looks at me again. "I could have been wrong. He might just be a creepy man who has more money than sense and an overinflated sense of entitlement."

"I don't think you were wrong," I whisper, "and that scares me even more. What if it was Mikhail and not this Adam fucker?"

"Then he would have never gotten that close to me," she assures me.

I want to believe her, I do, but it's not easy. I also want to be in the warehouse with the guys.

Oaklynn giggles and pinches my chest. "You're thinking about torturing him in the warehouse while your cock is still wet from me," she chastises me.

Laughter bursts out of me as I roll onto my back. The weight of tonight, of what

could have been, isn't quite as heavy as it was. It's still there, I can't imagine a time when it'll disappear entirely, but it does feel like something I can shoulder now.

I roll to face our woman again and cup her cheek, my hand looking comically large, "I love you, Oaklynn."

The smile she gives me is luminous. "I love you too."

It's not Adam's blood spray as a badge of honor, but it's enough. The guys will get the information we need. I have no doubt about it.

MAXIM

I'm practically skipping into the warehouse to see our newest guest. Knowing that he's waiting there for us, the asshole who thought it would be a good idea to track down our woman and threaten her, has me excited about shedding some blood. I need this.

It's not just for me either, even though I really want to make this guy suffer. Kirill needs answers and not being here with us is going to weigh heavily on him. I do think he's right where he's supposed to be though.

If he were here with us, I'm not sure we'd get any fucking answers. Kirill would have walked into the room, taken one look at the asshole, and killed him.

Not a single question would have been asked, let alone answered.

This way we have a chance to find out his deal.

"I know who this guy is," Huck's voice stops me in my tracks before I open the door leading to the basement which is outfitted for wet work.

Since he's behind me because I wasn't going to wait for them, I turn around slowly. My eyebrows shoot up toward my hairline as I look at him expectantly.

"I did a little digging on the way here," he explains. "He's Mikhail's cousin. It's the only Adam I could find. Adam Peterson. He's the son of Anatoly's sister who wasn't part of the business at all. She avoided it all her life. She got married and had Adam."

“Does this mean I can just kill him?” The question is hopeful as fuck as it slips from my lips.

Huck shakes his head and rolls his eyes. “No, we still need to ask him a few questions. He might know more about Mikhail’s plan or maybe we can use him as leverage later.”

“You’re no fucking fun,” I grumble as I head toward the door leading downstairs.

I almost roll my eyes when I think about how Mikhail targeted our last wet work designated warehouse. If he thought it was going to slow us down, or even put a dent in our operation, he didn’t do enough research. Kirill is the kind of man who thrives on being prepared.

Which is why I know Adam getting close to Oaklynn will be eating at him. He’ll be blaming himself and trying to figure out how to lock our woman down. The thing is, she won’t let that happen.

Our wife is independent. As she should be.

Our wife is stubborn as hell. Which means she’ll go toe-to-toe with Kirill and not back down. It’s what he needs.

Our wife is smart. She’ll know exactly what Kirill needs, give it to him, and then convince him that wrapping her in wool and trying to keep danger away from her isn’t going to work.

Not in our world.

It’s not like I don’t want to keep her safe, I desperately do, but every day is filled with variables I can’t foresee. I could be lost in the unknown, in all the possibilities of

what could go wrong, or I can trust our woman.

I choose to trust her. She can protect herself, even if I never want her to have to do so. None of us can be with her all the time and I won't stifle her because of my own needs. That would be cruel and make us no better than her dead father.

None of us want that.

Adam's head snaps up when I walk into the room. I don't bother looking around the sparse room. You don't need much when it comes to torture. The best feature is the drain in the middle of the floor.

"Comfortable?" My question is a taunt that I hope gets under his skin.

Adam sneers at me but keeps his mouth closed. Pity.

I grab the brass knuckles from the table as I pass it, my eyes locked on the idiot in front of me. Slipping the weapon on my hand, I relax my fingers before curling them into a fist.

"Hurting me would be a mistake," Adam tries to keep the wobble out of his voice, but I can hear it.

"Oh? Why would that be?"

"You don't want to piss my cousin off," he warns.

I pout and slump my shoulders. "Is your cousin really important or something? Is that why I should be afraid of them?"

Baker clears his throat behind me, but I know it's only to cover his laughter. Toying



with this imbecile is more entertaining than it should be. He has no idea that he'll never see the light of day again.

"You definitely don't want to piss my cousin off," Adam states.

Even with me standing in front of him, the fear in his eyes has nothing to do with me. It's all about his cousin.

"Your cousin, Mikhail," Huck growls from where he's leaning against the wall.

Adam's eyes snap over to him, the surprise evident on his face. It's almost comical.

I turn toward Huck and give him a look. "Why do you have to take away all my fun?"

Huck shrugs, unaffected by my warning look. "I don't want to be here all night. Let's get the answers we need and then head home." He turns his gaze toward Adam. "We know Mikhail is your cousin. We know you didn't grow up the same way Mikhail did. How the fuck did he get you mixed up in his mess?"

Adam's shoulders deflate and he shakes his head. "I'm not going to answer any of your questions."

Baker sighs before picking up a knife from the table. He smirks as he approaches Adam. "I understand this isn't the first time you've had a knife pulled on you tonight. Our wife is quite impressive, isn't she?"

Adam curls his lip, but it's all bravado. "Your wife is a whore. I know all about her. She was supposed to marry Mikhail, but my cousin didn't want her." He scoffs, "Why would he?"

Baker tsks, but that's the only warning he gives before he plunges the knife into

Adam's thigh. He's careful about where he places the wound. Adam screams out in pain.

Before he even has a chance to process what is happening to him, I land two quick punches to his gut. He doubles over in the chair as he gasps for breath.

"Here's what is going to happen," my voice is cold as I get in Adam's face, "you're going to tell us everything you know about Mikhail and his plans. You're absolutely going to explain why you sat down next to our wife tonight."

"No," he groans.

"Yes," there's a demand in my voice.

"You're not going to make it out of this room," Huck warns him coldly. "Right now, the only thing you can do is ensure your death is quick. Or you can endure unfathomable torture. We've had a lot of practice at it."

"I'm not a fucking rat," Adam spits.

"Oh good," I punch him again, this one a jab to his nose which has no hope of holding up and fractures, "I was hoping you wouldn't take the easy way out."

Baker grunts and slams the knife into Adam's other leg. We don't let up. I land punches and Baker stabs Adam, always careful about where he's plunging the knife into him. There's no doubt in our mind that he will die.

But will it be tonight?

In a week?

That has yet to be seen.

“Let’s see if he’s ready to answer our questions now,” Huck sounds bored as fuck behind us.

I glance over at Baker to find blood splattered all over him. I don’t even have to look down at my clothes to know I look roughly the same. With a smile on my face, I head over to the tray and drop the brass knuckles down, flexing my fingers once the weight is gone.

Baker’s voice is a low demand, “Tell us about Mikhail and how you got mixed up in his shit, and the point of tonight’s stunt with our wife.”

Adam’s head lolls to the side and he can barely open either of his eyes to look at us. When he coughs, some blood sprays out of his mouth and Baker steps back quickly with a look of disgust on his face. The room smells like urine, and I realize that I didn’t even notice when he pissed himself.

I can’t help the bark of laughter that bursts from me. Baker looks at me like I’ve lost my fucking mind, but all I do is wave my hand dismissively.

“I didn’t realize he pissed himself. You think he shit himself too?” Another round of chuckles takes me under, and it takes a moment to get myself under control.

“Fuck you,” Adam rasps, but there’s no heat behind the words. How could there be? The man is a mangled mess.

And it’s only going to get worse from here.

“I didn’t know Mikhail when I was growing up,” Adam starts, his voice soft and broken, his words barely discernable with the way they’re slurring as the pain really

sets in.

Then there's the blood loss; it's probably not helping matters but I don't really give a fuck.

"Mom made sure I didn't have contact with that side of the family tree.

" He closes his eyes briefly, pain etched across his face as he mutters, "I wish it would have stayed that way."

"You made a choice, there's no reason to waste a wish on bullshit completely in your control," I point out.

Adam's eyes crack open, and he lets out a labored breath.

"Maybe," he offers, almost conceding but not quite.

"A few months ago, Mikhail came to me. He told me about what could be gained by being behind him. I didn't want any part of it at first, but then he threatened my mom even though she is his blood.

I figured doing what he wanted was worth saving her and I would benefit from it. He promised me a life of luxury."

"Loyalty under duress is no loyalty at all," Huck mutters under his breath.

When I meet his gaze, I give a nod of agreement. Mikhail is desperate and it shows.

"I was just supposed to sit next to Oaklynn tonight and chat her up, be charming while threatening her. Mikhail just wanted to get a read on her. He said she was a meek, stuck-up bitch."

My fists clench and I step forward to show him just what I think about his words. Before I can get to him, Baker is there and backhanding him across his already bloody, bruised, and swollen face. Adam lets out a whimper which sounds more animal than man.

“Guess it’s a good thing you won’t have the chance to report to him about the kind of woman our wife really is,” I spit the words as the control I’m barely holding onto frays a little bit more.

“Mikhail is coming for you,” Adam looks at each of us, his eyes clear of the pain for a moment, “and he’s going to start with your wife. She’s your weakness. Mikhail doesn’t have one. Everyone is expendable to him.”

“His arrogance is going to be his downfall and his maniacal need for power that will never be his. He probably dresses it all up in revenge, but he only wants power. He won’t get it,” I vow.

Adam slumps back, his head falling forward, “Doesn’t matter to me either way. I’m already dead.”

Now he’s getting it.

Baker kicks at his foot, but he doesn’t move. We watch for a moment, his chest rising and falling, even if the movement is shallow. He’s passed out; I’m mildly surprised he lasted as long as he did.

I share a look with Huck and Baker which speaks volumes. We’ll be keeping him alive. For now.

He might come in handy later. We’ll have someone come and clean him up and dress his wounds before he’s put in one of the cells down here.

“At least he didn’t seem to think Mikhail is going to come and rescue him,” I mutter while looking over at Adam.

Baker snorts out a laugh. “Mikhail doesn’t give a fuck about him. Cousin or not.”

I look at the blood on Baker and then down at myself. “Let’s go home. We need to fill in Kirill and I need to hold our wife.”

With one more look at Adam, I leave the room without looking back. I can feel Baker and Huck fall into step behind me.

Torture isn’t new to me. Being able to get the answers out of people who want to keep their silence and secrets has been a point of pride.

But now all I can think about is getting home to Oaklynn.

Fuck, what has this woman done to me? And why do I like it so much?

BAKER

“I should have changed before we left the warehouse,” I mutter more to myself than to Maxim or Huck.

Now that my adrenaline has leveled back out after torturing Adam, who is fucking lucky he’s alive right now, I’m starting to freak out because of the blood on me. I could be covered by a lot more considering how hard we worked him over tonight.

Maxim shakes his head. “It’ll be fine.”

“It won’t be fine,” I snap at him.

Panic starts to set in. I don’t want our woman, our fucking wife, to see me like this. She’ll see who I really am and what I’m really capable of.

I don’t want that.

It’ll change the way she looks at me.

My breathing deepens and becomes slightly labored. Whether I was covered in blood and the assumptions made about me didn’t used to matter.

I was more than fine being the muscle in our family. I prided myself on it. It wasn’t the same as being overly blood thirsty. Protecting my family is a point of pride.

It was something the guys understood and relied on. But what about Oaklynn? Will

this change how she sees me?

When her father was taken out, which was the right fucking move, I came home with a bullet graze. The only blood on me was my own.

Tonight is different. None of this blood is mine.

“You’re freaking out over nothing,” Maxim’s voice is a little softer than normal.

“You don’t know that,” I accuse him.

“Our wife knows what this life is about,” Huck points out, trying to make me feel better and stop me from spiraling.

“Knowing and seeing are two different things,” I bark as we pull through the gates of the house.

My leg is bouncing up and down and a feeling settles in my gut that I haven’t experienced since I met Oaklynn—dread.

I don’t want to go inside. I don’t want to see the disappointment in our wife’s brown eyes. Her judgement will slay me.

When the door opens next to me, I jump a little bit. Maxim’s dark eyes, the same ones he shares with his older brother, Kirill, are staring at me and taking my measure. When the hell did he even get out of the vehicle? He shakes his head and lets out a long-suffering sigh.

“You’re underestimating our woman,” he tries to reason with me, “and that is a dangerous thing to do. It’s what Adam did and look where that got him.



Mikhail is doing the same thing, and we know he'll be dead soon, just like her father who also didn't see her strength or value.

Don't be like those men, Baker," he snarls.

My head is screaming at me that he's right. And he is. I know it. But my heart is still pounding in my chest, and worry is still singing through my veins.

I won't be able to handle it if she rejects me.

"It's not about her," I whisper to Maxim after he moves back and allows me to climb out, "it's about me. What I lack. Who I am."

"My point stands," his words are firm and unyielding.

When I try to swallow, the lump in my throat makes it almost impossible. I should have changed before I left the warehouse. It's the only thought I have when I look down at myself again.

And this isn't even as bad as it could be. I've been covered in much more blood before. I probably will be again.

But this feels different. This is her looking at me and seeing what is real. About me. About us. About the life she's been thrown into.

I won't be able to survive it if she runs.

She's stronger than you're giving her credit for.

Tell that to my racing fucking heart.

When I look up, Oaklynn is standing in the open doorway with Kirill at her back. Her eyes sweep over us, and her body relaxes as if she was worried about us even though she had no reason to.

She looks me over and her expression doesn't change, it doesn't falter. The only thing on her face is relief and happiness.

Can that really be right?

Maxim strolls up to her and kisses her lips softly. His lips move to the shell of her ear, and he whispers something too low for me to catch.

All I can do is shuffle from foot to foot, waiting for the inevitable. Waiting for her to look at me like a monster and be disgusted by me.

Oaklynn's eyes snap to mine and then she's closing the distance between us. Our toes are touching, our chests one breath away from touching.

"Don't," I croak out, "come closer. I don't want you to get blood on you."

"Is it your blood?" There's no judgement in her question, only curiosity. But I still hate it. All I can do is shake my head, not trusting my voice.

I'm supposed to be stronger than this. Giving into fear is not like me. I'm used to being the one to lighten the mood, along with Maxim. Being quick to smile and crack a joke while charming everyone around me is what I've built my life around.

But with her here, everything is different.

She grips my hand and tugs. It feels like I have no choice but to follow behind her. I'm sure that I look like a lost puppy who has just found a master they can trust. I

don't even care.

I would follow our woman anywhere. Happily.

Oaklynn doesn't stop until we're standing in our bathroom. Even though we've kept our rooms in the house, we have figured out how to sleep in Oaklynn's bed with her. Everything is better with her. At this point, I don't think I could sleep without her.

Which makes the need I have for her to not look at me any differently grow even more. I wouldn't survive without her.

After turning on the shower, she lifts her face and her eyes lock with mine. She takes her time undressing me, her movements methodical and graceful. Once I'm naked, she pulls the tank top she's wearing off and then pushes her sleep shorts down until they fall to the ground.

When she steps into the shower, I follow right after her without even thinking about it. I need to be close to her. I'm not sure I can get close enough to her.

I move underneath one of the showerheads and let the warm water flow over my body. It's tinged pink, but it's not nearly enough for me to feel clean.

The rough fabric of the shower poof thing touches my back, and I jump a little. When I whirl around, Oaklynn is giving me a gentle, amused smile.

"Talk to me," she prompts. Her voice is soft, but I can hear the command wrapped within her words.

She's not going to let this go if I try and avoid it. And if I did try that shit, I wouldn't be a man worthy of worshiping this woman.

“On the way home, I looked down and realized I had more blood on me than I realized. All I could think about was you looking at me differently when you saw me,” I admit while hating myself with every word.

“I know who you are, Baker,” she tells me, an insistence in her tone that I desperately want to believe in.

“Knowing and seeing are two different things, Little Bee.”

I can only hope she feels my sincerity and my fear in the words. I don’t want to say it. I’m not sure if I can.

Oaklynn makes a humming sound before walking around to my back as she continues to clean me. After a soft plop, it’s her hands on my skin and not the netted ball thing anymore. My entire body shudders as her hands glide over my skin.

“You’re right; knowing and seeing are two different things.

But what you aren’t considering is the fact that I see you just as clearly as I know you.

” She steps closer, her tits pillowing against my back as her hands glide around my waist. “I know you will do anything to protect me and our family. You will kill for us; you will die for us. It is part of who you are, and I’m not disillusioned.

Nor am I naïve or unable to handle the reality of it. I see the blood on you and am proud.”

I spin so fast to look at her that she stumbles a little. My hands shoot out and I grab her, my fingers digging into her hips as I look down at her. “Proud?”

“Maybe I’m a little messed up, but it’s true,” she says casually.

I bark out a laugh and spin us while pressing our wife against the shower wall. She lets out a small gasp and my cock throbs against her hip where our bodies are pressed against each other.

“You’re amazing,” I praise her, my voice filled with awe.

Her hands come up and cradle my jaw, her fingers rubbing against the stubble there. “And you were scared,” she challenges me.

My hands slide down over her hips until I’m gripping the back of her thighs and lift. Her legs wrap around my hips, my cock gliding between her pussy lips and making me groan as my vision blurs slightly.

With my forehead pressed against hers, I admit, “I was.” I kiss her lips softly. Everything in me screams to kiss her harder and to slide deep inside of her. But I can’t.

Not yet.

I’m not the only one who needs to see and touch our wife. Kirill was on the verge of jumping into the abyss of his anger to be consumed by the darkness. I’m not jealous of the fact that he got to spend some time with her. He needed it.

And now she’s right here with me.

“How do you know how to give me what I need?” I murmur the question against her lips.

We share our breaths. The water showering down on us from above and soothing the

edges of my frayed nerves.

“It’s easy because you do the same for me.

” Her hands land on my shoulders. Her touch is like a feather, but it grounds me just the same.

“I don’t just love you because you’re a part of this family, Baker.

I love you for you. You are an amazing man, one who has hidden parts of himself behind smiles and charm.

You are allowed to feel how you feel, and you are allowed to be who you are.

You are deeper and more emotional than you’ve allowed yourself to show others.

” When I open my mouth, she shakes her head, and it snaps closed.

“I understand why but in here, with just me, you can be scared.”

This time when I kiss her, I take her mouth brutally. The kiss is all teeth, lips, and desperation. Her taste is fucking addicting, and I only want more.

I slow the kiss down and then pull back. Our chests are heaving as we breathe heavily. Her eyes are half-lidded and glazed over with lust.

After I pull her away from the wall, I set about getting her clean. There’s no way I’m not going to take the opportunity to show her how much she means to me and how I want to worship her.

The more time I spend with her while looking into her eyes, the better I feel and the

smaller my fears become. I press my lips against her forehead before I shift us slightly underneath one of the rain showerheads.

“Thank you,” I murmur.

She smiles at me, and it feels like I can really breathe again.

I take my time drying us off after we step out of the shower. Is it a stall tactic so I can soak up a few more minutes? You better fucking believe it, but I’m not going to apologize for it.

When I reach over and grab her slinky, silky robe my cock takes an immediate interest. The way the fabric molds to her curves, hugging them and making me want to trace them with my hands, is impossible to ignore.

Just as I suspected, we step out of the bathroom and the rest of the guys are waiting for us. Their hair is wet which tells me they showered in their own bathrooms. The conversation stops from where they’re sitting against the headboard of our giant bed.

It’s not at all difficult to see the appreciation in their eyes as they take Oaklynn in. I’m not sure the robe will survive tonight, but we’ll just get her another one.

Oaklynn kisses my cheek before her eyes lock onto Huck. Our woman is up to something, and I can’t wait to see how it plays out.

HUCK

When Oaklynn looks at me, her brown eyes intent and focused, everything else falls away. I could feel the fear coming off Baker earlier. He was worried about how our wife was going to react to seeing the reality of who we really are.

I could understand his worry, but I just didn't share it.

Our woman is made of the strongest stuff. She doesn't bend easily unless it's to us. The way she can stand strong in the face of what life throws at her is something I admire. I'm not entirely sure how she does it, but it's made me look back on my life and reassess some things.

There were times while growing up that I wasn't nearly as strong as she is. But then I remember that I had the guys at my back. She had no one.

I wish I could have been there for her when she needed me, but it wasn't the way life turned out. I'm right where I'm supposed to be now—at her side.

The sway of our woman's hips as she walks toward the bed, leaving Baker standing near the doorway to the bathroom, has my breath hitching. She has no idea how gorgeous she is, not really. It blows my mind that she's ours, especially in moments like this.

As she nears the edge of the bed, she unties her robe. Then the silky fabric slides off her body and lands on the floor.



“Fuck,” Maxim groans next to me.

All I can do is nod in response since my mouth has gone dry and my cock, which is trapped in my boxer briefs, hardens so fast that I get a little dizzy.

This woman is pure fucking magic. The way her soul has tangled with mine, with all of ours, is something I could only dream about and wish for before she came into our lives.

I wasn't even sure a woman like Oaklynn was out there for us.

But she's right here. In the flesh. The very smooth flesh which I know is so fucking soft.

Oaklynn climbs onto the bed, her movements graceful and pulling me deeper into her spell. She crawls over Kirill's legs and then up the length of my body, not stopping until our noses are touching and she's straddling my lap.

I know she can feel how hard I am for her because the heat of her pussy seeps through the strained fabric of my boxer briefs. She's wet, I can feel it. Knowing that she's slick with arousal, the sweetest I've ever tasted, has my mind spinning.

“Huck,” she coos, “what did you find out from Adam?”

I swallow hard, knowing what her game is now. She knows I won't hold back from her and will tell her everything. She also knows one of the other guys, including Kirill since he's been filled in now, might sugar coat things.

That is something I'll never do. Not when the difference between knowing and not knowing could be her life. I will always provide information and clarity to Oaklynn.

Even if the guys don't like it.

"He's Mikhail's cousin."

Oaklynn stiffens and her eyes slide closed slowly. She nods without opening her eyes.

"Your instincts are good, Zolotse ," Maxim murmurs next to us.

Her eyes snap open and she glances at him before her gaze comes back to me. "Tell me," she demands.

And I fucking do. I tell her everything he said, including his impotent threats. There's no stopping just at what we know, I share my suspicions, including ones I haven't voiced yet. She doesn't look away the entire time, as if she's pulling the words out of me from deep in my soul.

"He's still alive," she doesn't phrase it as a question.

"He is," I confirm.

As she makes a humming sound, she looks over at Kirill. "Are you going to use him as leverage?"

He shrugs one shoulder. "Probably. It makes sense to try, but I have a feeling it won't work. It would mean that Mikhail cares about Adam. But I don't think he does."

"No," she agrees, "he's expendable. Just like everyone else. Lev. My father. That rat you filled me in on. All the dealers he has on the streets." She sighs. "Adam coming directly at me feels desperate."

“We’re banking on it,” Baker chimes in as he sits on the end of the bed, his eyes trained on our wife.

Oaklynn nods and one side of her mouth tips up on one side. “Thank you for telling me without going all caveman or shielding me because I have tits,” her tone is teasing, but I can see the truth of her feelings in her eyes.

My hands slide up her thighs and over her hips, where my fingers dig in. “I’ll always be honest with you, Sweet Girl. You deserve to know what’s happening. If you didn’t want to know it would be different. I know you not only want to know but need to know.”

The smile she gives me is sinful and so fucking sexy that I can feel pre-cum beading on the tip of my cock. After kissing my lips softly, she pulls away from me and starts to move back down my body.

As much as I don’t want to let her go, I do.

Her soft lips against my chest makes me groan under my breath. She keeps moving down my body and I swear my cock hardens further trying to get to her lips. I know how good her mouth feels.

“I don’t know if I can take your teasing, Oaklynn,” I grit out through my teeth.

She presses her open mouth against the hard ridge of my cock, breathing warm air against me through the fabric of my boxers. The sensation makes my hips jolt, and she takes full advantage by hooking the waistband of my boxer briefs with her fingers and tugging them down my legs.

With the flat part of her tongue, she licks up my length from the base. My hands move to shove my fingers in her hair, but she bats them away and I can only arch an

eyebrow in question as I stare down into her brown eyes.

With a wink, she swirls her tongue around the tip of my cock before sucking me into her mouth. It's heaven and hell. It's sin and sweetness.

Just as I tip my head back to bask in the sensation of her warm, wet mouth taking me deeper, she pulls off with a pop. Then she's straddling me and guiding me into her needy pussy.

We both groan at the sensation. She loves to be filled and always gets this look of awed bliss on her face when it happens. It's sexy as hell and makes me feel like a fucking king.

All the power in the world is ash at the feet of this woman. She wields her power for her family and with a reverence that I can't help but admire.

"I would have told you everything too, Oaklynn," Maxim pouts from next to us.

Oaklynn shoots him a coy smile before leaning over to him and twirling her tongue around the tip of his cock since he shucked his boxer briefs at some point. I'm sure it was around the time our woman impaled herself on my dick. I would have done the same.

"Move," Kirill barks near the foot of the bed.

I glance up as I start pumping upward to meet Oaklynn's hips as she rides me. Kirill climbs onto the bed and moves between my legs. He glides his hand up and down her back and I can feel how her body shivers in response.

Maxim grunts as Oaklynn takes his cock deeper into her mouth. Kirill catches the lube that Baker tosses his way before settling in the place where Kirill was just

against the headboard next to me.

Our woman shifts slightly so only one of her hands is braced against my chest as the other shoots out to wrap around the base of Baker's cock. "Damn it," he grunts under his breath.

Kirill takes a few moments to get our woman ready to take him in her ass and I slow my movements, the grip I have on her hips doing the same with hers. Her pussy tightens around my length, and I know she's getting closer and closer to coming.

I can't wait to feel her tighten around me. I've never felt anything as good as her coming on my cock. Somehow it gets better every time I'm buried inside of her even though it makes no sense.

"You ready to take my brother's cock in your ass, Oaklynn?" Maxim's growled question comes out strained.

I have no doubt why. Her mouth. It's fucking otherworldly.

Her pussy squeezes my dick, and I grunt. My jaw clenches and I tighten my grip on her hips to help stave off the need I have to fill her up with my cum. It's not fucking easy.

Oaklynn pulls back from Maxim and eyes Baker's dick. Right before she can wrap her lips around Baker's cockhead, she lets out a strangled sound from the back of her throat.

"Relax and let me in, Solnishko," Kirill demands.

I can feel the moment he pushes past her tight ring of muscle. Oaklynn's walls squeeze me in response. Or retaliation. He slides deeper inside of her, and I can feel

him against the thin skin separating us. I'm panting, trying to hold still and not pound into our woman like I desperately want to.

Baker growls, "Your fucking mouth, Oaklynn."

I let out a grunt, but I'm not sure if its because of how much tighter our woman is around my length or in agreement with Baker. Both? Neither?

Who fucking knows.

Once Kirill is all the way inside of her, I meet his gaze, and we share a nod. Then we start moving. Together.

There's no reason to alternate filling her because we're not easing her into anything tonight. We need to remind her just what it means to be claimed by us.

We move together, pumping in and out of our woman's holes, chasing our own pleasure as we push her closer to the edge. All for her. Everything is for her.

She pulls off of Baker's dick and arches her back, her moans growing louder with every stroke of our dicks inside of her. Her eyes are glazed over with lust, just how I like her.

Maxim's hands are rough as he threads his fingers through our woman's hair and pulls her over to his cock. She swallows him as deep as she can go and her pussy squeezes around me, telling me just how much her body loves being used by us.

"You better swallow every drop," Maxim grits out through his teeth.

Then he lets out a sound from the back of his throat and holds her in place, his hips pumping slightly as he empties himself down her throat.

Her lips tighten around him as she swallows and then slowly glides her mouth up and off of Maxim's dick. My gaze is locked on her face, flushed and wild eyed, as she looks at him and winks.

Maxim smirks, his voice husky as he pants, "I think you might need some help to swallow Baker's cock. He uses his grip on our woman's hair to reach across me and directs her mouth to Baker's waiting, and angry as hell looking, cock.

"Needed your mouth," Baker moans.

Kirill starts to fuck our wife harder, and I match his thrusts. As much as I want to savor this, the need to come is too much to ignore. Holding back has my balls aching.

"Can't hold back," Baker mutters right after Oaklynn moans around his cock.

I thrust upward as I watch her throat swallow Baker's load. She's gasping for breath when she pulls back, and I can feel how close she is to coming as her entire body shakes.

She starts bouncing on our cocks, pushing back, and encouraging us to fuck her harder. Like we're going to refuse.

Kirill and I move faster, our movements more forceful, her sounds egging us on and telling us how much pain is wrapped up in her pleasure.

"Yes. Please. More." She barely gets the words out between breaths and moans.

And then it's like a wave crashes over her. Her pussy spasms around me and Kirill grunts as he fights against the squeeze of her body and keeps moving his hips.

Before I can even process it, she's milking my shaft. It feels like she's sucking the

cum right from my balls, my entire body tingling with the force of it and how fucking good it feels. I can barely breathe as my eyes cross.

She's fucking gorgeous, her chin glistening with saliva and the cum that leaked out of the corners of her mouth. Her face is pink and her jaw slack. Watching her lost to the feeling of bliss we give her has my heart pounding in my chest.

I watch, entranced, as Kirill plants himself all the way in her ass and lets out a roar. Oaklynn's brown eyes open and blink up at me before she slumps down against my chest. Her panting breaths puffing against my skin has my dick perking up already.

But now is not the time for that.

Our woman has had a long night, and she needs sleep.

We all do.

When Kirill pulls out of her, his movements are slow and careful. Before I can even consider it, Maxim is there, gently moving our woman off of me and into his arms. She lets out a sigh as she curls up against his chest.

Some men might be jealous, but I'm not. Our woman loves us. Together. Individually. We all deserve some time with her and now it's Maxim's turn.

He'll clean her up and worship her, making sure the euphoria she's experiencing lasts as long as possible. She deserves nothing less.

And we'll always give her everything we can.



*Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:29 am*

KIRILL

It's been a few days since the night Oaklynn went to the charity meeting and Adam made a move to intimidate her. He's been our guest ever since. Knowing he's sitting in our warehouse and healing from Maxim and Baker working him over pisses me off.

As angry as I am, I know it's not time yet.

Mikhail is going to make a move, and we need to be ready for him. But until then, I think I can nudge him a little more. I desperately want to piss him off.

I know how to do it, but I'm dreading it.

The guys are already in my office and I'm about to tell them my idea when the door opens. I glance up to find Betty walking in. I almost groan in annoyance, but I hold it back.

Overall, the woman has toned her shit down, but I still get flashes of defiance as she tries to push her boundaries. Either she'll get it fully or she won't. And then she'll be gone.

"Can I get you some coffee? Mr. Volkov? Mr. Cardenas? Mr. Volkov? Mr. Dalton?" Betty looks at us as she says each of our names. The way her eyes widen, as she keeps her head tipped down, is an act to get us to believe she's innocent.

But I know the truth.

We all do.

“No, Betty,” my tone is neutral. I force myself to bite out, “Thank you.”

The way she bites her lip before giving me a small smile does nothing for me. She opens her mouth as if to say something, but then she turns away.

It's only once she leaves and the door closes behind her that I feel like I can relax. My eyes are locked on the door, and I shake my head slowly.

“Maybe it's time to just let her go,” I muse.

Baker grunts, “She might seem like she's getting it, but she still is rude as fuck to Oaklynn when she thinks no one is around.”

My head snaps his way, and I glare at him. “What are you talking about?”

He huffs out a breath and looks sheepish as fuck. “Honestly, I forgot about it. But the other night when she stopped in while you were considering killing Hendrix and the guys, Betty had a nasty attitude from the moment Oaklynn stepped off the elevator. Our wife took care of her.”

“The next time she says some shit, she's gone,” I tell him.

Baker will be the one to keep an eye on things, especially the cameras. Betty opens her mouth and says one more thing to our woman and she's going to be gone.

My gut is telling me she's going to get herself fired before she even knows it.

I shake it off, knowing it'll happen the way it's supposed to happen. However it ends remains to be seen. No matter what, I'm sure it'll be entertaining.

As the silence stretches in the office, I blurt, “I think we need to be seen more.”

The guys freeze and then look toward me slowly with shocked expressions. I’ll admit, they should be surprised. Putting our woman in the spotlight isn’t really something I want to do, but we need to.

As much as I hate to admit it, Hendrix was right. Putting our woman in some tower isn’t the right thing to do. If I keep doing it, if I keep insisting on it, I’ll be denying her, and us, the woman she truly is. That would be a huge shame.

“Are you sure?”

I look up to find Baker studying me. My throat closes up and it takes a lot of effort to swallow past the lump in my throat. The idea of our woman being out there and being in danger kills me, but we can’t lock her away and keep her happy.

Something has to give, and it needs to be me. Between the four of us, we can protect our woman. It’s not like she’s ever going to go out somewhere by herself. If we don’t have her back, then she’ll have protection.

“I’ve been kicking around an idea since we went to Second Circle,” Maxim throws out there.

When I look at him, he has a mischievous sparkle in his eyes. My gut is screaming at me that I’m not going to like his idea at all. But then again, he loves our wife just as much as I do and he’ll always act with her well-being in mind.

“Is this going to make me want to shoot you?” I can’t help but ask the question.

Maxim barks out a short laugh and shrugs. “Probably,” he admits.

“I’m not opening a fucking brothel,” I growl in warning at my brother.

“I don’t want to open a brothel,” Maxim huffs and rolls his eyes, “don’t be ridiculous. I do think that we might want to consider a nightclub.”

“A nightclub?” Huck looks like he’s considering the idea.

It’ll probably be only a few minutes until he grabs his tablet and starts to do some research and crunch some numbers. Baker is already shaking his head, which doesn’t surprise me. A club sounds like a horror in terms of security and that would fall completely on Baker’s shoulders.

“Do you realize how much time a club would take up? How much time it would take away from Oaklynn?” Baker asks, clearly annoyed.

“We know how to hire the right people. Sure, at least one of us would need to come through a few times a week, but I’m not suggesting we spend all our time at a club,” Maxim fires back.

“It’s like White Stone. We hired the right people, empowered them to do their jobs, and ensure they feel ownership when it comes to the business. Why can’t we do that with a club?”

Baker’s shoulders slump slightly, knowing full well that Maxim won’t be put off. It’s not like the idea is a bad one either. The problem is that Baker’s first priority is safety. It’s what his mind mulls over all the time. He’s always assessing the world around us and looking for the pitfalls.

“We’ll need to talk to Oaklynn about it, but I’m not opposed to getting in the nightclub business,” I offer.

“I think we should look for a club which is already established and buy it as is. We can change things as we need, but there’s no reason to reinvent the wheel,” Huck offers.

His fingers fly over the screen of his tablet. I’m sure he’s checking the numbers to see if this is something we want to consider from a business standpoint. I have a feeling it will be.

There’s money to be made in a club, but it has to be run well. The service provided, along with the way the club is branded, is the key to success. Just like with White Stone.

“I do like the idea of buying a club that’s already established,” I muse.

“What about Aamon’s club?” It sounds like Baker is forcing the words past his lips. When I look at him, his face is twisted up telling me that he’s not a fan of contributing to the conversation but is doing it anyway.

It would be comical if I didn’t understand his reservations and feel them myself. I don’t want to do anything to hurt our woman. And we’re already spread so thin.

But I think we can handle adding this to our plate.

Baker snaps his fingers, “Pulse.” When I give him a look, he flips me off and shakes his head. “The name of the club. It’s Pulse. I couldn’t remember it for a moment.”

All I can do is nod to let him know I heard him. My mind wanders to Aamon. He’s a wannabe.

And I mean that in every sense of the word. He wants to be someone who people like while also being willing to dip his toe into illegal bullshit. He’s a shifty fucking

character.

But Pulse is popular from what I understand. I'm sure people don't pay the cover to get close to the owner.

Well, most people at least.

From the moment we came to Seattle and started to get the lay of the land, Pulse was on our radar, and it wasn't just about it being a good night spot.

There's something shady going on there, but we never had any proof.

Making an enemy out of Aamon wasn't something we were interested in doing, but we didn't become friends or get into business together.

Having Pulse under new management would be a good thing. And safer for the patrons.

"Fuck," Huck grunts.

All eyes turn toward him, and he looks disgusted. "I've run Pulse through the information I have on Mikhail, Chambers, and now Adam. There's some overlap, especially when it comes to Chambers and his financials."

"Plot thickens," Maxim's voice is ominous.

"There's nothing with Mikhail or Anatoly that I can find, but it doesn't mean anything," Huck interjects. "Adam is too new in the city. He doesn't have much of a footprint here yet."

I nod slowly, thinking over what it means to have a connection between Chambers

and Pulse. Richard could have been the money man, at least in name, but he could have been a lot more too. We never had anyone inside Anatoly Morozov's operation, so it's all speculation at this point.

My gut is screaming at me.

"I wouldn't be surprised if they used Pulse to tag women for the trafficking shit," Baker gives voice to my own thoughts and fears.

As I rub a hand over my face, dread fills me. "I was thinking the same thing," I mutter.

"Then will he even want to sell?"

"Like whether he wants to sell or not matters," Maxim answers Huck's question.

"You better fucking believe that it doesn't matter. We're buying the club," I state without any fucking room for argument.

Maxim claps and rubs his hands together. The gleam in his eyes tells me he's looking forward to tonight. He knows I won't want to wait on this.

I pull my phone out and send off a text to my personal shopper to get an outfit together for our woman. She needs to look hot as hell, which won't be a hardship at all.

"And we'll have the prettiest woman on our arm while we go and check Pulse out," Huck's voice is full of pride.

It's the same feeling that warms my chest. Having Oaklynn stand next to us isn't a hardship. She's been an asset in every situation she's been put in. I know it will be

the same tonight when we go out, even though my protective instincts are screaming for me to keep her at home.

Maybe she'll have a little fun while we're at it. She deserves it.

As I look around at the guys, I realize we all deserve it. We've spent a lot of fucking time dealing with Morozov and balancing the power in this city, along with the men who wield it with honor.

We've been playing it safe.

It's time to shake things up.

"Are you sure taking Oaklynn is a good idea?" Baker's voice is full of trepidation, trying to be the voice of reason as he puts thoughts of our safety first.

"Try and keep her home," Maxim challenges him. "You know she won't stand for it."

"I know," he grumbles, "but I don't have to like it."

We chuckle together, knowing we're all on the same page. We need to present a united front when it comes to who holds the power. We're Oaklynn's sword and she shall wield us however she sees fit.

As it fucking should be.

"Aamon doesn't know what is coming for him," my voice is deep and dark.

Hopefully, he's ready to sell. Pulse will be ours one way or another. The night ending with blood on our hands doesn't bother me in the least.



Honestly, it would be par for the course with us.

## Page 14

*Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:29 am*

BAKER

Fuck our woman looks damn good. I can't tear my eyes away from her leather covered ass or the way her pants hug her legs and hips.

The whole outfit, including the red sparkly top she has on which barely covers her, but costs more than I can imagine, is hot as fuck on our woman.

It's not just the clothes though, it's the confidence she has.

The sway of her hips is hypnotizing and the badass heels she has on makes me think about fucking her later with only her heels on. It's hard to concentrate on anything else.

But I need to be on my game tonight.

Kirill is in the front of the group with Oaklynn on his arm with the rest of us flanking them on both sides and behind. My gut is screaming at me that this is a bad idea.

But then again, I think anything that puts Oaklynn close to danger is a bad idea. There's no doubt in my mind that we'll be able to protect her, but she shouldn't have to be protected. She should just be safe.

The line outside of Pulse groans as we walk right by it and head straight toward the entrance. There's no way we're waiting in the fucking line. And if the people in it knew who we are they wouldn't make a fucking sound.

I glare at a few guys who let their displeasure be known far too loudly. It shuts them up instantly and then they suddenly find everything other than the five of us interesting.

Good.

Oaklynn's soft giggle has me looking her way and I find her brown eyes taking me in. She looks around me like she's searching for something as amusement dances in her gaze.

"What?" My curiosity gets the better of me and I can't help but asking. She's up to something, it's easy to read as much on her face.

"Oh," she coos, "I was just looking for the octogenarian who must be using you as a puppet." My mouth drops open, and she winks at me while patting my chest. "It's the only explanation for you acting like an old man."

I gasp and press my hand to my chest. "You wound me, Little Bee."

She laughs, the sound wrapping around me and sticking to my skin as the bouncer leads us through the entrance, his eyes averted once Maxim worked his magic. Maxim made it clear who we are and who we are here to see.

Oaklynn's voice drops, her words meant for me alone, "I know you're worried and I get it. One of the things I love about you is how protective you are, Baker, but you also need to relax a little."

"I'll relax when we're back home," I grumble.

She makes a humming sound and then whatever else she was going to say gets lost as Aamon pops up out of nowhere, his booming voice full of jovial charm as he greets

Kirill, “Mr. Volkov, this is a surprise.”

“I hope it’s a good surprise, Aamon,” Kirill’s tone is filled with ice and warning.

Aamon, to his credit, looks thoroughly chastised and starts to nod like he’s a fucking bobble head figurine. He’s a good ‘yes’ man, but it’s about all he’s good for.

I don’t trust him; none of us do.

He’s dressed in an expensive suit which is tailored to fit him perfectly. He’s leaner than any of us, but he doesn’t look weak. I’m sure he hates the fact that he’s a few inches shorter than me and the rest of the guys, probably under six feet tall if we were to pull out a measuring tape.

His black hair is slicked back, and it makes him look oily. I always prefer it when the outside package matches someone’s personality. And when it comes to Aamon, everything about him screams creep.

When I notice him eyeing Oaklynn like she’s a fucking meal, I clench my hands into fists to stop myself from wrapping a hand around his throat. He’ll get his soon enough, I’m sure, but I just hate the way he’s looking at her.

“You and your men are always welcome here,” Aamon tries to sound magnanimous as he forces his gaze back to Kirill.

He can’t hold it though, his eyes going back to Oaklynn almost immediately while not caring that we’re taking up far too much space in the vestibule.

The bass from the club vibrates through our feet while not encroaching to the point we can’t be heard.

“And who is this? You brought me a little present, Kirill?” The question oozes from him and has our wife arching an eyebrow, disdain written all over her face.

“When did I ever give you leave to address me by my first name?” Kirill growls out the question, the threat hanging in the air with his words.

“I’m not here for you,” Oaklynn’s voice takes on a cultured tone she uses when speaking to someone who isn’t worth a piece of dirt stuck to her shoe. “I’m here for a night out with my husbands.”

“Your husbands?” Aamon chokes out the words as his eyebrows shoot up to his slicked back hairline. “I had seen something about Mr. Volkov getting married, but...,” his words trail off and he looks like he’s at a loss.

It would be comical if I weren’t busy keeping my eyes moving to ensure we aren’t caught by surprise. We’re deep in unknown territory and being alert and ready is the only defense I have. Well, and my weapons.

Oaklynn waves her hand dismissively, ensuring her wedding and engagement rings are on display as she does. “Yes, well, that’s immaterial. I was told Pulse is the place to be.” Oaklynn’s smile is fake as fuck, but Aamon is enchanted just the same.

“It is,” Aamon assures her. He gestures behind him. “Let me give you the full VIP Pulse experience.”

Oaklynn’s laugh is forced, but I swear Aamon’s eyes roll back in his head as he pulls the door open and the music from inside hits our senses. The lighting is low with neon making colors dance around the dark room. I don’t like it at all.

Our wife slips her arm through Kirill’s elbow as we fall in line and follow Aamon. My eyes are bouncing around, taking in the writhing bodies on the dance floor the

same way I take in everyone working the floor because you never know where the threat will come from.

Better safe than sorry.

We follow Aamon toward a set of stairs which leads up to the VIP lounge. He nods at the bouncer there who practically falls over himself to pull the rope back to give us entry. Either word of our visit has spread, or the bouncer is afraid of his boss.

I'm guessing it's us more than Aamon considering the bouncer is much larger than the club owner. But, then again, I have a feeling we don't know nearly enough about Aamon and his connections.

My gut is telling me that is going to change tonight, but only time will tell.

We've barely sat down in one of the large lounge sections in the VIP area when a waitress appears with a bottle of Hammond Whiskey and some champagne in an ice bucket.

As much as I want to sit right next to Oaklynn and cocoon her in safety, I force myself to relax and keep some space around us, looking more casual and relaxed than I'm feeling.

I glance at the bottle of Hammond Whiskey and smirk. Aamon must want to impress Kirill, and us, considering the Blue Label he's serving us tonight. I won't be drinking, but he doesn't need to know that.

Once the drinks are passed out, the waitress glancing at Aamon furtively the entire time, she scurries away. My gut is screaming at me, but I push it aside. For now.

Oaklynn watches the waitress for a beat longer than she should before she looks out

over the club on the floor below us. She takes a sip of her champagne before directing her attention at Aamon and smiling at him, but it doesn't quite reach her eyes.

"Thank you," she demurs, "this is delicious."

"Of course," Aamon practically fucking bows as he accepts our woman's praise. "Anything for Mrs. Volkov."

The placating smile she gives him should make him feel like an errant child, but I swear he puffs his chest up as if he's won a trophy. Oaklynn turns toward Huck and winks, her voice seductive and sweet, "I think it's time you showed me more of your moves out on the dance floor."

Huck chuckles, his eyes dancing with mirth as he holds out his hand, "That's an offer I can't refuse, Sweet Girl."

As much as I want to watch our wife's ass as she's led out of the VIP area and toward the dance floor by Huck, I force myself not to. When I glance over at Maxim, his eyes are riveted right where I wish mine were. The fucker.

Aamon clears his throat and our attention drifts in his direction. Kirill's eyes are intense and focused which causes Aamon to shrink under his gaze before he thinks better of it and puffs up his chest. I have to swallow down a laugh because now he just looks constipated.

"With the ball and chain gone, can I offer you gentlemen some company? I have a connection that can provide you a woman for anything you might need," Aamon offers.

He leans forward like he's not digging his own grave, "I'm sure you have needs that your wife can't fulfill.

There's a difference between what you can satisfy with a wife and with a mistress. ”

I barely stop myself from rolling my eyes. This guy has lost his fucking mind. The fact that he doesn't know how much danger he's in right now is kind of funny. It's also really fucking sad.

Kirill's voice is cold as the dismissal rolls off his tongue, “I have no need for a mistress.”

Aamon is nodding, his face a mask of fake understanding. “Just for a night then. Not a mistress per se, just someone you can take all your frustration out on.”

My stomach rolls at the thought of being near any woman other than Oaklynn. Not only is cheating not our style, but our wife would have our balls if we even considered such a thing. And she would be right to mount those balls and put them on display on our mantle.

While trying not to launch myself at Aamon, since it would do me no good, my eyes find Huck and Oaklynn on the dance floor.

As if the crowd can feel the danger coming off Huck, they give the two a wide berth.

It looks out of place in a club where bodies are usually tightly pressed on the dance floor, but it gives me a little bit of comfort.

Kirill doesn't respond to Aamon's ridiculousness which has the man nodding at someone in the corner. I'm not looking forward to whatever his nod brings our way. My eyes continue to scan the club, looking for an attack.

One feels imminent even though I doubt it'll happen here. The foreboding feeling in my gut, which I can't ignore, is growing the longer we're here. I don't like it one bit.



“A woman who bears your last name is only good for pushing out some babies, but then there are the whores you take to bed. They can be used and left without a backward glance.” Aamon’s words have me wanting to scrunch my face up in disgust, but I don’t let my feelings show on my face.

He seems emboldened by our silence and keeps talking.

“I’m sure you already know all about that.

” The laugh he lets out borders on a maniacal cackle as I side eye the man as he’s lost in what he thinks is a hilarious rant.

“Women are all weak. It’s best to find one who is meek and a little stupid to be your wife.

That way they don’t know what they’re missing when it comes to their home life and are happy to have kids to look after. ”

I share a look with Maxim and can see the anger in his eyes, but Aamon is too gone to notice. Or, maybe, he just doesn’t care. Either way, he’s going to be lucky to live through the night if he keeps up spewing his bullshit.

With a shake of my head in warning, I look away from Maxim. That’s when I notice the three women approaching the VIP area. They’re dressed in little more than lingerie and I almost ask what the fuck is happening because it looks like they belong at Second Circle.

My jaw clenches as Aamon perks up when the women approach. He makes a sweeping gesture with his hand toward the three of us. “Ladies, your entertainment is required.”

When the redhead closest to me tries to sit on my lap, I give her a sharp look. Fear flashes in her eyes before she sits next to me and puts a hand on my knee.

Disgust thrums through my veins, building with every beat of my heart.

Looking toward Kirill and Maxim, I find them in much the same position as me. Their faces are twisted in matching snarls which would be funny if not for the situation we find ourselves in.

“Think of these ladies as a gift, gentlemen,” Aamon’s tone is pleased, as if he’s caught us in some way which has my spine straightening.

That’s when my eyes snap toward the dance floor and don’t find Huck and Oaklynn.

Well, fuck.

MAXIM

If this woman touches me one more fucking time, I'm going to have to break my own rule and kill her. I won't feel good about it after because she has no idea what she's doing and is following orders. But there's something to be said for reading the room.

Aamon looks thrilled at the women's behavior. The slimy bastard.

"You need to back off," I growl at the blonde whose hand is hovering over my knee.

"Don't be like that, baby," she purrs, trying to sound seductive.

She just sounds whiney. Her voice grates on my nerves. I'm annoyed that I have to endure this bullshit.

I also know that men like Aamon like it when they think they're winning at something. He obviously believes he's tricked us in some way.

Little does he know.

I notice Baker stiffen, but I'm not sure if it's because of the redhead next to him or something else. My eyes scan the area, but I don't see anything going on from where I'm sitting.

"Aamon," Kirill's voice is filled with warning, "you need to call your whores off."

The blonde gasps and pulls away from me slightly. Thankfully.

Just as I'm about to chime in and agree with my brother, our woman's voice has my head turning her direction. "Well, well, well." She deliberately walks toward me, her eyes flashing while Huck stands behind her with his arms crossed across his chest. "It looks like the party has started," she coos.

When she leans down, the kiss she lays on me is full of possession. It shouldn't turn me on as much as it does, but everything this woman does sets my blood on fire. It's part of her charm.

With a curled lip, she looks toward the woman sitting next to me. "Scram," she commands.

And it fucking works. The moment the blonde moves away, it feels like I can breathe a little easier. It helps that her cloud of perfume is moving with her. Talk about making my stomach churn.

Oaklynn pulls back from me and goes toward Baker, ignoring the woman who is still trying to climb on Kirill. The kiss our wife lays on Baker is just as intense as the one I got. Now that I don't have a human octopus next to me, I can find the hilarity in the situation.

"You need to move on for the night, honey," the woman next to Kirill speaks up as the redhead next to Baker takes one look at the kiss going on and removes herself from the situation. "It's our turn tonight."

Oaklynn turns slowly before a sinister smile curls her lips. "Oh," our woman feigns surprise and innocence, "you think you get a chance to have anything happen with my men?"

The woman scoffs, "Just because you warm a bed sometimes doesn't make them yours." She looks at Aamon whose eyes are locked on our wife. It's the wrong move

which he'll learn soon enough.

"I should have brought popcorn," I murmur under my breath.

Oaklynn winks at me before focusing back on the woman perched next to Kirill. I'm fairly sure she still has her hands only because she isn't touching him.

"That's not what makes them mine," Oaklynn's voice is sweetness personified. "My rings do though."

Oaklynn holds up her wedding and engagement rings while fluttering her fingers. The light catches the stones beautifully.

The brunette glances at Aamon, again, looking for some sort of signal. But she's barking up the wrong tree.

In the face of not knowing what else to do, she makes the worst decision she could make. She decides to double down.

The brunette wraps an arm around Kirill's shoulders and leans into him. The movement presses her barely covered tits against his arm. Her focus is on Oaklynn which means she misses the look of pure fucking death the man she's hanging off of is giving her.

"Beat it," Kirill seethes.

When the woman doesn't move fast enough, Oaklynn's hand shoots out. She grips the woman's hair hard and physically drags her away from Kirill. When in front of Aamon, she drops the whore in a heap unceremoniously.

"What the fuck are you doing, bitch?" Aamon seethes the question.

He should be looking at the brunette at his feet, but he's not. He's glaring at Oaklynn.

"Did you just call me by something other than my name, little man?" Oaklynn steps closer to Aamon, purposefully stepping on the brunette's hand while she does.

"You need to know your place," Aamon quips and puffs up his chest as if he has any fucking power in this situation. He doesn't know how much danger he's in right now.

"My place?" Oaklynn doubles over in laughter.

Aamon turns toward Kirill and snarls, "What's wrong with your bitch?"

Kirill doesn't hesitate to pull his gun and point it right at Aamon's head who freezes.

Oaklynn makes a tsking sound as she presses her knife against his throat.

Our woman doesn't pay any attention to the sniveling woman at her feet while Aamon's eyes practically cross.

He's trying to keep one eye on Kirill and one on Oaklynn at the same time.

I have to cover my mouth to hide my chuckle. I fucking love our woman. She's sexy as fuck when she goes full on Magura on those who underestimate her. She's a goddess and I'll be worshiping her later.

My cock throbs as Oaklynn smiles wide. The danger in her eyes is so often overlooked, but then she exposes her full glory and people learn quickly. It's amazing to watch.

"I'm Mrs. Volkov to you," Oaklynn enunciates every word, making sure he hears and understands her. "You will never disrespect me again by referring to me as anything

other than Mrs. Volkov. You will also not disrespect me or my husbands by offering them women.”

“Men like Mr. Volkov and his associates,” Aamon tries to sound tough, “are used to beautiful women wanting them. That’s all that happened tonight.”

“Just because I’m beautiful, don’t assume I’m stupid,” Oaklynn grins as her words land. “Or weak.”

A whimper comes from the woman whose hand is still pinned to the floor by Oaklynn’s sexy as fuck heels. Oaklynn lifts up her foot and the brunette scurries away as quickly as she can. The pain written all over her face shouldn’t be amusing, but it really is.

“You’re a woman,” Aamon tries to excuse himself, “you should leave the big conversations and decisions to the men.”

“Ohh,” she holds the word out like he’s just given her some kind of epiphany.

She slides her knife along his neck without cutting him as she moves past him and plops herself on Kirill’s lap. My brother doesn’t flinch, nor does he lower his gun.

Baker is taking in our surroundings. I’m sure he’s looking for security coming our way to do anything, but no one has even tried. Either his employees know not to fuck with us, especially Kirill, or this area of the club isn’t covered like it should be.

If he’s basically selling women, I’m sure it’s not covered. Which is just dangerous all around. I shouldn’t be surprised, but I am a little bit.

Oaklynn waves her knife back and forth, “Go ahead, menfolk. Discuss and do your manly things.”

Aamon glares at her, clearly forgetting just how much danger he's in. Baker, who is closer to Aamon, presses the muzzle of his gun against his temple.

"Consider this your warning. Do not disrespect our woman," Baker warns.

Aamon rasps, "Got it."

Baker grunts and puts his gun away. His eyes go back to scanning the room, but it's clear his focus is on Aamon and the threat he poses to our woman.

"It's bad form to throw women at men, married or not," Oaklynn leans forward, her eyes intently focused on Aamon. "Unless," she muses, "you hope those men will make some bad decisions with your little presents and then you have something you can use to blackmail them."

Aamon pales slightly as he snaps his mouth shut and swallows whatever derogatory bullshit he was about to spew. What a fucking dirtbag.

"You're in luck, Aamon," Kirill's voice is hard.

"Why am I in luck?" He sounds resigned and pissed at the same time.

He should have known this night was shit from the moment we walked into Pulse. But his overinflated ego got in his way. It's not even surprising.

"Because you're going to walk away tonight with a payout and your life." Aamon blinks in surprise at Kirill's words. "I'll be leaving with my gorgeous wife and your club in my name."

"What the fuck are you talking about?" Aamon sounds shocked.



“You heard me,” Kirill doesn’t give an inch and sure as fuck doesn’t repeat himself.

“Pulse isn’t for sale,” Aamon states like it fucking matters.

It doesn’t. And he’s about to learn that lesson.

“You’re making a mistake, Mr. Volkov,” he tries to reason with Kirill. It won’t help matters at all.

“I don’t believe I am, Aamon.” Kirill leans forward while keeping Oaklynn close and secure on his lap. “I think you’re going to learn that you have no power in this city. Any you think you have is a mirage. I’m in the market for a club. You have a club. I’m buying your club.”

Oaklynn giggles, amusement dancing on her face. The moment she does, Aamon’s face goes red.

He snarls at Oaklynn, “You stupid cunt. You think you’re protected? You’re not.” His eyes flash with anger. “You have no idea who you’re fucking with. I work with Mikhail Morozov, and he won’t like business being interrupted.”

Oaklynn’s giggles become a full-on belly laugh. It takes about three seconds but then Aamon freezes as a myriad of emotions play across his face. It’s obvious the moment he realizes what he just said because his mouth opens and closes a few times.

“Yeah,” Oaklynn teases him, “you just said all of that. It was pretty stupid, and it changes nothing.”

“Fuck, Zolotse ,” I growl, “I love your sassy mouth.”

She turns to me and winks. “I know you do.”

“The only thing your mouth is good for is swallowing dick,” Aamon snarls.

Kirill moves like lightning. Suddenly Oaklynn is in my lap and Kirill is standing in front of Aamon with his gun pressed right between his eyes.

“I knew you were stupid, but your lack of self-preservation is a little surprising,” Kirill growls.

“The only reason you’re not dead already is because you need to sign on the dotted line.

My lawyer will be coming in half an hour to make sure everything is straight.

But don’t worry, I’ll be giving you a fair market price. ”

“You can’t just come in here and demand for me to sell my club to you,” Aamon insists.

“Why can’t I?” Kirill challenges him.

From the way Aamon’s mouth opens and closes like he’s a dying fish. He’s clearly having an issue with figuring out exactly what to say. If he hasn’t figured out that he’s in our crosshairs, he will soon.

My hand grips the inside of our woman’s thigh and gives a squeeze. She melts back against me, and my hands tighten on her body. She’s been teasing me all night and my cock is throbbing while I think about what is going to happen when we get home.

“I can’t wait to sink into your tight little cunt,” I murmur the words against the shell of her ear.

She shivers and goosebumps pop up all over her exposed skin. I love the way she responds to me and my touch. It's fucking glorious.

"Because Pulse isn't for sale," Aamon tries to argue.

"You're under the impression that I give a fuck. I'll be buying it and that's just how it is."

The smile on Kirill's face is sinister and full of dark promises. Aamon is looking up at him in fear before he starts to nod.

I stand up with Oaklynn in my arms and slide her down my body slowly until she's standing. The way it feels to feel all of her curves against my hard edges is so fucking hot. I can't wait to get her home.

"I'll have my lawyer come down and see you.

He'll be escorted by some of my guys just to make sure you don't pull some bullshit.

If you try and disappear, I'll track you down like a dog and put you down.

" Kirill presses the barrel against his forehead harder and leans toward him.

"Don't fucking try me, Aamon. You won't like the outcome and you sure as fuck won't be saved by Mikhail. "

Aamon curls his lip, but he doesn't argue. Either he knows this is a battle he won't win, or he really thinks Mikhail will have his back and will make this right.

Too bad we know Mikhail is a piece of shit who wouldn't cross the street to help his own mother let alone Aamon. He sure as fuck won't step in to prevent this sale from

going through.

Kirill stands over Aamon as the rest of us start to move toward the entrance to the VIP area so we can go home.

Home.

My body yearns to wrap around our wife. She centers me and gives me a sense of peace I've never felt before.

"And Aamon," Kirill drawls, "don't forget to run to Mikhail and whine to him about all your problems like a little bitch."

Before he gets the chance to respond, we're already gone. It doesn't take very long for us to finally step out into the night air. I can breathe a little easier now. By the time I wake up in the morning we'll own Pulse.

"You could have at least winged him," I point out to Kirill, more than a little disappointed about the lack of bloodshed.

"No need for blood," Oaklynn's voice is breezy as she pats my chest. "For a man like him, this will be worse."

I know she's right, but Aamon got away with saying way too much to our woman. His time will come eventually. I'll make sure of it.

*Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:29 am*

OAKLYNN

The ride home is quiet. The lack of chatter doesn't bother me, it feels safe, like a buffer between everything that went down at Pulse and the sanctuary of home. And there is a lot to process about what happened at Pulse.

Those bitches who thought they could touch my men? They're lucky they are still alive. I've never killed someone, but it was so fucking tempting. I almost allowed the need for vengeance to take over.

It would have been a mistake though. Those women weren't acting out of their own needs, wants, and desires. They were acting on orders.

I can understand that, but it did nothing to stop the haze of red that descended when I saw the way they were trying to entice my husbands.

The fact that I trust my men saved them, along with the way Aamon had my skeeve-o-meter going off like crazy. He's slimy as fuck.

No one was surprised when he revealed his link to Mikhail and the Morozov Bratva. A place like Pulse is the perfect place for unsuspecting women to be targeted.

The biggest concern is how they operated within the shadows for so long. If there was an electronic link to be found, I have no doubt that Huck would have found it. The fact that he hadn't already is concerning.

But now Pulse is out of commission. My men will own it within a few hours and then

it'll become a safer place. I'll make sure if it if I have to, but I know my men will already be all over it.

When I step into my room, I can feel my men at my back and know they all need to be close tonight. I'll be surprised if I'm able to go to the bathroom by myself. They're on edge, but I understand why.

Aamon got away with saying a lot of vile shit to me. They wouldn't have allowed it if they weren't trying to give him enough rope to hang himself, which he did. Still, I know it's not settling well with my men.

They're more of the pull the trigger first and fuck the questions kind of men. Holding back when Aamon was being a complete dickwad had to be difficult.

I'll be rewarding their restraint soon. But first I need to peel myself out of these leather pants.

"Pulse is yours," Kirill's words have me spinning around to look at him, my mouth falling open in surprise.

"What?" My eyebrows furrow together as I ask, needing clarification. Or to just make sure I'm not dreaming.

"Pulse is yours," he repeats himself simply.

His dark eyes are twinkling with amusement, but they turn molten as his gaze drags down my body and then back up to meet mine.

His appreciation for my outfit is written all over his face, but I'm sure I could wear a sack, and my men would still want me.

It makes me feel like a fucking goddess which is still taking a little getting used to.

“The club?” I shake my head and laugh softly. “I don’t understand. Why would you give me Pulse?”

He steps closer to me, his hands skimming down my bare arms, his dark eyes intense and focused.

“You’ll take it and make it into something great; I know it.

You have the freedom to do whatever you want.

Redesign it. Rebrand it. Hire a brand-new staff or keep the good ones already there.

I want to see what you can dream up and we’ll make sure it happens. ”

My mind starts to spiral with all the possibilities.

There are almost too many options. It was a nice club, don’t get me wrong, but I do think it could be even better.

Neon lights and a pulsing beat feel a little played out.

There were some women there, but I think we could attract even more.

And that is where the money is. If women feel safe and comfortable, then the men will follow, and they’ll be buying all the drinks.

“Are you sure about this?” I bite my lip, my vision starting to come together in my head and getting me excited. “It could get really expensive.”

Kirill throws his head back and laughs. It's a beautiful sight; I tuck it away and can't help but smile. His laughter has become more frequent in the time we've been together. I understand the pressure on his shoulders but seeing him let go is a reward I didn't even know I needed.

"I'm sure, Solnishko ," his voice drops an octave as his hands reach the hem of my shirt, even though there isn't a whole lot to it.

"Your budget is unlimited. I know you'll create a space which will have women flocking to it.

You'll elevate it from a nightclub to a destination, and it will take you no time at all to make the initial investment. I trust you."

My eyes fill with unshed tears, and I have no idea why. I know my men love me. I know they trust me. There's just something about hearing it in no uncertain terms and with so much conviction that tugs at my heart.

"Don't cry," he murmurs before pulling my top from my body to find I'm not wearing a bra. "Fuck," he barks.

Then all thoughts leave me as he lunges for me and his hot mouth sucks one of my nipples into his mouth. He teases it with his tongue and his teeth, bringing it to a hard peak which is straining and begging for more. It's always like this with my men.

His large hands span my waist and squeeze my hips. It's the only warning I get before he lifts me up and drops me down on the bed, following me down. I'm very aware that I have way too many clothes on for this. And so does he.

The feeling of the fabric of his clothing against my overheated torso makes me even more sensitive. I can feel my juices flowing and I'm sure that I've made a mess of the



thong I have on. Maxim tried to talk me into going without, but it wasn't going to work for me.

"Kirill," I beg, unsure of what I need exactly.

But he knows. He always does. When his dark eyes meet mine, I can see it. His resolve, love, and a need of his own.

"I've got you, Oaklynn," he whispers after popping off my nipple.

He slinks down my body until he's on his knees and looming over me as he radiates power and control. But I can make his control snap and his power envelope me. There is nothing quite like when my stoic man loses himself.

Maxim slides onto the bed next to me, his lips ghosting over the skin of my collarbone and moving up my neck. "I'll be fucking your ass tonight, Zolotse ," he warns me, "I hope you're ready. You'll be feeling me for days."

"Yes," I hiss.

Maxim chuckles as Kirill's fingers curl into the waistband of my pants. His movements are slow and deliberate as he peels the fabric off of me. The way he's looking down at me is sinister and reverent, a contradiction that has awareness slamming into me.

Nothing that is about to happen will be soft and sweet, but I don't want it to be.

I lock eyes with Kirill while knowing all my men will know I'm speaking to them as well. "Show me who I belong to," I demand.

My men growl, the sound reverberating around the room and slamming into me.

Maxim sucks a nipple into his mouth as Baker slips onto my other side, his large hand cupping and squeezing my breast. When Baker pinches my nipple and twists, I let out a strangled sound which is part pain and part pleasure.

“More,” I groan.

And my men deliver. Just like they always do.

A delirious blissful haze descends as I’m moved around and put right where my men want me. Maxim slides underneath me, my back to his front, and our naked flesh tingles wherever it touches. When he got undressed, I don’t know, but I don’t care.

His cock is already lubed up and ready for me. Kirill grips my hips, his touch punishing and possessive, to help me slide down his brother’s cock. The burn and the stretch from him breaching my ass is too much at first, but I lean into the feeling instead of fighting against it.

I want this.

I want them.

“I love you,” I whimper.

My men freeze for a moment as if they are soaking up my words. Instead of their touch becoming sweet and tender, they hold me tighter and force me to take even more.

It’s glorious.

Huck takes the spot on my side where Maxim was before while Kirill kneels between my legs, his eyes locked on my glistening pussy. The longer he looks at me, the more

turned on I become.

When Baker taps my lips with the crown of his cock, leaving pre-cum behind, I turn my head and open for him. The groan he lets out as he slides inside my mouth and my lips tighten around his shaft is feral. Just how I like my men.

I know Kirill is going to fill my pussy until he's balls deep, but now that I'm not looking at him, I have no idea when he'll do it. The anticipation is almost too much.

Huck bows his head and sucks one of my nipples into his mouth. He plays with it, using the tip of his tongue in a way which has me shivering. Maxim's fingers tighten on my hips to hold me in place as he pumps up into my ass.

My brain is overloaded with too many sensations. Pleasure starts to coil in my gut, tightening with every movement my men make.

It's too much.

It's not enough.

Just when I'm on the edge, my orgasm threatening to push me over the edge, Kirill fills me until he's buried all the way inside of me.

A scream works its way up my throat, but it can't escape because Baker pushes himself deeper at that very moment. His growl tells me just how much he likes the vibrations running along his length.

Huck's fingers pluck my other nipple, twisting it and pinching it just enough to make me squeeze my eyes closed. All I can do is feel and ride this wave, giving myself over to my men.

They'll hold me close and give me everything I need.

My trust in them is absolute and allows my mind to float in a haze of desire I had never experienced before I met my husbands. It feels like I'm flying and falling at the same time.

As my heart beats harder, my stomach tightens. Someone reaches between Kirill and I, their thumb pressing down on my clit. It could be any of them, my mind too jumbled to recognize their touch at the moment even though I normally can tell the difference between them.

Right now, I just don't care.

"Oaklynn," Kirill barks, "come."

And that's all it takes. I'm no longer flying or floating. I'm careening.

Stars dance through my mind, blissful and bright. My body locks up and my pussy walls clench down on Kirill, begging him to fill me with his cum. And he responds.

I can feel every jet of his cum filling me, the warmth of his release spreading through me and heightening my pleasure. Baker grunts and I'm swallowing him down.

Maxim starts to move faster and harder as Kirill slips out of me and is replaced by Huck. As Baker slips from my mouth, I gasp for air and look up at Huck who is now looming over me with a smirk on his face.

"You're messy, Sweet Girl, but we're not done with you yet."

"Please," I husk the word, my throat sore from the way Baker was fucking my throat.

Maxim and Huck move together, making my eyes cross as my back arches. I'm lost. To them. To the pleasure.

Reality feels like clouds between my fingers, evaporating just as I touch them and try to hold on. All I am is feeling. All I am is bliss.

Someone pinches my clit and my body jolts as I'm send spiraling again. Huck and Maxim roar at the same time, filling me with their cum just as my body tumbles over the edge again.

My eyes stay closed and I'm only vaguely aware of Huck and Maxim pulling out of me and resting me back on our bed before I'm cleaned up. I try to open my eyes, but I can't.

Darkness surrounds me and I don't get the chance to worry about what comes next. Whatever it is, we'll face it head on and turn anyone who gets in our way to ash.

## Page 17

*Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:29 am*

HUCK

I'm going over the specs for Pulse, including the security and camera systems in place. I have a feeling the place won't be named Pulse much longer. Our woman has been practically bursting with ideas for the last week. It's been fucking adorable, though I haven't said as much to her.

She wants to be taken seriously and being called adorable would not go along with that.

I can't say I blame her. She wants to prove to us that giving her the club was the right move, and her determination warms my heart.

None of us feel like she has anything to prove, but she's not ready to hear it.

Not yet at least.

I've gotten everything that was under the control of Aamon under us now. It makes me feel a little better, but the fact that he has ties to Mikhail makes me uncomfortable. It's just a matter of time before that comes to a head.

Part of me is worried about what will happen when everything comes crashing down. I know we'll protect Oaklynn with everything in us. But Mikhail is a variable that scares me.

Even if we didn't know it before walking into Pulse, buying the club out from underneath Aamon is going to make waves. I hope we can ride them.

When I get an alert on my computer that Oaklynn has walked into the building, I perk up. Whenever we're away from our woman, it's difficult. Being around her makes it easier to breathe.

She has no idea the real power she wields. But she will.

I use one of the monitors and pull up the security cameras for the building to track our woman's movements up to us. Watching her when she doesn't know it makes me feel a little dirty.

But then she looks up at the camera in the elevator and winks.

Maybe she does know I'm watching her. Or does she think it's Baker keeping an eye on her?

She knows how much time Baker spends keeping an eye on the cameras in the building and tracking her.

Whether she thinks it's me or Baker doesn't matter to my cock. I'm hard and throbbing because I know she's getting closer to me.

The moment she steps off the elevator, Betty is there at the reception desk. My body tenses as I subconsciously brace for the confrontation. I've been keeping an eye on Betty closely because there is no fucking way we're going to tolerate her fucking with our wife.

Oaklynn barely glances her way as she walks right by the desk toward Kirill's office. I'm up and out of my chair without thinking twice about it. I make it to the door just as it almost shuts, but my hand slides into the gap and catches it.

Our woman looks over her shoulder with wide, surprised eyes before she realizes it's

me. The smile she gives me is big and bright.

My gaze slides down her body and focuses on her ass. Yet again she's dressed professionally and completely mouthwateringly. She has pants on with wide legs and a tight blouse that's almost too sheer but isn't quite. The way she teeters on the edge of scandalous and sensual is a mystery to me.

I'm all about the magic she has.

Before she sits down, she turns and pulls a thumb drive out of her bag and holds it out with a smile. "Will you pull this up for me? It's my proposal."

"Of course, Sweet Girl."

With a kiss far too brief on my lips, she turns and heads toward Kirill. When she gets to him, she gives him an equally chaste kiss.

"You don't need to show me a proposal, Solnishko ," he tells her, his voice husky. "You can do whatever you want with your club."

She huffs out a breath and shakes her head before heading around to one of the chairs facing Kirill's desk. With her hands folded on her lap and her back straight, she fixes him with a level look.

"I won't have you giving me special treatment because I'm your wife, Mr. Volkov," she informs him primly with a flirty edge in her voice. "Considering the magnitude of the money being spent, I believe you should be fully informed about the choices and changes coming."

Kirill's smile is indulgent and a touch patronizing. It has me clenching my hand into a fist, but I don't comment. Not yet.



If he wants to piss our woman off by underestimating her, I'm not going to get involved. Not until I need to. There's no doubt in my mind that she's capable of dealing with him.

I'm sure he thinks this proposal will be subpar or won't be complete. To him, it doesn't really matter because he's going to see this through no matter what.

However, I'm sure we're about to be impressed by our woman's mind and everything she's about to show us. I almost chuckle at the thought but swallow it down and cover my mouth with my hand to hide my smile.

After pulling up the presentation and streaming it to the televisions in the room, I hand Oaklynn a little clicker to control the slideshow and sit back. Damn it, I should have brought popcorn.

Oaklynn turns toward me and winks before smoothing out her face and turns toward Kirill. Is my dick hard because of the anticipation? You better fucking believe it.

The next thirty minutes is fucking mind blowing.

Not only has Oaklynn fleshed out her entire concept, but she's put together a complete prospectus on the club and projections for the first six months the club is open again as well as for a year out.

If her estimates are correct, the new club is going to be even more profitable than what the books indicate that Pulse was.

I'm impressed as hell, especially the renderings she's put together for the interior.

I love the steampunk meets speakeasy vibe she's going for.

It's industrial with a touch of whimsy which will speak to a lot of clients.

It'll be a place where businesspeople want to take clients during the day and night.

It will also be a place where women will want to be for the atmosphere and interior alone.

As much as I pay close attention to the presentation, I'm also watching Kirill. He's done a fairly good job of keeping his face neutral, but the pride in his eyes is unmistakable.

When she's done, she sits back and crosses her legs with a small, unassuming smile on her face. "I hope you can see the vision I have for the space," she finishes up. "The only thing I'm not sure about is the name. It'll come to me."

Kirill rests his forearms on his desk and leans forward, no doubt needing to be closer to her. It's a deep-seated need, one I understand. Being so close to her for the last half hour without touching her has been torture.

But to see her shine? To see her step into her own like she has? It's more than worth it.

"I can absolutely see your vision, Oaklynn." He motions toward the screen where the last slide is still displayed, one which shows the interior of the club again. "It's hard not to when you've shown me the best presentation I've ever seen."

Oaklynn blushes and looks down at her lap while taking a deep breath. "You don't need to lie to me, Kirill," her voice is small, and I hate it.

Kirill is up and out of his chair in a flash. He's kneeling down in front of our wife so quickly that she looks at him with shock written all over her face.

His large hands cup her cheeks and tilt her head so that she's forced to look into his eyes.

"I will never lie to you," his voice is forceful as his eyes beg her to believe him.

"Before I started, you had already assumed that my presentation wouldn't include much or wouldn't be thorough," she points out having read the situation correctly.

Kirill's head drops back on his shoulders as he looks up at the ceiling. He barks, "Fuck."

"It's okay, I get it," she concedes.

It makes me want to punch him in the face, the same man who I consider a brother who saved my life in more ways than one. But he's hurt her and that is unacceptable.

"No," his voice is like steel as he tips his head back down and stares into her eyes, "it's not okay.

And you will not accept it." That has her sitting up a little straighter while squaring her shoulders.

"I shouldn't have assumed a damn thing when it comes to you.

You've already proven to me that to underestimate you is dangerous and a mistake. I'm not sure how I forgot it."

"You really think this will work?" As she asks, she nods toward the screen.

"I think you are a force of nature that will take this city by storm, Solnishko ," he murmurs softly.

She stares into his eyes, searching them for something. When her shoulders slump slightly and she breathes out a shaky breath, I know she found what she was looking for.

Sincerity.

Truth.

When Kirill glances my way, all I see in his eyes is regret. I arch an eyebrow, but I don't say anything. He's going to be beating himself up more than I ever could.

Now, if one of the other guys finds out about this who knows how it'll end up. Baker and Maxim both go feral for our woman. They're also more likely to jump in front of her. I, however, know it isn't always necessary.

Our woman has more heart and grit than most. And she shouldn't be hidden just because she's a woman.

Oaklynn lets out a small yelp of surprise when Kirill picks her up and carries her around to the other side of his desk. Her voice is husky, "What are you doing?"

Kirill stands her up and pushes her flowy pants down over her hips before lifting her and placing her ass on the edge of his desk. Then he's sinking to his knees before her. I'm quick to stand and move so I get a better view of what is about to happen.

Seeing our woman flush with pleasure and riding the wave of her orgasm is not to be missed.

"I'm showing you how sorry I am for being another man who underestimated you when all I should do is love you as fiercely as you love me," he growls as he pulls her panties to the side.

“Kirill,” she whimpers.

He plants kisses up the inside of her thighs, one leg and then the other. When he’s moved all the way up to the apex of her thighs, he leans in and blows a breath out over her clit which is peeking out from where her arousal coats her pussy lips.

Oaklynn leans back on her hands, her dark hair swinging and brushing against the top of the desk. Fucking gorgeous.

“Fantasy come to fucking life,” Kirill grunts.

Then he dives between her legs, his mouth attacking her pussy. I let out a low hum of approval because I know how fucking good our woman tastes. As I hear him eat her, slurping and lapping at her wetness, I can almost taste her on my tongue.

I’m not even a little bit ashamed when I lean back against the wall and reach down to free my cock from my pants. It’s hot as fuck watching our woman experience pleasure.

My eyes stay focused on her face, watching a flush rising up from her neck to her cheeks. She’s so responsive to us; I fucking love it.

When she glances over at me, she licks her lips. I know it’s an invitation, but I stay where I am and enjoy the show.

This is about her and I’m not going to change it.

Kirill shoves two fingers inside of our woman as he focuses on her clit, sucking it into his mouth as he fingers her. I have no doubt that he’s curled his fingers just right when her hips jolt and he has to hold her in place with his free hand.

“Yes,” she moans, “just like that. Don’t stop,” she gasps.

Kirill doesn’t stop. He doubles his efforts.

I watch in awe as she’s tossed over the edge of her pleasure, her head falling back as he rips a shriek from her mouth. The way her thighs shake as he laps at her opening, not wanting to miss any of her arousal, makes me a little jealous.

He gentles his movements as she comes down, her chest heaving as she tries to catch her breath. When she looks down at him, her eyes are wide and filled with satisfaction.

As much as I want to come, I don’t want my seed anywhere other than in our woman. I tuck myself away, my cock screaming at me the entire time which isn’t easy to ignore.

Oaklynn’s brown eyes are glassy when she looks over at me and pouts because I’ve put my dick away. All I can do is chuckle at how fucking cute she is.

Kirill stands and hovers over her. “Don’t let anyone make you feel small, Oaklynn, not even me.”

Her small hands come up and her fingers glide over the stubble along his jawline. “Okay, Kirill.”

As he slams his mouth down on hers, I’m quite sure we won’t be able to get any more work done. I’m more than okay with it. I’d much rather be at home with our woman, hopefully with her coming all over my cock.

KIRILL

Things have been quiet for the last few weeks. I've watched Oaklynn thrive. I'm so fucking proud of her, and it's only grown as she's put her plan to reinvent the club into action. She's a hard fucking worker and throws herself into everything she does with everything she is.

I'm so fucking impressed by her.

Even though she didn't know what the new name would be when she did her whole presentation, it came to her randomly. One night, as she was basking in the afterglow of her pleasure, surrounded by her men, she gasped, "Clockwork."

We looked at her like she had lost her mind. Well, except for Maxim. He looked pleased as hell because he had just finished fucking her sweet pussy. The look on his face was smug, as if he had just fucked her into a state of disassociation or delirium or something.

She slapped his arm as her chest heaved, still trying to catch her breath. "I was talking about the club's new name. No need to look so damn pleased with yourself."

Maxim chuckles and shrugged while flopping onto his back. "I just fucked the name of your club out of you. Or allowed your mind to clear so much from pleasure that it came to you. Either way, I think I have plenty to be smug about."

When Oaklynn hit his face with a pillow, he started roaring with laughter. All of us were soon to follow.

Even with Maxim's smug response, our woman had a name for her new club. If she weren't so tired from all the orgasm she had already gotten, I'm sure she would have been out of bed and getting more things in the works. As it was, she fell asleep with a smile on her face.

Working on Clockwork while also helping bring the gala together for Heart and Home, has ensured she's been out of the house more and more. I hate it, but I also know it's for the best.

It works with our plan; the same one we came up with days after Oaklynn showed up at the office to show me her proposal for the club.

We were sitting in the living room, curled up and relaxing after a dinner Maxim cooked for us.

The atmosphere was cozy, but you could feel something at the edges creeping in.

Oaklynn looked at each of us, assessing our moods and trying to read our minds.

"What's the plan?" When we turned toward her, her cheeks were a gorgeous pink.

"I know that buying Pulse, rather forcefully, wasn't necessarily part of the plan with Mikhail considering you didn't have solid proof of the connection.

But it has me wondering what the plan is. "

None of us wanted to say it, I could feel the hesitation coming from the guys. As is my lot in life, I knew it was up to me to step up and explain.

"We need to be out in public more," I tell her honestly.



Her eyebrows furrowed together, and I explained, “We’ve been keeping ourselves, and you, pretty isolated.

Mikhail is the kind of man who will only see you as a liability.

It’s why he sent Adam to that meeting. He wanted to scare you and assess how vulnerable you are. ”

Oaklynn stiffened slightly. “You’re using me as bait?” Her words were more accusatory than curious, but it still felt like a slap to the face.

“No,” I barked, “not as bait. Never as bait.” I looked into her eyes and hoped she could see the sincerity in mine. “The truth is that if someone wants to get to us then the best way is through you.”

It was like a light bulb went off, the confusion clearing from her eyes. “But only if they’re underestimating me and who I am.”

The smile I gave her was genuine and wide. “Exactly. And men like that will always underestimate you. I could be accused of the same thing.”

Oaklynn giggled softly before reaching over and giving my hand a squeeze. “The difference is that you’re willing to learn and to adjust your thinking. He never will be. It will be his downfall.”

“That’s what we’re hoping,” Baker admitted, “but one thing we will never do is put you in danger.”

“I know,” she assured us.

I blew out a breath, relieved at her trust in us even though I wasn’t sure we

completely earned it. I watched as our stunning wife's mind mulled something over.

“What I can't figure out is how Adam, or Mikhail, knew I was going to be at that meeting. I mean, sure in certain circles it might be talked about, but for him to know about it? It feels suspicious to me,” she mused.

“We don't know how he found out,” I admitted. “Adam didn't know, or he wasn't saying.”

“Maybe we should visit him again,” Maxim suggested with a little more glee than necessary for the situation.

I shot him a look, but he didn't look regretful at all. Quite the opposite.

“So,” Oaklynn chirped, “what's next on our public tour?”

We chuckled, the tension in the room becoming more manageable under the light of our woman. It's something she's skilled at, something I'll never take for granted.

How our woman makes even the worst days feel lighter and easier to navigate is a gift. I didn't realize I wasn't breathing deeply until she came into my life. The world we operate within can be dark, but she brings in light and helps me shoulder the weight of the responsibility.

My gut is screaming at me now though. I don't want to leave the house with our wife even though I know we have to do it.

She's not missing the gala and none of us will ask her to. That doesn't mean I'm not scared as hell about something happening to her. There will be so many people there which puts me on edge, even though we have people watching the perimeter to ensure the event is secure.

None of us will be leaving her side, but that doesn't mean I'm not dreading the whole thing. If something happens to her, I'll raze this city without thinking twice about it.

The guys are already downstairs, dressed and waiting for us.

But I just needed a moment with our woman.

I have no problem sitting on the edge of the bed and waiting for her while she's in the shower.

My heart is pounding in my chest and it's nearly impossible to push aside the worry which has been dogging my every movement since the moment I woke up this morning.

When the bathroom door opens, our woman steps out while the steam from the shower she just took is following her like it can't bear to leave her the same way I can't. She startles when she notices me, but the surprise on her face smooths out to understanding almost instantly.

Her legs are bare, and her silky robe clings to her still damn skin. She's sexy as hell and I can't look away from her as she reaches up and unclips her hair which she clearly put up to prevent it from getting wet. I watch the dark strands tumble down and provide the sexiest halo I've ever seen.

"You look nice," her voice is soft and soothing as she moves toward the closet. "Were you sent to hurry me along?"

When I shake my head, my silence has her turning toward me before she disappears into yet another room and I lose sight of her. The way she tilts her head to the side and studies me is adorable, but it barely penetrates my mind.

Oaklynn's small hands cradle my jaw, and I jump a little, surprised at myself that I got lost in thought and wasn't paying attention to her movements. Her eyes move back and forth between mine and it feels like she's looking into my soul.

"You're worried," she doesn't pose it like a question, just a simple fact.

"I don't like you being exposed like this," I admit.

The smile she gives me is soft and filled with love instead of being patronizing or dismissive. Her fingers slide back and forth against the stubble on my face, scratching against her soft skin. I love it when she touches me, it's grounding in a way I didn't even know I needed.

"What will you do if I'm in danger?"

Her question throws me off for a moment and all I can do is stare up at her, my mouth opening and closing a few times before I snap out of it. When I do, I growl, "I'll kill anyone who thinks they can hurt you, threaten you, or breathe on you funny."

Her laughter fills the room and forces some of the knot in my gut to unfurl. It's not gone, I don't think it ever will when it comes to our woman, but I can breathe a little easier.

Fuck, our wife is something special.

She leans down, her robe gaping slightly and giving me a very tempting view of her pink nipples and the way her milky breasts sway. The groan I let out is full of need and she smirks in response.

"I trust you," she murmurs, "you just need to trust yourself."

“If something were to happen to you,” I shake my head and swallow hard, “I don’t know what I would do.”

“Go on a killing spree,” she throws out nonchalantly.

I blink up at her before barking out a laugh and nodding. After hooking one of my arms around her waist, I pull her closer. My forehead rests right between her tits and I take a deep breath.

She smells so fucking good. The vanilla and cinnamon scent surrounding me has my mouth watering.

But I know I don’t have time to indulge.

When Oaklynn drops to her knees in front of me, my eyes widen. My voice comes out hoarse, “What are you doing, Solnishko ?”

Our wife looks up at me with a mischievous twinkle in her eyes. “I’m helping you to relax, Kirill,” she says it so casually, I almost think I’m wrong about her intentions at first.

At least until she undoes the fly of my tux pants and her delicate hand reaches in and pulls out my rapidly hardening cock. I’m always half hard, minimum, when I’m around our wife and tonight is no exception. My dick doesn’t care if I’m worried, he’s always trying to bury himself inside of Oaklynn.

“It’s going to be okay,” she whispers, each word sending puffs of air over the crown of my cock and making me shiver. Her brown eyes look up at me, full of trust. “I love you, Kirill and I know you’ll keep me safe.”

My mouth opens, but whatever words threatening to come out are lost in a strangled

sound as her lips wrap around me and she takes me into her mouth. I grip the sides of her head, knowing I shouldn't push my fingers into her hair considering we don't have a lot of time, but it's difficult not to.

Her mouth is warm and wet, and my balls are already begging to make her swallow my cum. When she sucks a little harder, her mouth moving up and down and taking me a little deeper every time, I'm lost to how fucking good it feels.

I grunt, "That's it, Oaklynn. You can take more," I encourage her.

The next time she takes me to the back of her throat; she takes even more and swallows. The feeling of her tight throat squeezing me, knowing she's pushing herself to the limits of what she can take, has me growling in pleasure.

Nothing could pull my eyes away from her. Not now. Not ever.

"You look sexy as fuck on your knees for me," I groan.

When she pulls back, the tip of her tongue plays with the vein running up the length of my shaft. Then she flicks across the underside of the crown, making me see fucking stars. Her nose flares when she takes me back into her mouth and as she breathes before my length goes a little bit deeper.

I'm mesmerized and as much as I want to close my eyes and just feel, I need to see her. I need to revel in how fucking good it is, the memory burning into my mind.

Never to be replaced.

Never to be forgotten.

Her movements get faster as her hand comes up and rolls my balls between the

fingers of one hand while the other wraps around the base of my cock. She strokes me as her mouth moves up and down my length.

It's too much.

It's not nearly enough.

My entire body starts to tingle, and I know I'm not going to last much longer. When she gives my balls a little tug, I'm fucking done.

"You're going to swallow every drop," I grunt my demand.

It's the only warning she gets before she takes me as deep as she can and I shoot my load right down her throat. The muscles there milk me as she swallows every jet of my cum. I swear my eyes cross with how fucking good it feels.

I'm a panting mess as my balls empty and she pulls back slowly to make sure she cleans me up as she goes. The only thing I can do is stare down at my woman in awe.

My thumb swipes along her bottom lip and her eyes soften. "Now it's your turn, wife."

She shakes her head and gets up slowly before heading toward her closet. "No time," she throws over her shoulder, "but you can make it up to me later."

I stand and tuck my cock back into my slacks before following her. As I lean against the door jam, I take a moment to simply appreciate the goddess in front of me.

Then I step inside as I ask, "Can I help you?"

She looks up at me, clearly confused, but whatever she sees on my face has her

nodding slowly. Her brown eyes are big and round as I help her get dressed. It's simple, but so fucking intimate.

If I weren't already in love with the woman, this would be the moment I fall. Instead, it's just another drop.

There's no doubt in my mind that I'll continue to fall for our wife for the rest of my life.



## Page 19

*Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:29 am*

OAKLYNN

Tonight has been going so well that I almost can't believe it.

I'm used to working with a charity and then being unable to genuinely enjoy the payoff when it comes to nights like this.

My father never allowed me to shine, but he was more than willing to soak up the praise from my hard work.

Being on his arm felt like being shackled.

It's completely different with my men.

They are more than happy to put me in the spotlight and keep me there.

Even when I try and shy away, they're at my back to remind me that I deserve to revel in the good things I've done and to have pride in the work I've put in.

Sure, I wasn't part of Heart and Home's event right from the start, but I can still see my influence on the night.

When I see Angela approaching with a middle-aged couple who are smiling from ear to ear, I brace myself to meet more people. As wonderful as this night has been, I'm starting to get a little tired. But it's not over yet. At least I can soak up a little bit of strength from my men.

“Mrs. Volkov,” Angela greets me with a grateful smile on her face, “I’d like you to meet the mayor, Seth Mason and his wife Vivian Mason. They were both interested in meeting the woman who helped us tie everything up and make this event better than it has ever been before.”

Even as my heart pounds in my chest I plaster a smile on my face.

“Mr. and Mrs. Mason, it’s lovely to meet you.

I’m Oaklynn.” I turn slightly toward Angela and give her arm a squeeze.

“And it was my absolute pleasure to help Heart and Home. It’s such a wonderful charity and is desperately needed in Seattle. ”

As we shake hands, Seth continues to smile and doesn’t seem at all bothered by the four men who feel more like shadows than husbands at the moment.

“Please call us Seth and Vivian,” he offers, and I give a nod in response.

“I’ve heard about your charity work before, but this is the first chance I’ve had to meet you.

I wanted to personally thank you for putting your time and effort in to helping your fellow citizens. ”

“Of course,” I offer graciously. There’s no need to tell him that working with charities used to be one of the only freedoms I was allowed when stuck underneath my father’s rule.

Talk about something that would bring down the whole mood of the night.

“Please, let me introduce my husband, Kirill Volkov.” The men shake hands, and I take a moment to introduce Huck, Maxim, and Baker as well.

Vivian’s eyes are wide as she takes in the men surrounding me.

Seth immediately starts to talk to Kirill about Volkov Enterprises, seemingly excited about the fact that not only is he here tonight but is married to me.

I don’t get the feeling he asked for an introduction just to get to Kirill.

It warms something in my chest and helps to put away fears I wasn’t even aware I had.

I’m so much more than Kirill’s wife. Just like I was much more than Richard Chambers’ daughter. While opening Clockwork won’t erase my connections to the men in my life, past and present, I’m looking forward to standing on my own in some way.

When Maxim rests his hand on my hip and gives it a squeeze, the gesture is far more intimate than would be proper if I am only Kirill’s wife, Vivian’s eyes track the gesture. She leans into me, but I don’t see any judgement in her eyes.

“It seems you’re keeping secrets, Oaklynn,” her voice is light and breezy, but also filled with curiosity.

“Legally, I am only Kirill’s wife,” I hedge, testing out the waters.

Her eyes widen slightly before she chuckles under her breath.

“You lucky woman,” she breathes out, her eyes darting between my men as if seeing them for the first time.

“While I am very happy with my husband, who is a wonderful man, I do enjoy reading certain romance books which are very,” she pauses as if searching for the right word, “descriptive and plentiful.”

I can’t help it when my head drops back as I laugh. The last thing I expected was for the mayor’s wife to admit to reading spicy romance with more than one man in the mix. It’s refreshing and makes me like the woman instantly.

“Uh oh,” Seth’s voice is full of amusement, “it looks like our women might be troublemakers together.”

Vivian giggles and rolls her eyes like her husband is being ridiculous, but the grin on her face doesn’t drop and there’s a mischievousness in her eyes. There’s an energy about her which has me wishing I had an older sister.

Making friends in my life hasn’t been easy. I never wanted to bring anyone around my father, and I never knew how to explain all the things that weighed me down. Now, I’m not sure how to explain my four men who are all dangerous and not to be trifled with. Maybe I’m selling people short.

“I don’t make trouble,” Vivian assures her husband, “I just enjoy life.” Her eyes sparkle as she looks at me.

“There are a few organizations I work with which could really benefit from your help if you’re interested?”

Angela has been singing your praises for the last little while since you agreed to help with tonight.

I’d love the chance to sit down and talk to you when we aren’t forced into evening gowns and more hairspray than is probably required. ”

I'm smiling so big that my cheeks hurt. When I glance at my men, they're all looking at me with eyes filled with love. Seth is looking at his wife like she's a treasure and I'm starting to think he's not far off.

"I'd really like that. We've recently bought Pulse and I'm in the process of rebranding it for the relaunch, which means I don't have as much time as I normally would, but I can always find time for a worthy cause."

"You're the one rebranding Pulse?" Seth's question holds a mix of curiosity and relief.

I nod and his shoulders sag slightly. "Good. I've heard rumors that it was under new management but hadn't been able to really look into the details yet.

Pulse might have been popular, but it was shady as hell and was under investigation.

"Kirill stiffens slightly but Seth shakes his head.

"My gut is telling me that won't be necessary now.

"With a wave of his hand, he adds, "I'll get it taken care of. "

Kirill and Seth shake hands, a look of understanding passing between them.

"I'd love to see the new place. I'm not really a club person, but I'm curious about your vision," Vivian pulls my attention back to her.

"When I send out invitations for the grand opening, you'll be the first person on my list," I assure her, and I swear the woman lights up.

"Perfect," she chirps and claps her hands together. "How do you feel about brunch?"

Maybe in a few weeks?"

She pulls a card out of her clutch and hands it to me, her eyes hopeful in a way I know is sincere. It catches me off guard, but that's more about me than her.

"Brunch sounds delicious," my voice is low as I blink back tears for some reason.

When I look up at her, her eyes soften. "I'm more of a bellini person than mimosas, what about you?"

"As long as there's champagne, I'm good either way," I tell her, slightly teasing.

Before I know what's happening, Vivian is giving me a hug. She murmurs, "I think we're going to be friends, Oaklynn, and I'm looking forward to it."

I'm taken aback but sink into the feeling of comfort and warmth she exudes. When she pulls back, we share a look, and I nod. It's the only thing I can do because I don't quite trust my voice at the moment.

Seth tucks his wife's hand in the crook of his elbow and teases, "Come on, Vivian. We've monopolized enough of their time for the moment, and I see some people who are desperate to get a few minutes with me across the room.

" He rolls his eyes before shooting me a wink.

"They'll be inconsolable if I make them wait any longer. "

With a quick goodbye, Seth pulls his wife away gently. She looks over her shoulder and makes a motion of a phone with her hand as she mouths, "Call me."

I can only nod and smile. There's no doubt in my mind that I'll be calling Vivian.

I'm sure she's used to people trying to get close to her because of her husband.

It's something I'm just starting to navigate.

But we don't need the other to gain power or prestige which means more than I realized it would.

When I look up at my men, they're already staring at me with soft smiles on their faces. "She seems nice," I test the waters.

"She does," Huck agrees without offering anything more, not like I expect him to.

"Seth Mason is a good mayor, one who can't be corrupted by money and the promise of power. His only goal is to do the best he can for the city," Kirill informs me.

I never paid much attention to politics because it didn't seem to matter. When you see behind the curtain of corruption, which I did by having my father in my life, you realize that right and wrong aren't always the factors that matter. Money and influence usually hold more weight.

With the knowledge that Seth is a good man, one of integrity, I feel myself relax a little more.

Maxim leans in closer, his lips brushing the shell of my ear, "Have I told you how sexy you are in this dress?"

I roll my eyes in exasperation, even as I preen under the praise. Yes, my husband has, in fact, told me exactly what he thinks of me in this dress. More than once. I feel sexy and beautiful in it. I'm glad I let him dress me however he wanted yet again.

"You flirt," I murmur and tip on my tiptoes to kiss his cheek, "you might have

mentioned it once or twice.”

His eyes rake down my body and take in the black dress he chose for me.

It’s gorgeous and fits me perfectly. The fabric might as well be feathers with the way it feels against my skin.

It’s more modest than I was expecting from him.

At least, at first glance. But then my leg peeks through the outrageously high slit and the illusion of modesty becomes slightly tarnished.

“I need to use the restroom,” I murmur softly. He nods with a twinkle in his eyes that has me smacking his chest softly with the back of my hand. “Not for that,” I hiss. “I am not letting you fuck me in the bathroom of a charity event.”

Maxim pouts for a moment before sighing like I’m asking him something impossible by expecting him to behave. It’s adorable.

The guys share a look and then Maxim is guiding me out of the large ballroom space and into the hallway.

We don’t get far before someone calls his name and he turns.

The man who approaches us looks a little unsure which has Maxim transforming into the charming man who helps to lead Volkov Enterprises instead of the Bratva second who can kill without remorse.

I give his arm a squeeze, knowing the bathroom isn’t far, and nod in that direction. Maxim looks torn for a moment but then he gives a tentative nod.



It doesn't take me long in the bathroom, but I take a moment as I'm washing my hands to think about where my life is now.

So many things have changed. I almost don't recognize myself when I look in the mirror.

The sadness in my eyes, which I never thought would look any different, has been replaced by love.

I'm happy.

It's shocking, all things considered, and I take a moment to simply enjoy it.

Just as I turn toward the door, it opens and a man steps in. At first, I'm confused, but then I get a better look at him and my heart drops into my stomach.

"Ah," he taunts, "it looks like you recognize me. Good."

Fuck.

Mikhail.

And from the looks of things, he's pissed.

He lunges for me, but I sidestep him quickly, my training kicking in. I don't have to pretend to be the scared, small woman everyone in my life used to assume I am. Now, I can own the woman I used to hide away.

I am exactly who I am supposed to be. For me. For my men.

He's bigger than I am which means I have to use his size to my advantage instead of

allowing him to use it against me. Easier said than done sometimes.

When he comes at me again, I dodge and turn as his body moves past me while landing a hit to his kidney. He grunts in pain, but I know not to allow the feeling of victory to cloud my mind or my judgement.

This is bad, but his anger is working for me, and I can't lose focus now.

"You fucking worthless whore," he seethes as he turns toward me.

When he tries to slap me, I block it and land a punch to his nose. The sickening crunch makes me wince, but all Mikhail does is smile.

I try and put some distance between us, but it's not easy in the confined space of the bathroom. The next time he swings at me, I'm not fast enough and take a hit to my jaw. My back hits the wall, but I steady myself quickly.

"Oh, this is fun," he teases, not realizing I haven't said a word. He doesn't care about what I have to say, so why waste my breath? "You can fight all you want, Oaklynn, but eventually you'll find yourself on your knees for me. No one will save you."

The smile that stretches across my face is filled with dangerous promises. No one has to save me; I'm going to save myself. Well, at least I'm going to try.

MAXIM

Something is wrong. I know it down to my bones. I've tried to gracefully step out of this conversation with a guy we've done real estate work for. In the past I prided myself on being charming and being damn good for business, but I'm getting pissed.

I've had my eye on the door to the bathroom almost the entire time, but there was a moment when I lost sight of it. It was just a moment. But I still can't shake the feeling that something is wrong.

I should be taking this networking opportunity seriously but fuck it and fuck this guy.

"I'm sorry, my wife has been gone for a little too long and I need to check on her," I try to keep the annoyance out of my voice but it's almost impossible.

The guy, whose name fucking escapes me at the moment, looks confused. "You mean the woman in the black dress you were with?" His eyebrows pull even closer together. "I thought she was married to your brother?"

I growl, unable to stop the sound but not giving a shit either way at the moment. Not when alarm sirens are blaring in my head and making it hard to think.

The need to get to our woman, our wife, is practically taking me to the floor. I need to move. Now.

Is this what panic feels like? It's a foreign feeling to me. Being in control is something I pride myself on, but when it comes to Oaklynn everything that I'm used

to flies out the window. The only thing that matters is her.

Without bothering to answer, I walk away from Mr. Whatever-His-Name-Is. I'm just about to reach for the bathroom door handle, not giving a shit about it being the ladies room, when the door flies open.

I jump back, my brain not catching up with what I'm seeing for a moment. Mikhail fucking Morozov is standing front of me, blood dripping from his nose and an arm wrapped around his torso like his ribs are hurt. His chest is heaving up and down as his wild eyes meet mine.

He snarls and barrels right through me. I stumble back but stay on my feet.

"Fuck no," I roar and rush into the bathroom without even considering going after the man.

Not when our woman, the love of my fucking life, is in the bathroom.

I don't give myself a chance to brace or prepare as fear crawls up my throat. Fear of what I'm going to find. Fear that I've failed her.

When I step into the bathroom, I almost stumble over my feet as I find Oaklynn leaning back against one wall. Her chest is rising and falling with her rapid breathing. Her brown eyes meet mine and all I can see is fire burning there.

A bruise is already blooming on her jawline and her lip is split. She's clutching her torso as she slides down the wall. That is when I see a rip in her dress. It's too much and my knees buckle.

I'm not sure if I'm more relieved or pissed.

“Go,” she gasps. “Go and get him. He was just here.”

“I know,” I tell her as I drop down to my knees next to her, the jolt giving me a bite of pain that I need in this situation before I lose my fucking mind.

“I was coming in as he was going out. He bumped into me, but all I could think about was getting to you and finding out if...,” my words trail off because my thoughts are just too fucking dark to give voice to.

If he had hurt you.

If he had raped you.

If he had killed you.

No matter how I finish the sentence, it makes my head want to fucking explode. I should be running after him. We’ve been hunting him for so long and he’s been keeping himself so well hidden in the shadows.

But if the choice is between going after him and making sure my wife is okay, it’s no fucking choice at all.

“Go after him,” she pleads but I shake my head.

There’s no fucking way I’m leaving her here. Not now, not fucking ever.

I pull my phone out and call Kirill. He answers after one ring, his voice on edge, “What’s wrong?”

“Get to the bathroom.”

I hang up without waiting for his response before I tuck my phone away. My hands hover over our woman, unsure if I should touch her or where she's hurt.

"I'm fine," she rasps.

The door slams open and the hulking bodies of Kirill, Baker, and Huck storm into the small room, soaking up the air in the process. Their eyes sweep over us and take in the scene before them. Their eyes harden and fill with rage, which I'm sure is exactly what happened to me when I first saw her.

"I'm fine," she says again, this time the words sound like a resigned sigh.

"You're not fine," Kirill snaps. "You have a bruise on your jaw and there's blood on you."

Her shoulders slump as she nods slowly. "It's not my blood," she tries to argue, but it falls on deaf ears.

My brother's rage filled eyes meet mine and I can see the questions. "I got sidelined while I was walking Oaklynn to the bathroom by a client. She continued on. I wasn't far," there's a plea in my voice I don't even try to mask.

I'm not sure what I'm pleading for. Understanding? Absolution? The guilt tries to take me under, but I fight against it.

"It wasn't your fault," Oaklynn insists while grabbing my hand and squeezing it.

Normally her touch is soothing and something I crave, but right now it feels like acid against my skin. I almost pull away, but I stop myself. I'm not going to hurt her anymore than she already is.

“Who?” Baker questions, but I have a feeling he already knows.

I suspect they all already know.

With my head bowed, I tell them the rest. “I lost sight of the door for a second and then I couldn’t shake the feeling that she needed me. It took me longer than I liked to get away from the client. When I did, I was about to open the door to the bathroom when Mikhail came rushing out.”

“Mikhail was here?” Kirill roars the question, his anger reverberating around us in the small room in such a way that it might as well be a punch to the chest.

“He was,” Oaklynn confirms. “He underestimated me.”

There’s steel in her voice and I know it’s more than just words. It’s a reminder for us not to do the same.

Baker and Huck are on their phones even though most of their focus is on our wife. As it should be. I have no doubt they’re making calls to find out what the fuck happened to the men on the perimeter.

Mikhail should have never been able to get into the building. He should have never been able to get as close as he did.

And as he was leaving, he should have been grabbed.

“He hurt you,” Kirill seethes as he moves closer and crouches down.

“I’m fine,” she grits out, but I can see the pain in her eyes just like everyone else can. She closes her eyes and shakes her head. She looks at me, but there’s no resentment or regret there.

“We need to go,” Huck interjects, always the voice of reason.

He steps forward and offers our woman his hand. Her movements are slow as she slips her hand into his. When he helps her stand, she winces and lets out a grunt of pain which has us freezing in place.

“Not here,” she whimpers.

She reaches down and runs her fingers over the rip in her dress with sadness in her eyes. Even though I have no right, I step closer and press my lips against her forehead.

“I’ll buy you a million more dresses, Zolotse ,” I promise. “The only thing that matters is your safety.”

Her big brown eyes meet mine and for the first time in a long fucking time, it feels like I’m on the verge of tears. I failed her.

“Stop,” she demands.

My eyes pop open as I search hers. I’m not even sure when I closed them. A wave of pain, of self-recrimination, washes over me.

I hope the guys beat the hell out of me. Nothing less will do as penance because I allowed this to happen.

“No one has seen him,” Baker’s words are cold and unforgiving as he looks up from his phone, no doubt getting updates from the men who should have kept this event safe.

But what about me? I should have kept her safe. Instead, I’m watching the bruise



darken on her jaw in real fucking time.

“Blaming yourself isn’t going to help anything,” Oaklynn’s words are soft.

They wrap around me like fog but barely penetrate. Rage and fear are on the battlefield and I’m not sure which will win at this moment.

Before I know what’s happening, Oaklynn’s lips are pressed against mine and a growl comes from the depth of my chest. The beast wants to be free.

Not to fuck our woman and show her who she belongs to, but to hunt down Mikhail and bathe in his blood. The beast wants to present his head to our mate on a silver fucking platter.

“Choose the rage,” she murmurs against my lips, coaxing the darkness in me to flare and consume. “Fear has no place in this. I’m fine,” her words are final.

Absolute.

I blink a few times, and her face comes into focus. Not just her gorgeous features, but the warrior within.

“Let’s go,” Kirill’s impatient order has us moving.

Instead of heading back toward the ballroom, we move farther away. We take the hallway and move in the same direction that Mikhail did earlier.

I don’t regret not going after him, not when it would have left Oaklynn alone and hurting. Still, that doesn’t mean I don’t wish I had him in my clutches.

If I hadn’t let him get away, I could be showing him exactly what happens to

someone who hurts our woman. But revenge will have to wait for now.

When I catch Baker's eye, he gives me a nod.

My shoulders relax slightly because I know he would have called in Wolfe and his team.

They'll get all the guys who were supposed to keep Mikhail out of tonight's event down to the warehouse.

Maybe they're clean and Mikhail is just that good.

Or maybe we have a rat we don't know about.

Either way, I'll be able to vent some of my rage.

It won't be enough. It'll never be enough until Mikhail is bleeding out at my feet, and I can watch the life drain from his eyes.

This shit is exactly why Mikhail's father was never worthy of the power he held. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree. Mikhail would have kept his father's legacy going and we can't allow it to happen.

It's time to stop waiting for him to show himself. It's time to burn everything down and smoke him out of hiding.

But, first, we need to take care of our wife. Then I'm going hunting, and no one is going to stop me.

HUCK

Oaklynn is now in comfortable lounge pants and a tank top, her face free of make-up and her hair pulled up into a messy pile on top of her head.

It's a stark contrast to how she looked just a short time ago.

I love our woman no matter what, but I do think I prefer her looking cozy and comfortable like she is right now.

Even though the conversation we're embarking on is anything but peaceful, she looks relaxed and that helps to keep the rage inside of me in check. It's simmering under the surface and waiting for the right time to make itself known.

Now is not the time.

We have to keep our cool for our woman. It won't do anyone any good to get pissed and fly off the handle. Not when Mikhail is long gone and we need to hear what happened.

Oaklynn sighs and shakes her head slightly. "He caught me off guard. I wasn't expecting someone to come barging into the bathroom since I had just left Maxim in the hallway. He was so close, and I knew it; I felt safe stepping away while he talked to the guy who flagged him down."

Kirill interrupts, his eyes boring into his brother, "Do you think it was a set-up?"

Maxim shakes his head. “I don’t believe so. He was just a client, and I was caught up at the wrong time which allowed Mikhail to have an opening.”

Kirill seethes, “An opening he should have never had.”

Oaklynn’s eyes flash, her tone hard, “None of that. We will not play the blame game amongst ourselves. I’m not some weak woman who always needs a man to ride in on his white steed to rescue me. I’m capable.”

Maxim begrudgingly admits, “Mikhail didn’t look so great as he pushed past me. It was fast, but he definitely had a broken nose.”

“And at least one cracked rib,” Oaklynn sounds smug as hell.

The smirk on her face falls quickly when none of us relax or even so much as have a lip twitch.

“Right,” she claps her hands together, “as I was saying, Mikhail came into the bathroom like he owned the place. I knew who he was instantly, which seemed to amuse him.” She huffs out a breath and rolls her eyes.

“He didn’t say much as he attacked me other than the usual misogynistic bullshit.”

“What does that mean, Little Bee?” Baker’s voice is soft and calm, but it’s all a front; he’s just as on edge as the rest of us.

“He was glad I recognized him and called me a whore. He tried to taunt me by saying that I’d be on my knees for him eventually,” her voice is soft, but it’s not weak.

The rest of us growl and I have to clench my hands into fists. Tensions are high and it feels like I can’t breathe.

Being able to see our woman, right in front of me and whole, is the only thing keeping me sane at this moment. It would be so easy to lose my shit entirely.

“And he just breezed past you?” I try to keep my question neutral as I look toward Maxim, but even I can hear the underlying accusation in my words.

He looks away, shame coating his features. It’s so damn clear that it has me swallowing hard even though I’m the one who asked in the first place.

“Don’t do that,” Oaklynn’s voice is a warning.

“It’s not his fault. He had an impossible decision in front of him.

What would you have done?” I look up to find her brown eyes pinning me in place.

“I told him to go the moment he saw me, to track Mikhail down, but he saw me—against the wall, holding my ribs, bloody—and he made a choice.”

My eyes slide shut, and I tip my head back. It’s easy to picture the moment in my head.

“I would have done the same damn thing,” I admit knowing the truth of my words all the way to my soul. When I tip my head forward again, I look toward Maxim. “I’m sorry man, putting that shit on you wasn’t right.”

He nods, but I can tell by the way he clenches his jaw that my words haven’t landed. He’s obviously blaming himself. I just made it worse.

Oaklynn is looking at me in such a way that she might as well be screaming at me to make it right. All I can do is nod in understanding at the moment. It’s not something that’ll be fixed in a matter of minutes; there’s not much I can do to change that.

“What about the cameras?” Kirill’s voice is strained and showing just how on edge he is.

With a sigh, I run my fingers through my hair and admit, “The feeds were taken down. Either it was someone on the inside or Mikhail was watching and made it happen before entering the hallway to the bathroom.”

When the door opens, four guns are pointed toward the entrance to the living room where we’ve posted up. Wolfe comes into view and pauses for a heartbeat as he takes in the scene before he heads straight over to our wife. He drops down onto his knees in front of her, his eyes assessing her closely.

“I’m fine,” Oaklynn sighs, clearly done with saying the same damn thing over and over tonight.

From the look on Wolfe’s face, he doesn’t believe her any more than we do. I’m not surprised. He’s become very protective of our wife since meeting her. I wasn’t thrilled about it at first, but the more I watched them interact the more it became clear that they have a brother-sister relationship.

I never really thought it could be anything else because Wolfe—along with Dominic and Hendrix—are totally gone for their woman, Kirby. Still, I don’t like anyone other than us having their hands on our wife. Call me possessive. Call me an asshole. I don’t really give a fuck either way.

Oaklynn is ours. Our woman. Our wife. Our love.

And we aren’t going to allow anyone to get in the way of that.

Which is why Mikhail taking a shot at her tonight has me seething. I swallow down the words I want to bark at Wolfe to get him to back the fuck away because I know

he's here to look her over and make sure she's okay.

He asks her some questions about what happened and how she's feeling. She answers honestly, but it's clear she's more than done with this whole thing.

Our woman isn't one to milk an injury or revel in the spotlight. It's one of the many things I love about her, but right now she needs to let that shit go because none of us are going to be able to rest without knowing if she's okay.

When Wolfe touches her side, his fingers gentle, she sucks in a sharp breath and winces. It takes all of my willpower not to jump out of my seat, but I manage to stay still. My eyes aren't still though.

I share a long look with Baker who looks just about as ready to kill as I do. I'm just not sure if he's looking to killing his brother or Mikhail. Probably both.

Wolfe spends time smearing ointment on her bruises as well as her knuckles which are clearly red and swollen. His touch is careful and clinical as he wraps her torso. The look in his eyes tells me he's not entirely thrilled about just treating her here.

When he sits back on his heels, he runs his hand along his jaw and lets out a long breath. "I would feel a lot better if you'd go and get checked out which would include some imaging for your ribs."

Oaklynn is shaking her head before he even finishes the words. "I'm not going to a hospital or clinic or wherever. I'm fine," her words are fierce.

Wolfe isn't one to be intimidated easily, "You're strong, little sister, I get it, but that doesn't mean you don't need more medical attention than I can give you."

"No," she snaps at him, her eyes blazing with fury.

But before Wolfe can respond, her shoulders slump and her face crumples.

“I’m sorry,” she whispers. “I’m just pissed that this happened on such an important night, and I’m tired of having to insist that I’m okay.

Does it hurt? Yes. I had to kick some ass and I’m going to feel it. ”

“I know you’re badass, Oaklynn,” he assures her.

And he does.

Not only has our wife sparred with us, but she’s been in the ring with Wolfe, Dominic, and Hendrix. They wanted to assess her skills and give her pointers just as much as we did. Our woman impressed them, something which isn’t easy to do.

Even so, she should never have been put in the position she was in tonight.

I have to take a few deep breaths to get myself under control before I destroy our living room and then move on to the other rooms in the house. Losing my cool won’t help anything right now.

I know that.

But it’s hard to remember. Every time I look at Oaklynn, my gaze goes right to the bruise on her jawline. How fucking dare Mikhail attack our wife.

He needs to die.

Everyone’s eyes snap over to me, and I realize I said that last bit out loud. I have no doubt that I sound unhinged because that’s exactly how I feel.



“He will,” there’s a promise in Kirill’s words.

All I can do is nod my head. I’m antsy and on edge.

The need to go down to the warehouse and find out what the fuck went wrong tonight is riding me hard. I’m not sure what answers I’ll find, but I need to start asking the questions.

Since looking at the camera feed was a bust, it feels like I’m flying blind right now and it is not a feeling I like. It makes my skin crawl.

“Okay,” Wolfe sighs as he takes in the defiant way Oaklynn is holding herself. “Please take something for pain. If the over-the-counter shit isn’t touching the pain, then let me know.”

“I won’t take anything stronger,” Oaklynn insists.

One thing I’ve learned about our woman is that she’s stubborn as hell.

It makes her a good match for us because she won’t break under pressure, whether the source is outside of our little family or within.

She could stand strong in the storm and come out looking like the skies were clear and the wind was calm.

I’m in awe of her.

When Wolfe stands up, he looks at the way the rest of us are clenching our jaws or hands and nods with a knowing glint in his eyes. “The team working tonight is waiting at the warehouse. Dominic and Hendrix are watching over them,” he confirms with a smirk.

Yeah, I'm sure they're just watching over them.

All three of the former military men turned mercenaries love Oaklynn like a sister. They would light the match we'd use to burn the world down for her. That's just how it is.

I'm so fucking glad our woman has a family at her back now.

Maxim looks defeated, but I know what he needs. He needs to be useful because he already feels like he's let our woman down.

Kirill looks like he's on edge. His energy is feral and combustible. It reminds me of the night Adam approached her at the Heart and Home meeting. When it comes to Oaklynn, he's no longer the stoic leader who doesn't get rattled.

He's a loose fucking cannon. One we need to contain.

"Kirill," I call to him and wait until he looks at me. His eyes burn with an uncontrollable wildfire. "I'm going to go to the warehouse with Maxim and Baker. You're going to stay here and take care of our woman."

He narrows his eyes, but he doesn't say anything. It's clear he's not happy about it, but I don't think he's going to fight me on it either. Not when she needs him and he needs her.

When I look at Oaklynn, she gives me a small nod. Is it gratitude or understanding?

Either way, I'm up and headed toward the front door knowing the guys will fall in line with me. Maxim's too mired in guilt and it's time for me to step up and get this shit done.

It's time to see if we can get any answers. Mikhail should never have been able to get into the building, let alone that close to our wife. But he did and now heads will roll.

OAKLYNN

Kirill is pacing back and forth in the living room. He reminds me of a lion trapped in a zoo. You're told that the enclosure is big enough, but when you look into the animal's eyes you can see the truth. Only the entire Serengeti will be enough room.

"Kirill," I keep my voice soft as I call to him.

He turns toward me and for a moment it's like he's looking right through me instead of at me. But then he focuses, and all his intensity is directed at me. It's almost too much and my breath hitches.

His steps are long as he closes the distance between us. Even though I can almost taste the danger in the air, I don't flinch, and I don't move away. All I can do is wait and see what happens.

"I need you to be honest with me, Solnishko," he murmurs, "how are you feeling?"

"I'm good," I promise him. "It's you I'm worried about right now."

He rears back like I've slapped him, and his eyes widen slightly. "Me? Why are you worried about me?"

"You look like you're about to lose your shit," I explain. "I understand staying back and babysitting me isn't exactly ideal."

His hand shoots out so fast that it startles me when it wraps around my neck.

“Staying with you is an honor. I’m not here to babysit you,” his words are insistently rasped.

“I’m sidelined because the guys knew that I wasn’t going to be able to keep a lid on my rage.

Losing control would only make things worse, even if it would feel good in the moment. Dead men can’t spill their secrets.”

“But you would rather be at the warehouse to find out exactly who or what the weak link was in tonight’s coverage,” I push.

Kirill looks away, unable to deny my words. It’s written all over his face anyway.

It’s almost funny how he’s wearing his heart on his sleeve right now. Kirill is such a stoic man. He prides himself on keeping his emotions locked up and being unreadable.

But at this moment, when he’s still caught up in being scared for me, he’s showing me everything.

“I love you, Kirill,” I murmur.

He snaps his gaze back to mine and his shoulders relax. It’s small, but it’s enough.

“I know you want to be at the warehouse. Admitting it isn’t a bad thing,” I tell him honestly.

“No,” he shakes his head, “I need to be right here with you.”

I cup his jaw with my hands and search his eyes. It’s so obvious what he needs, but

he thinks taking it will let me down. He's wrong.

"You want to go and get answers?" His nod is hesitant. "You don't want to leave me," I don't state it like a question, but he nods anyway. "Then there's only one solution."

He looks confused. It's kind of adorable.

I would never underestimate this man. He is power personified and dangerous as hell. He's also smart and capable. Which makes it all the more amusing when he doesn't understand something.

"Take me with you," I state the obvious, my words measured.

"No fucking way," he snarls.

With my head tilted to the side, I study him. I wish my ribs weren't aching right now because I know what would calm him down. But now isn't the time for that.

The only thing that is going to help him cope is if he's in the midst of the action, and the only action right now is the questioning of the security detail that was on tonight. He has questions. They, hopefully, have answers.

"Kirill," my voice is stern, "it's the only way for you to be involved right now. You agreed that you don't want to leave me, but you want to be there. You are a lot of things, but you are still incapable of being in two places at one time."

"I could have Huck hook up some sort of video feed," he suggests, clearly mulling over the situation.

With an unladylike snort, I wave my hand dismissively.

“Like that will be enough for you. Look at you,” I accuse gently, “you’re about thirty seconds away from losing your shit.

” I stand up gingerly and nod toward the door.

“It’s time to get moving if you don’t want to miss anything.

By the time we get there, they will have them warmed up and we won’t have to wait long for answers. ”

The moment Kirill’s shoulders slump, I know I have him right where I want him.

Do I like manipulating the man? Not really, but I also am woman enough to admit it gives me a little sick thrill.

He’s not the kind of man to be led around by his nose, but he’d follow me into hell just to make sure I’m not too cold.

When he doesn’t move fast enough, I level him with a look and warn, “Don’t continue to underestimate me and what I can handle. If I didn’t feel up to going, I wouldn’t have suggested it and would have simply gone up to bed while allowing you to stew in your indecision alone.”

“Fuck,” he groans as he looks up at the ceiling like he’s praying for patience, “you’re a fucking pain in my ass, Solnishko .”

“You say the nicest things,” I sass him.

I slap his ass as I walk past him toward the front door. When he jolts, I giggle softly, making sure not to aggravate my ribs too much. They do hurt, but I’m not going to show weakness to anyone. Not tonight when there is still more work to do.

The ride to the warehouse is quiet. I realize just how much my men are letting me in, how much trust they are putting in me. They'll never know how much I appreciate it.

While they might forget from time to time, they don't look at me like some weak woman. They treat me like an equal. I'm just an equal they feel the need to protect. I can respect that.

An ominous feeling settles in my gut the moment we arrive, and Kirill leads me into the cavernous interior. We don't stop until we head through a door, down a set of stairs, and into a large room. Hidden away from prying eyes, it is exactly what I expected.

It's clear everything in the room is designed to be thoroughly cleaned. The lingering scent of bleach makes my stomach flip. Keeping my face set in a neutral mask isn't easy, but I manage.

The men who were working security for the event, the same ones who were supposed to maintain the perimeter, are strapped to chairs set-up in a semicircle around a drain which could only have one purpose. When I step into the room with Kirill at my back, every set of eyes lock onto me.

Huck and Baker look surprised to see me. Maxim along with Wolfe and his guys all have smirks on their faces like they were expecting us. They probably were.

Baker's the first one to move toward me. The moment he's close enough, his hands shoot out and wrap around my waist. His touch is gentle and full of caring as he tugs me closer to him and wraps me up in his strong arms.

"What are you doing here?" The question is murmured against my hair as he buries his nose there and takes a deep breath.



“Kirill needs answers,” I whisper back. “He was pacing like a fucking lion. It had me on edge so I convinced him to bring me down here so we could both get the answers we need.”

Baker sighs, but I’m not sure if it’s because he’s annoyed or understands. I’ll take either at this point. It’s not like it changes anything.

“We were just getting started,” he tells me.

I nod against his chest and then take a step back. When he looks down at me, I arch an eyebrow in question. The breath he blows out tells me he knows exactly what I’m asking and is not happy about it.

“Fine,” he grits out through his teeth.

With a kiss to the underside of his jaw, I step around him. As I look over the men in front of me, I slowly assess them. My men are capable, but I’ve spent a long fucking time studying men with overinflated egos and have learned a few things because of my unique education.

“Sorry to interrupt the party,” I don’t take my eyes off the men in front of me as I speak and it’s unclear whether I’m speaking to them, my men, or Wolfe and his guys.

Not like it really matters. “I’m sure the gentlemen behind me have threatened you all in no uncertain terms. The way I see it, this could go a few different ways.

One, a lot of energy can be used to extract the information, the anticipation and fear building as you watch each other being tortured.

Two, everyone dies because you think you’re so big and bad, and you don’t give up the information needed.

Now, my personal favorite is option three.

This is where integrity and courage come into play,” I look each man in their eyes, “because the man responsible for the hole in the security speaks up now and dies with some fucking honor.”

I watch each man closely. Almost everyone’s eyes are moving, trying to take in each other on either side of them and around the room. Everyone’s eyes except for one.

I almost do jazz hands and shout ‘ta-da’ as I take slow steps toward the man in question. If the sweat on his brow is any indication, and it is, he’s nervous. Good; he should be.

“Why are you the only one not looking around like you’re trying to piece together the puzzle without the box in front of you?” I infuse as much innocence as possible into the question. I even bat my eyelashes at him for a little extra zing.

Maxim barks out a laugh, the first time he’s sounded like himself since he found me in the bathroom earlier. I’ve been worried about my cocky man who doesn’t seem like he takes much seriously, even though it’s all a front. The man loves deeply. He loves me.

The sweat on his brow starts multiplying. It isn’t just nerves either. The eyes of every man in the room, including the ones still being held captive for questioning, burn into him.

His eyes start darting now. He looks everywhere but at me or the men surrounding me. One place he never looks is toward my four men who have taken up residence at my back. I can feel the heat from their bodies and it’s delicious.

If only my ribs weren’t fucking throbbing right along with my jaw.

Speaking of my jaw. I very slowly and deliberately pull my hair over my shoulder to ensure that my bruised jaw is very much on display. The anger coming from my men, which was already almost overflowing the boiling pot of their emotions, is now creating a sauna-esque atmosphere in the room.

“Who got to you?”

It’s a simple question that I throw out into the room, but it has the tension mounting. Honestly, it’s almost difficult to breathe, but I push through. Because my men need answers and they aren’t the only ones. I also need to know how the fuck this happened.

If I hadn’t been preparing my whole life to enact some sort of exit strategy from my life, when I came up with one, I would not have been able to defend myself from Mikhail.

The thought of him being able to do actual harm to me and for my men to find me—or not to find me if I had been taken—has my vision going a little red with fury.

“I’ve been seeing a woman for about a month now,” the man’s words come out quickly like his mouth is tripping over itself to get the information out.

“A few nights ago, after we had, um,” he looks at me with a sheepish expression on his face and I just roll my eyes and huff because I can guess what they were doing, “anyway, she told me about a friend who had been snubbed by not getting an invitation to the gala. I didn’t know who it was.

” He sighs, resignation in his tone, “I didn’t ask. ”

It’s like the fucking Niagara Falls of truth in here right now.

“Well, that was stupid,” I snark. The pain is making me a little more feral than I would like.

Large hands on my hips pull me back against a strong chest. When I look over my shoulder, I’m not surprised to see Kirill with his hands on me. I’d know his touch anywhere.

He takes most of my weight and I almost moan with how good it feels to not have to stand upright at the moment.

“You didn’t fucking ask?” Kirill’s words are cold, and I have a feeling he’s holding me against him for me as much as for him.

Dead man can’t word vomit all their secrets and all that.

“We don’t pay you enough?” Maxim asks the question, some of the devil may care man I know peeking through his tone.

The man in the hot seat swallows hard. “It’s not like that. I’m paid well,” he insists.

“Were,” I correct flippantly. When he looks at me, for the first time, I can see the question in his eyes. “You were paid well. Corpses don’t get a paycheck,” I singsong and he pales. I nod slowly and sass, “Yeah, now you’re starting to get it.”

“Who is this woman you’re seeing?” Huck comes up with the right question.

I was going to ask it, but I figured this doofus was all about giving the details about what went down, and we’d circle back to it eventually. Apparently, Huck is not able to be patient tonight. It’s understandable, all things considered.

The man bows his head, his answer whispered, “Betty.”

The laughter which comes out of me is so sharp and sudden that I let out a groan of pain and wrap my arms around my waist. Kirill's hands tighten around my hips, but I'm not sure if it's to help hold me up or to stop himself from ripping the man's arms off and beating him to death with them before he goes to hunt down Betty.

"Well," I muse once I finally get my shit under control, "that answers the other question of how Adam knew where I was going to be the night of the meeting." I shake my head. "What a shame."

One of the other men in the chairs speaks up, "I would like the chance to pay penance for not realizing I had a rat on my team by balancing the scales." When I look at him, his eyes are focused on the traitor in the room.

"It would be an honor to kill him in Mrs. Volkov's name.

His stupidity and his inability to keep his dick in his pants put her in danger and caused her injury. He deserves nothing less."

My heart warms and I clasp my hands together over my heart. "Aww, that is the sweetest," I gush.

I swear the man's lip twitch slightly, but he doesn't smile. Nor does he look away from the soon to be dead man.

Kirill leans forward, his teeth nipping at my earlobe before he warns, "Careful Solnishko ."

With a sigh, I mumble, "Spoilsport."

His chest doesn't rumble with laughter, but I can feel the vibrations against my back. It's good enough for me.

My men exchange looks with Wolfe, Dominic, and Hendrix before herding me out of the room. Things will be taken care of in the room of death. The men who were innocent shall be given a chance to prove themselves, including the leader, and the dirty pussy fucking turncoat will die.

All in a day's work, if you ask me.

As we walk out of the warehouse, I can't help but ask the next question, "Now, what do we do about Betty?"

The gleam in the eyes of my men, filled with malice and probably too much excitement, is all the answer I need. I have a feeling I'm going to enjoy this next part.

MAXIM

Sitting back to watch how this meeting plays out is not easy. All the self-loathing I've been sitting on for the few days since the gala has transformed. It's become a white-hot fervor that won't be extinguished.

I'm tired of this shit. Of Mikhail popping up and making waves. Of people operating in the shadows and thinking they're smarter than us. Of our woman being in danger.

There's no way I'm going to tolerate this shit any longer.

Whatever has been coming, marked by the feeling in my gut, is almost upon us. It used to feel like it was on the horizon, but something has shifted. Something is going to break, and I'll make damn sure it's not my family.

I'm lounging back in one of the couches in Kirill's office. Waiting. I fucking hate waiting.

"She's on her way," Kirill's voice breaks me out of my thoughts. I didn't even notice him calling her.

Fuck. Am I losing my edge?

I guess it's a fair trade for having Oaklynn in my life.

The door to Kirill's office opens so fast that it makes me wonder if she was just waiting to be called into the room. Swallowing down the resentment and the hatred I

have for this woman isn't easy.

Remembering the look of surprise on her face when we got off the elevator not long ago, has my hands clenching into fists. This day is all about surprises, I suppose.

"Mr. Volkov," Betty's voice is sweet, too fucking sweet, as she tentatively approaches Kirill's desk. When she looks around to find the rest of us sitting around the room, her eyes widen slightly, but she covers it quickly. "You wanted to see me?"

It's not easy to stop myself from scoffing at her little innocent act. She's so far from innocent that it's ridiculous.

"Please sit," Kirill offers and motions toward one of the chairs facing the desk.

Betty perches on the chair like she's prepared to run at any moment. Good. She should be wary even if she has no idea what is about to happen.

"Our wife," he looks away from her like he needs a moment and clears his throat, "was severely injured on a night when she should have shined. We're only here to get a few things dealt with before we head back to her."

Kirill might look away from her, but I don't. The glee and look of victory on her face is clear to see. She's unable to mask it fast enough. Or maybe she's just too stupid to do so.

"I'm sorry to hear that," Betty tries to sound contrite, but it falls flat.

I clench my jaw to stop myself from barking something very colorful at her. The fucking audacity of this woman. It shouldn't surprise me, but it still does.

"I'm sure you are," Kirill's voice is condescending as fuck.



“Was there something with your schedule I could help you with? Or anything you need help with?” She bats her fucking eyelashes like she’s a doll with a lazy eye.

It would be comical if I weren’t so close to losing my shit. A quick glance at Huck and Baker tells me I’m not the only one struggling. We need to get this show on the damn road or the answers Betty has to our questions won’t matter.

Normally, I wouldn’t be on board with hurting a woman, but I’m finding my morality is more pliant than I thought, at least when Oaklynn is in danger. When the threat is to her, all lines disappear.

“It’s come to my attention that you have been in a relationship with someone on our security team,” Kirill launches right into it without warning.

Betty pales slightly and swallows hard as she starts to shake her head. “I don’t know what you’re talking about, Mr. Volkov.”

When the door to the office opens, everyone turns toward it to find our wife breeze in without a care in the fucking world. Seeing her always takes my breath away and today is no different. She’s dressed to fucking kill in a pencil skirt and blazer which are tailored to her body like a second skin.

Betty’s eyes widen and she turns to Kirill so fast that her hair flies around her head and gets caught in the gloss on her lips. She looks ridiculous as she blows it out of her mouth, which doesn’t work.

“I thought you said she was severely injured,” Betty’s tone is full of accusation.

As if lying to her is a crime. It’s not. Fuck, even if it were, none of us would care.

“Betty, Betty, Betty,” Oaklynn’s words are condescending as she strides into the

room like a fucking queen. She doesn't look at us, her focus solely on the woman in the hot seat. "You don't get to sound all offended by the idea of my husband keeping the truth from you."

"But I thought....," she begins and then clamps her mouth closed. Her lips press into a thin line, and I have to cover my mouth to stop myself from laughing at how petulant she looks right now.

"Oh, we all know what you thought," Oaklynn assures her as she steps between Betty and Kirill's desk where she perches on the edge.

She crosses her arms across her chest which pushes her tits up and makes my cock harden behind the zipper of my pants to the point I have shift slightly to get comfortable.

Damn, this woman. A little bit of lace peeks up over her blazer and makes me wonder what she has on underneath.

"You thought Mikhail Morozov was going to take me out of the equation, with your help of course, and then my husband would be yours to console." Her face is a mask of mock sincerity before she snarls, "As if he would fall into your used up snatch."

"What?" Betty gasps and presses her hand to her chest like she's offended, but we see through her act. "Who is this Mikhail person?" She looks around wildly and looks for someone to come to her rescue. "What are you even talking about?"

Oaklynn groans and shakes her head. "You're a horrible actress," she deadpans.

With a clap, she has Betty's attention back on her. She scoots back, sitting fully on Kirill's desk before she crosses her legs. The way her skirt rides up her thighs is sexy as fuck.

“Fuck,” I mutter under my breath.

This time I have to reach down and adjust my hard cock. Our wife is a fucking vision.

Our woman’s hand slides up under her skirt and she pulls out a blade before placing it next to her hip on the desk. My mouth falls open in surprise. When she looks over at me, she winks. The fucking minx winks.

“Keep this for me, husband,” she purrs as she looks over her shoulder at Kirill, “it’s too much of a temptation to have on me at the moment.”

Betty is pale and starts to shake but no one in the room gives a fuck. When Oaklynn looks back at her, the fire in her eyes is clear to see. She’s pissed and she’s about to let her displeasure be known.

I shouldn’t rub my hands together with glee. But it’s really fucking tempting to do so.

“You’re insane,” Betty’s voice wobbles.

The smile that stretches across Oaklynn’s face is sinister as fuck and has me leaking pre-cum. She doesn’t respond to Betty’s bullshit, but she doesn’t need to.

“Now, where was I?” The question is rhetorical, but she plays it up by tapping her chin like she’s really thinking about it.

“Oh! I know.” She winks at Betty who does not look amused in the least. “We already know how you asked your little boy toy, the one you were fucking to mess with my security, to create a breach in the perimeter during the Heart and Home gala.” She glances down at her nails like she doesn’t have a care in the world; they’re not even painted.

“He was very forthcoming, it didn’t even take much persuasion,” her tone is conversational and chipper.

“I just had a friend who needed to get into the event but hadn’t been given an invitation,” Betty tries to defend herself.

Oaklynn makes a humming sound but doesn’t acknowledge the woman sitting there and trembling with fear. The silence stretches in the room, but I don’t even notice it. I’m too fucking riveted by our woman.

My eyes trail down to her legs. It would be so easy to spread her legs, sink to my knees, and rip the lace covering her pussy away. Then I’d dive between her thighs and eat her until she’s screaming my name.

When I glance at Baker, the feral look on his face makes me wonder if he’s thinking about doing the same thing I am. We could all eat her out on that desk to find out who makes her scream the loudest.

That’s the kind of competition I could get behind.

I let out a low groan as I think about fucking her from behind with her bent over the desk. Damn it.

Oaklynn fans herself with her hand as if she can feel our thoughts.

“Is it hot in here?” She inquires to no one in particular.

Then her eyes snap to Betty who she scrutinizes.

“You’re sweating.” When she leans forward, her voice drops conspiratorially, “It’s good to know it’s not just me who is hot and bothered. ”

“Look,” Betty croaks like her mouth is too dry to form words, “I’m sorry. Mikhail approached me and explained everything.”

Oaklynn arches an eyebrow in question and in challenge. Fuck, she looks like the goddess of war. All she needs is armor molded to her and a splatter or two of blood.

“I’m just dying to know what the ‘everything’ is that he explained to you,” there is a note of glee in Oaklynn’s voice which can’t possibly go unnoticed.

“He told me all about how you were engaged to him first but then decided to sink your claws into someone with more money,” Betty’s face twists in disgust—disgust toward our woman—with her words.

“He just wanted a chance to talk to you, something you were denying him even though you never returned his ring, while walking around here like some fucking princess. I told him about the meeting at that charity,” her words are flippant as if housing for those without doesn’t matter.

“But he said that wouldn’t be enough. He said he wanted to expose you and humiliate you. The gala seemed like the right place.”

Oaklynn starts laughing. And when I say laughing, it’s not some easy chuckle or little giggle. She belly laughs to the point she has to wipe tears from the corners of her eyes.

Betty stares at her with her mouth hanging open as if our woman is the one who has lost it. Poor girl. She has no idea what she stepped in.

Oaklynn struggles to get the words out as she gets her laughter under control, “You really believed Kirill and my men would abandon me if I were called a gold digger. Or,” she snaps her fingers as the amusement in her eyes dies in a heartbeat, “even

better, you could sense the evil in Mikhail and wasn't at all sad about the prospect of him killing me.

"Her eyes narrow as she starts to nod slowly.

"You were hoping for it and relishing in the idea of a man like him getting his hands on me."

"No," Betty's voice wobbles, "it wasn't like that."

"Women know," there's an ominous note in our woman's voice before she shakes her head and tsks. "It's an intuition we hone over the years for our own self-preservation. One you should have listened to instead of lapping up Mikhail's bullshit thinking it was cream."

With practiced ease, Oaklynn unbuttons her blazer and slips it off her shoulders, letting it fall to the desk to reveal the corset style top she's wearing. It's lacy and revealing, but in a way that is sophisticated and not cheap.

"Fuck, Little Bee," Huck groans.

Our woman flashes him a wide smile before looking at Betty again.

She stands up slowly before reaching back and tapping the handle of her knife with her nail, the sound loud in the quiet of the room since it's only competing with Betty's ragged breaths.

I'm not sure whether I'm disappointed when she doesn't pick it up or not.

Oaklynn stalks forward, slowly, showing herself to be a sleek and practiced predator.

“You got it all wrong, Betty,” her voice is patronizing.

“I was never engaged to that scum, and I never walked around here like a princess.” She grips the arms of Betty’s chair and leans in which forces Betty to lean back.

“I walk around here like a fucking queen,” she snarls in Betty’s face, “because that is what, and who, I am.”

Oaklynn holds up her hand, her wedding and engagement rings on display and so fucking close to Betty’s face that she needs to cross her eyes to see it.

“I’m their wife,” Oaklynn’s words are measured. “Their. Wife.”

“We would never choose you, Betty,” Kirill growls the words.

When I look at my brother, his eyes are glued on Oaklynn’s ass as she looms over Betty. Fuck, I have no doubt that it’s a great view. I’m almost tempted to get up and move so I can get in on the view too.

“Never,” I chime in right along with Huck and Baker.

Betty tries to turn her head to look around the room, but Oaklynn grips her chin and holds her steady. “They are mine,” our woman’s words are menacing and final. “You fucked up and now I’m going to tell you what is going to happen.”

Betty swallows hard and tries to nod, but Oaklynn’s grip on her chin tightens. “O-o-okay,” she stutters out.

“You are going to pack up your shit and you are going to leave. Not just Volkov Enterprises. Not just Seattle. Not just the state. Hell, not even this seaboard. You are going to run as far and as fast as you can.”

Even though Oaklynn could shove Betty back, she doesn't. She releases the scared woman slowly and then stands up to her full height. When our woman crosses her arms this time, I can't hide my groan of approval.

"Never come back here, Betty," the warning in Oaklynn's tone is easy to hear.

"Or the next time I see you I won't just be tempted to use my knife; I will use it.

" Her lips stretch into a smile that shows all of her teeth.

"I'll use it to gut you before I skip rope with your intestines.

" Her eyes flick down over Betty's body as she muses, "Maybe make a purse out of your skin."

Betty is trembling in her seat to the point I'm almost afraid she'll fall out of it. When Oaklynn steps back, our receptionist stands up and bolts toward the door.

Just as she grips the handle, Oaklynn calls out, "Betty." The woman turns slowly, fear written all over her face. "Just to ensure everything is crystal clear—you're fired."

Make that former receptionist.

Oaklynn meets the heated gazes of each of us before turning toward Kirill. She points at him, her voice full of sass, "I'm hiring your next receptionist."



KIRILL

Oaklynn declaring that she's hiring the next receptionist, which I'm more than fine with, has me holding up my hands in surrender. Fuck, she's sexy. Like an angel swooping in from the heavens in full battle regalia to turn the tides and demand surrender.

From our enemies.

From us.

"You can do whatever you want, Solnishko ," I tell her honestly, "you're the queen."

The smile of triumph on our woman's face is one for the record books. With Betty handled, we're one minor problem down. But that doesn't mean we're done. Far from it.

Now we need to deal with Mikhail. His time is coming though; I can feel it.

I stand up slowly, my eyes fixed on our woman. My steps are measured as I stalk toward her. Even with the show she just put on and how badass she was, her cheeks pink and her beautiful brown eyes widen as I move closer to her.

"Have I told you today how much I love you, Oaklynn?" My voice is a low rumble which has her shivering.

"You just like my outfit," she teases as she motions toward her own body.

“Can’t say it hurts,” I murmur. “You look hot as fuck today, but it’s not why I love you.”

“Oh?” She challenges me with a tilt of her head and an arch of her eyebrow.

“You’re so damn strong and fierce. Over the last few days, even though shit was raining down on us, I’ve watched you become the queen I knew you’d be from the moment I saw you in White Stone.

” When I’m close enough, I cup her face in my hands.

“The way you claimed us with the same possessive need that we have for you is something I’ll never forget. ”

I can feel the guys move closer to us, being pulled toward her because denying the pull is painful. Physically. Mentally. It’s just impossible.

“How are you feeling?”

She blinks up at me with my question and her eyebrows pull together slightly. “I’m,” she pauses for a moment as if really assessing her body and how she’s feeling, “good.”

When I smile at her, I know it must look sinful because of the way her eyes dilate and her lips part as she starts to pant. The need pumping through me is reflected back to me and written all over her face.

My hand reaches down to allow my fingers to glide along the hem of her skirt. With my free hand, I run a fingertip along the lacy edge of the top she’s wearing.

“Who let you out of the house in this outfit?” Maxim asks as he steps closer to her

side, an edge to his voice along with a lot of fucking desire.

She looks at him from underneath her lashes. “I let me.” The way she squares her shoulders pushes her tits up deliciously. “I don’t need anyone’s permission.”

Maxim chuckles, the dark sound wrapping around us. He steps closer at the same time Baker does, the two of them caging her in as Huck presses against her back.

“I just need to threaten someone to turn you on? Good to know,” she sasses.

“A lot of things turn me on.” I lean down and run my nose along her jawline before nipping at her ear.

I run the tips of my fingers up and down her exposed arms. “Pretty much all you have to do is breathe and I’m hard,” I husk.

“I’m man enough to admit the way you just claimed us, the way you stomped in here like a vengeful goddess,” I pause and hold her gaze to ensure she sees, “it makes me melt for you. Only for you.”

When my fingers come across the small and almost unnoticeable bump on her upper arm, I pause. Her implant. I hate her fucking implant.

Huck and Maxim give me a little room as I move our woman closer to my desk. My movements are fluid as I grab her knife, the one she left on her desk, and slice the skin right underneath her implant.

Oaklynn’s eyes go wide as she gasps. She looks down at her arm, her mouth opening and closing without saying anything. I don’t look away as I put pressure around her implant and remove it.

“I hated that fucking implant,” I admit with a growl.

“You can’t just remove my implant, Kirill,” she snaps.

I drop it on the ground and step on it; the action satisfying something primal and damn close to feral inside of me. Closing the distance between us, I don’t give a single fuck if some of her blood is on my fingers as I grip her chin and hold her in place. “I can and I fucking did, Solnishko .”

When she swallows hard, I watch the motion intently. Her eyes search mine and I’m not sure what she’s looking for. Whatever she sees—whether it’s determination, love, or just fucking need—has her shoulders relaxing.

“Now we’re all going to take turns filling your pretty cunt with our cum,” I grit out through my teeth.

My cock is weeping pre-cum as I turn our woman and push her down until her tits are pressed to my desk.

I lean over her as I pull her skirt up her legs and bunch it up over her hips.

The site of her lace panties already darker with her arousal has me clenching my teeth even harder to try to keep hold of my control.

It feels like I’m losing the battle.

I rip her panties from her body, the sound of it not nearly satisfying enough. My hands shake as I undo my belt and pants. The moment my cock is free, I don’t wait, I don’t give her a moment to brace.

With a hard thrust, I bury myself balls deep inside of our wife’s sweet pussy. She’s so

warm and wet, telling me exactly what her little performance did to her. She loved it. She relished it.

Our avenging angel. With blood-soaked wings which aren't safe for flight but are perfect for battle.

My movements are fast and hard because we both need to chase the high that we only find in each other. It's a calling that can't be ignored. We are hers. She is ours.

"We're going to breed you, Oaklynn, until you're round with our child. Until you're tied to us in every way. You'll never escape," I hiss the words against the shell of her ear as I drive into her over and over again.

It's too much and not fucking enough.

Her fingers curl around the edge of the desk and she uses it as leverage to push back against me. She meets every thrust, urging me on and welcoming me home.

The feeling of being inside of her, of our pleasure climbing, is pure euphoria. I crave it like a drug. Addicting. She's pure fucking need, an addiction I never want to shake.

"Kirill," she whines.

It gives me pause because I never want to truly hurt her and it was only days ago that Mikhail cornered her, but I don't hear pain in her panting breaths or her little moans. Only pleasure. Only bliss. Only begging desire.

I fuck her harder and faster, standing to my full height and gripping her hips so hard that my knuckles turn white. The sound of our slapping flesh fills my office, a melody which burrows deep under my skin to never be forgotten.

This is the moment. We can't come back from it, but we don't want to.

She's ours.

A drop of blood hits my desk and I can't look away.

I release one of her hips to slide a finger up her arm collecting a trickle of her blood.

She looks over her shoulder at me, her eyes wide and pleading.

When I suck that finger into my mouth, tasting her, the groan that comes out of me is all beast without a hint of humanity.

My hips move faster and punch forward harder.

After I collect the last of the blood on her arm, I reach underneath her to play with her clit. Her eyes widen, the implication clear. We are the same. We are joined.

Now.

Forever.

In love.

In blood.

In life.

When I pinch her clit, she shatters underneath me. The walls of her pussy ripple around me and pull me under with her. Every jet of cum filling her is a promise which forces our future to echo around us.

Emptying myself inside of her as her body begs for me brings a smile to my face. It might not be today, I know that, but it will be soon. She already fills our lives with light and laughter. Now she'll fill our lives with a kind of innocent hope only children can bring.

When I cover her back with mine and grip her chin to hold her in place, I smear her arousal and blood across her skin. I kiss her with everything in me and hope she can feel the depth of my love, of my obsession and possession.

“I love you, Oaklynn,” I murmur against her lips.

Her lips curl into a smile against my own and her whisper feels like so much more, “I love you, Kirill.”

Pulling out of her, my eyes take in the way my cum starts to slip from her pink puffy pussy. It's a beautiful sight.

And this is only the beginning.

I step aside and Huck is there waiting. His fingers run through her hair, soothing her, preparing her. Their eyes meet and he slips inside of her gently.

The only thing for me to do is sit and watch our woman as the memory burns itself into my soul. The foundation is already built, strong and without cracks. Today we build on it and never stop, never tire.

Even though our woman is bent over my desk, her ass up and inviting, Huck's movements are methodical. He doesn't lose control. He doesn't fuck her until she can't breathe. It's as if he holds her hand and leads her slowly to the edge where they teeter together.

“More,” she begs as she pushes back against him, trying to taunt him into moving faster and fucking her harder.

He doesn’t waver and remains steady.

But when they fall over the edge? It’s explosive just the same. I watch the pleasure wash over her face, unable to look away.

He pushes himself so deep inside of her walls as his head tips back and he growls through his release. Knowing the way her walls are squeezing him, milking him, I can almost feel them on my own length.

The kiss they share is sweet, full of promises like the eye of a storm.

Huck is slow to pull away from her and we all take a moment to see the evidence of the claim, half done and half wanting. Close. But not quite.

Baker steps up next and I glance at my brother to find shame and guilt written all over his face. He hasn’t forgiven himself. I’m not sure he ever truly will.

But it’s not my problem to solve. Not this time.

Baker’s large hands roam over our woman’s body as if he’s checking to make sure she’s whole. His voice is low and strained, like holding himself costs him something that can’t be named. “How are you feeling?”

“I’m good, but incomplete,” Oaklynn rasps.

When Baker claims her, there’s a playfulness in the air only he can give her. He nips at her exposed skin to make her squirm. He pulls out glimmers of laughter in her moans.



He builds her up to leave her hanging, again and again. Until she pleads. Her begging words wrapped up in sweetness and light, have him giving in.

As he finally pushes them over the edge together, there is hope in his eyes as he looks down at her and the smile on her face is full of forever. She's the most beautiful woman I've ever seen and the knowledge of how lucky I am, how lucky we are, settles around me.

After Baker gently pulls free of her body, Oaklynn's eyes search for Maxim. He's on the fringes like he's scared. Her eyebrows pull together, but she doesn't move.

"Maxim," she calls to him, "you don't want to fill me with your cum? You don't want to help me grow our family?"

"I would love nothing more," his words are soft, but filled with sorrow. "I just don't deserve to."

"Let it go," she demands, her brown eyes alight and pleading. "You're not to blame and I'm good. I'm healing. There is no resentment in my heart for you, only love."

His steps are tentative as if he doesn't want to give in but has no other choice. It's the pull. The same one that tugs at my own soul.

Undeniable.

Inevitable.

He never stood a chance. Just like the rest of us.

Maxim's claiming of our wife is different. It's fraught with fear at first, but when that falls away it's all teeth and claws.

The primal way Maxim fucks our woman is brutal, but not without love. It is as if he exorcises his demons, anointing himself with her love and her arousal.

But something clicks into place when he grunts out his release as Oaklynn trembles on my desk.

What comes of today doesn't matter beyond the fact that something has shifted. We are no longer thinking of Mikhail as a specter. His demise is just around the corner, and we can feel it.

And when it happens, we'll already be looking toward all the tomorrows our tangled souls will enjoy.

BAKER

Fuck this. Having to wait for the recon report from Hendrix is making my skin crawl. We should be busting down the door and taking Mikhail right now. We should be putting an end to this whole fucking circus.

It's so damn close that I can almost taste it. But we haven't finished it yet.

The last few hours have been a blur of activity which started when Huck burst into Kirill's office like his ass was on fire. Words started tumbling out of his mouth so damn fast that none of us could understand him.

Kirill had to grab him by the shoulders and give a little shake while shouting, "Slow the fuck down, Huck. What are you talking about?"

The wildness in Huck's eyes cleared a little, but the feeling of a close victory lingered. He took a few deep breaths, but then the words still tumbled from him.

"I found Mikhail. He's in a house, isolated on the edge of the city.

" Before any of us could ask how he got this information he pushed on.

"I flagged some old Morozov accounts, even a few I couldn't explicitly tie to Anatoly's old operation.

It wasn't like I expected to get a hit because Mikhail needed the shadows, but I still flagged them.

There was activity on one of the accounts about an hour ago and I tracked it to a quick as fuck sale on a property that's been abandoned for about six months. ”

I wasn't surprised about the quick transaction. Money talks and it's just that simple.

My heart started to pound in my chest with the possibility of no longer being on the defense. Everything in me was pushing to take the fight to him and make sure everything burned to the ground around him.

But it wasn't that easy. We couldn't run off without a plan.

It didn't take long for Hendrix, Dominic and my brother, Wolfe, to arrive. Once they did, it was about digging deeper and finding out everything we could about the property before we started to put together a plan.

Dominic headed out to do some recon, but we weren't far behind him. If he was able to confirm Mikhail was there, we weren't going to lose the chance to take him down.

Right before we left the office, ready to bring all of Mikhail's sins to bear, Maxim voiced the one thing that was on all of our minds.

“This could be a trap.”

We shared glances and nodded. He sure as fuck wasn't wrong. Even now, after Mikhail being spotted when he opened his front door for a whore he hired, we know it could be a trap.

It doesn't matter if it is. We can spring a trap and not get caught.

The fact that he only has four guards around the house leads me to believe he's just gotten sloppy.

As his lofty plans have started to unravel, he's finding he doesn't have the reach or the leverage to gain the power he set out to steal.

He was never a man of vision, only a foot soldier being used with a name which tricked him into believing he was more.

Dominic has set himself up somewhere and we haven't seen him since we arrived. Now, we're expecting Hendrix back any moment after doing one more check around the house.

It sure as fuck is isolated out here. There's no way the closest neighbors will hear a damn thing, but we're still going in as stealthily as possible.

My blood is pumping and I'm practically dancing on the balls of my feet. I need this. And I'm not the only one.

Kirill's jaw is clenched so tight that I'm on the verge of being concerned for the man. His eyes hold the same feral gleam of anticipation I know I have in my own.

Maxim claps me on the shoulder while smiling in a way only another predator can appreciate. "You good?"

"Yeah," I grunt, "I just want to get this over with. You know Oaklynn is probably pacing the floor and pissed that she's not here with us right now."

"Fuck that," Maxim bites out. "There's no fucking way she could be here with us." He shakes his head. "We've given her the room she needs to soar—which was hot as fuck—but this? This is when we step up and protect what is ours."

"I know." I grumble, "I only hope she sees it that way."

Maxim grimaces before shrugging his shoulders. Maybe she won't understand because we've allowed her to be so involved, but there was no fucking way we were going to allow her to be close to Mikhail again. Fuck no.

"This has been brewing long before she became ours," Kirill's voice is serious.

"She'll understand," Huck chimes in.

Before anything else can be said, Hendrix is in front of us. "He's in the house," he confirms. "Plan is a go."

We pair off without another word because we don't need to.

Kirill and I move to approach the house on the backside along with Hendrix.

There's no way I wasn't going to be with Kirill; it's my job to protect him even if he doesn't need it.

Oaklynn would never forgive me if something were to happen to him.

I can't forget that he is the focus of Mikhail's need for vengeance.

Huck, Maxim, and Wolfe go in the other direction so they can approach from the front. There are no sounds from their footsteps as we break off. My brother won't let anything happen to the men who are my family. I trust him to have their backs and to see this through.

I bet Wolfe is a little afraid Oaklynn would have his balls if anything were to happen to them.

Two of the guards are talking, their heads close together, as if danger isn't lurking in

the shadows. The way they're far too lax tells me that my gut was right—this is just Mikhail being lazy and thinking he was untouchable. They aren't even facing where a threat could be coming from.

With their backs to us, I share a look with Hendrix who nods. The movement is silent when I pull my knife free from the sheath and crouch as we get closer. I can almost feel how pissed off Kirill is that there are only two guys for the three of us to take down.

But his time to fucking shine is coming.

My movements are fluid death as I grip the guard I've targeted by the back of the head, wrench it back, and slice his throat. Blood sprays the back of the house, the kill silent.

An owl hoots in the distance like their deaths are being marked.

I lower the guard to the ground and Hendrix does the same next to us before we silently advance up the back porch steps. My eyes turn toward Hendrix who holds up five fingers. The countdown is steady and on one, he kicks in the back door.

The sound is echoed by the front door being breached in exactly the same way. In the distance a woman screams followed by a man's voice. It's too muffled and low to discern what he's saying, but we don't need to know.

We quickly clear the rooms as we head toward the front of the house. I pause when looking into the laundry room and see Aamon's body in a heap on the floor. He's covered in blood, but the lack of anything surrounding him tells me he was just dumped in this room to be out of the way.

I meet Maxim's eyes as we converge near the stairs. His eyes are devoid of any

emotion. They're an endless black filled with rage.

When I look over his shoulder, I see Betty's prone figure laid out in the living room. She's naked and her lifeless eyes are staring, unseeing, at the ceiling. The proof of the beating she took mars her skin; even at a distance, I can see the hand shaped marks around her neck.

The only thing I can do is shake my head and look away. She meant nothing to me. She betrayed our woman and us.

Still, she had a chance to leave Seattle. Instead, she probably ran right to Mikhail thinking he was going to back her.

Stupid woman.

I shake my head as the sound of shuffling upstairs pulls our attention, the thought of Betty overshadowed by the promise of grabbing Mikhail.

Hendrix takes point, and we fall in line behind him easily. Since it's no secret that someone has breached the house, we move quickly but not silently.

Just as we crest the stairs, another scream comes from a bedroom. We fan out, clearing the other rooms first before finding ourselves in front of the only one left.

Wolfe kicks in the door and we pour into the room, taking in the scene and fanning out with our guns raised and locked onto the target. Mikhail's mouth is stretched into a sinister grin as he holds the prostitute in front of him like a shield.

"Fucking coward," Huck mutters under his breath.

I look the woman over to see if she's injured, but the only thing I can see are some



track marks in her arms. The way her eyes are glazed over and barely seeing tells me that she's riding some kind of high, even if it's not a good trip.

"He's going to kill me," she rasps, but there's no fear in her words.

She might have screamed, but I'm sure it's not the first time one of her...clients hurt her. She has a look about her, one that says she's seen too much and felt too little. Pity is all I feel for her. It's not an emotion I'm all that familiar with, but she's earned it.

Mikhail's hand shakes a little as he holds a gun to the woman's head. The problem is that his leverage is shitty. It's not my hands this woman's blood will be on if he pulls the trigger. His soul is the only one that would be tarnished.

"You fucked up, Mikhail," Kirill's voice is cold and taunting.

"You shouldn't have come," Mikhail tries to sound bigger and tougher than he is.

Kirill snorts, "Why? Because you have four guards?" Mikhail ducks a little bit behind the woman, like it'll save him. "They're already dead. You're next," he promises.

Mikhail roars, "Fuck you, Volkov."

He shifts slightly and I see the moment. Time slows down. As he goes to pull the trigger, I'm ready.

Two shots ring out at the same time.

One bullet rips through the prostitute's head. His.

One bullet hits Mikhail's shoulder and has him stumbling back and dropping his gun.

Mine.

Hendrix and Wolfe are there then, subduing Mikhail for the trip he's about to take. Even though there might not be neighbors close by, the questions we have to ask are going to take some time. He's earned a trip to the warehouse and our special room.

As I look down at Mikhail's bleeding shoulder, it doesn't feel quite real.

He's been lurking and waiting, biding his time while stewing on thoughts of revenge. But now he's here at my feet with a bullet in his shoulder and zero hope to see the sunlight again.

"I'll fucking kill you," Mikhail's eyes are wild as he looks at the four of us standing over him.

All I can do is shake my head. We are kings. He was never more than a pawn.

KIRILL

When I walk into the basement room to find both of our guests—and yes, I’m using the term very loosely—waiting for me, I can’t help but grin. It’s not a nice smile and Adam, who starts wiggling in his chair, knows it. Mikhail doesn’t seem bothered.

Not yet at least.

I clap my hands together, the sound reverberating around the room as the guys file in behind me and pick spots where they can see the action. As they settle in, I don’t look away from Mikhail. He’s not rattled by it, though.

Which is just fine by me.

Those who believe they are unbreakable shatter in the most satisfying way.

My eyes drift over to Adam. The last time I visited him he had started to believe his cousin would come for him and liberate him from my clutches. I knew the truth. It was never going to happen, but desperation can lead to delusion.

“How has it been trying to run your organization without Adam as your right-hand man, Mikhail?” I don’t take my eyes off Adam as I ask the question.

Always so fucking full of himself, Mikhail laughs. He actually throws his head back and sounds like a movie villain who thinks he’s immortal. But this isn’t a movie. And Mikhail is just a man.

A man covered in blood with a weeping wound and a reckoning coming.

“My right-hand man?” Mikhail gasps the question incredulously, the amusement clear in his voice. “He’s nothing to me. Expendable,” he spits the word.

Adam pales and I can’t help but smirk. Triumph rushes through my veins as I prowl closer to our guests.

“I told you,” I murmur the words to Adam.

His head drops to his chest as if the weight of the world is bearing down on him.

Maybe it is. “I know,” he whispers. When he looks back up at me his words are broken, “I’ve already told you everything I know.

He was never worth my loyalty; I realize it now.

I thought because he’s family that it would be different.

I’m sorry for the role I played in his game. ”

I nod and pull my gun. The sound of the shot is jarring, but I don’t look away as the bullet embeds itself in the middle of his forehead. His body goes limp, the ground behind him painted with the last second of his life.

It will find its way down the drain. Just like every other life that has been taken here.

When I look over at Mikhail, he has a look of glee on his face. I wasn’t expecting anything else, but that doesn’t mean it’s not a shame. He became twisted up into something unrecognizable a long time ago.

Even if I hadn't killed his father, he would have ended up as this man. It might not have been my basement he ended up in, but it would have been another. I have no doubt about it.

I'm glad that I stood between him and this city before he could hold real power in his hands. I might not be a good man, but I'm better than the monster in front of me.

"Thank you," Mikhail's tone is conversational, "you just did me a big favor."

I make a humming sound as I tuck my gun away and pull out a knife. Part of me wishes it was Oaklynn's knife, there would have been a certain poetry to it, but it is what it is right now.

"You have been a thorn in my side for far too long, Mikhail," my voice is cold and detached. "You're bad for business, a loose cannon that can't be trusted." I smirk at him and add, "Even your father thought so."

Anger flashes across his features and he shouts, "You don't know what the fuck you're talking about."

"Oh?" I tilt my head to the side as I study him.

"I do." I nod toward Huck and let Mikhail know, "Huck was able to get into Anatoly's emails after I killed him.

He was making plans and doing deals behind your back.

He knew you were unstable and would destroy the empire he was building.

He was making moves to take you out. His own blood," my tone is filled with fake sympathy.

“No,” Mikhail roars and starts to thrash against his restraints.

Too bad he won’t get free. Killing a man who has no hope of fighting back isn’t as much fun. But, in this case, it’s necessary.

“Yes,” I state, my face and tone neutral.

“You’re a fucking liar, Volkov,” he spits.

I challenge him, “Am I?” I shrug and take a step closer to him.

“It doesn’t matter to me whether you believe me or not.

I know the truth.” I look into his eyes so he can see that I’m not telling him lies.

He doesn’t relax though, and he doesn’t admit defeat; I wasn’t really expecting him to.

“Now, you’re going to tell me about your suppliers, your dealers, and any other deals you can tell me about. ”

Mikhail starts to laugh again, the sound unhinged and creepy as fuck. I don’t acknowledge his little breakdown and step closer.

When I slice up his arm, he doesn’t scream. He doesn’t even flinch. He just keeps laughing.

“Fucking psycho,” Maxim huffs from somewhere behind me.

I don’t ask another question. Not yet.

Every slice I give his body is long and smooth. The blood covering him multiplies, none of the new blood coming from the bullet wound. He's littered with cuts, but I don't stop.

I can't.

He wanted my head which would be bad enough, but then he wanted Oaklynn's. That is what I can't accept. Ever.

When I finally step away, his chest is heaving, and his eyes are filled with pain. He tries to mask it, but it's too much for him to control at this point. Too much of his skin is covered in cuts.

Maxim steps up next to me, a blowtorch in his hands and an evil glint in his eyes.

I still don't ask a question. My last demand still hangs in the air along with the stench of his blood and his flagging determination. He'll break.

They all do.

Somewhere underneath his rage and his need for retribution is his humanity.

It might be small, but it is there. Even the darkest of us have an ember of it.

No one has looked for Mikhail's spark for a long time, no one cared to find it.

I don't either, not really, but I'm more than willing to take advantage of it.

Maxim starts with Mikhail's feet and the moment he touches the flame to his skin, the smell of burning flesh starts to compete with the copper of his blood. It's a heady combination, a harbinger of death.

But this death will not be visiting soon.

For the first time, he cracks. His screams make me smile as I stand back and allow Mikhail to exorcise some of his own demons. He's been beating himself up since the night of the gala.

I understand why, but he needs to let it go. That guilt cannot continue to live with us. It will taint our future and our family.

Oaklynn could be pregnant right now. We won't know for a little while, but it's possible.

The hope for our future must be stronger than the guilt and regret. There is no other way and nothing less is acceptable.

When Mikhail's scream cut off, the blowtorch on his thighs now, it's only because the man passes out. Maxim chuckles under his breath as he steps back.

Baker is there to toss a bucket of salt water on Mikhail who comes too and begins screaming again. Good.

Mikhail looks around the room as if an angel of mercy will appear. We know there is no such thing, but it doesn't stop the man from looking. Maybe what he's really looking for is the reaper to drag him to hell.

Not yet.

"You won't find freedom within death quite yet," my voice holds a promise which has his gaze snapping over to meet mine.

This time it's Huck who steps forward with pliers in his hands. He doesn't say a word



because my demand hasn't been met.

But it will be.

Huck is efficient as he peels off Mikhail's nails without flinching. Mikhail lets little whimpers leave his mouth, but he clearly resents each one of them.

"There's no shame in giving into the pain. The shame is in the man you became," I tell him, my lip curled into a snarl.

"Fuck," Mikhail pants with his eyes squeezed closed.

Huck isn't done. Far from it. Once all of Mikhail's nails are removed, he grabs a small bowl. Glee has me stepping closer. The moment Huck brings the bowl up and the liquid inside touches Mikhail's fingers, he starts jerking to try and pull them free.

It won't happen.

And I know the salt water in the bowl is burning, burrowing, and battering against his senses. There's no escape for him.

Huck uses the bowl to submerge the fingertips of one hand and then the other. On the third round of alternating between hands, Mikhail breaks.

Then the words start to tumble freely.

His tongue stumbles and stutters.

Everything is left on the floor of the basement where the shadows hide their horrors, and blood can be washed away.

He tells us the name of everyone he's recruited, who he bought drugs from, and who he sold to.

He tells me about the feelers he had out there for the trafficking operation to start again.

He doesn't stop until the truth is laid out and he has nothing left to give.

Hendrix, Wolfe, and Dominic will be tasked with ensuring every name uttered and contract brokered will be snuffed out. I know they'll do their job and do it well.

I look upon Mikhail because even with my demand met, his pain won't end.

Baker steps forward, a different knife in his hand. He slices alongside mine, parallel and crossing, not missing a single cut I gave the man and matching it with his own existence.

"Fuck," Mikhail rasps after needing to be woken up. Again. "Just end me. I've told you everything." His eyes come up and find mine, his world broken alongside his mind and his entitlement. "Please."

When I pull my gun free this time, I don't fire just one shot.

I take out his kneecaps. I fire into his gut.

He's gasping for breath, his skin becoming pale as the blood starts to drain from him with every sluggish beat of his heart.

With our eyes locked, I fire one more shot to match the one I gave his cousin.

Death was not slow for him. It was never meant to be.

Mikhail terrorized and plotted. He tried to wreak havoc on my city.

Now his blood is on my hands, but his is just another life taken. It's far from the first and I doubt it will be the last.

But at least, for now, I can close the chapter on Morozov completely. Anatoly is gone. Mikhail is gone. Their power was corrupted and overthrown.

The time has come to live our life with our tangled souls united, and love wrapped around us while enjoying a future which plays between the shadows and within the light.

*Source Creation Date: July 31, 2025, 6:29 am*

ONE YEAR LATER

OAKLYNN

For a while after Mikhail was captured, tortured, and killed, I thought I was going to drown in cum. Not literally, but I swear there was more cum in my body than any one person should have. Once the immediate threat was neutralized, my men put all of their effort into another mission.

Getting me pregnant.

It didn't take nearly as long as I thought it was going to, maybe only about six weeks, when all was said and done. Like I said, I was drowning in cum.

Even once I got pregnant, since I didn't know right away, the cum-fest lasted much longer than those six weeks.

It's not like I was complaining, not really, but sometimes a girl just needs a little space to breathe and to walk normally. I swear I looked like I was waddling everywhere I went.

But I love my overzealous men.

And I love our daughter even more.

I look down at the bundle in my arms and smile softly as Reign opens her dark eyes.

Logically, I know she can't really see me all that well since she's only a few weeks old, but I swear she's looking deep into my soul.

Maybe it's just the connection we have, one forged as I sheltered her while she grew.

Maybe it's a sign of what is to come in her life.

She's meant for remarkable things. I can feel it. There are times when I'm holding her, and it feels like fate is caressing both of us.

What I am sure about is that my men, her fathers, will protect her until their last breath and probably even beyond that. Just like they will do for me.

There is no doubt about the love our house contains. It's in every breath we take, every smile we share, and even in every dirty diaper we change. My men aren't ones to shy away from anything when it comes to our daughter.

"Your fathers are a little crazy," I whisper to Reign, and I swear she smiles in response.

I remember the day I told my husbands about the pregnancy. It was a little over four months after Mikhail was dealt with. I was so fucking nervous about the whole thing, but I'm not sure why.

They were trying to get me pregnant—evident by the amount of cum I was dealing with—but I was nervous about the idea of it becoming a reality.

I was barely able to keep the dinner Maxim had cooked down because I was so fucking nervous. I looked around the table and sighed. They were relaxed, something which was becoming more common as the days passed with Mikhail and his bullshit behind us.

When I cleared my throat, all eyes snapped to me. I thought for a moment that I saw Maxim smirk, but then it was gone, and he only looked curious.

“I’m pregnant,” I whispered the words slowly as if that could stave off the impending reaction.

It couldn’t.

When nothing happened, and I mean fucking nothing, my eyes widened and filled with tears as I looked at my men. Then I noticed the smug expressions on their faces and suspicion started to creep in.

“We know, Solnishko ,” Kirill’s voice was deep with an edge of victory.

“Wh-what? What do you mean you know?” I sputtered the questions, barely getting them past my lips.

That damn smirk was back on Maxim’s face, and I knew I hadn’t imagined it moments before. “We know your body, Oaklynn,” he informed me, almost offhandedly.

“You knew?” I asked, mostly for clarity.

“We were wondering when you were going to figure it out,” Baker let me know while grinning from ear to ear.

I wanted to be mad. Anger tried to bubble up in my chest, but it fizzled out just as quickly. With a huff, I sat back in my chair and sighed, “Dessert, then?”

Their laughter put a smile on my face. Later that night they all took the time to show me how much they love me and then spent far too long pressing their lips against my belly and talking to our baby.

The talking thing didn't stop during my entire pregnancy, warming my heart with every murmured promise and soft caress. They didn't just treat me like a queen; they treated me like a goddess.

My husband's stood strong and sure throughout the entire pregnancy while also throwing themselves into it as much as they could. I'm not sure a pregnancy or parenting book exists that wasn't purchased and read by my men.

I was constantly asked how I was doing or led somewhere to sit down. Then the orders began. About how much time I was spending at Clockwork, which has been a tremendous success. About my caffeine intake. About the food I was eating.

The only thing that saved their lives more than once was how much I love my men. Otherwise, I would have been covered in their blood without a single fuck given.

Honestly, the promise I made to myself not to kill one of them almost flew out the window the night I went into labor. They approached it like a mission, each one of them having a job they were going to see through with precision.

But they hated seeing me in pain. Kirill barked at the nurses. Maxim hounded the doctor. Huck fucking hacked into the security cameras to make sure we were safe. Baker stood like a sentry by my side.

It was adorable. And incredibly annoying.

Then that feeling melted away the moment Reign was born, and she was put on my chest, all wiggly limbs and lungs that wouldn't quit. I thought I fell for my men pretty much at first sight, but that had nothing on the first glimpse I had of our daughter.

And then I fell in love with my men over and over again as I watched them fall head over heels for our queen in the making.

Out of nowhere, the weight in my arms is lifted which surprises the hell out of me. I pull the knife I have hidden between the cushions of the glider—just for now—and press the tip against a crotch. A crotch I know.

I can't hide the grimace as I move the knife back to its hiding spot and look up to find Kirill. He's looking down at me with amusement and a sparkle in his eyes that speaks of payback later. He's cradling our daughter so damn carefully and it makes my heart flip in my chest.

When I look past him, I find Huck, Baker, and Maxim looking at me. Baker doesn't even try to hide his grin. Huck has the decency to cover his mouth as his shoulders shake with silent glee. Maxim, the troublemaker, smirks.

"At least I didn't cut him," I defend myself.

My men laugh and I watch in awe, not just at the sound, but at the way they press closer to Reign. Even though it hasn't been nearly enough time, I swear my ovaries give a little throb at the idea of letting them plant another baby in me.