



Tenure

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Category: Dark Erotica

Description: There's an exception to every rule

KIERNAN

A college professor and a student. Tale as old as time, right?

Only one problem: I'm not actually in college yet. Math is my second language; numbers and formulas just make sense to me, but my IQ never prepared me for him. Professor James McGrath.

He sets me on fire and surprises me at every turn. But this can't possibly work. Can it?

JAMES

I know I shouldn't want her. I know I can't want her. But the second Kiernan walked into my classroom determined to push every button I have, I felt my control slipping, and it's no longer a matter of if, but how. The only thing sexier than her body is her brain, and the more I get to know of both, the more I know the rule book has gone out the window.

Time to make our own.

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1

James

I'm sick of this shit.

I never wanted this. I don't like young people enough to mentor them. That's what TA's are for. I'm supposed to show up, share my expertise, and leave. The ones who are smart enough to understand it, will. The ones who aren't? Get out of my class.

New tenure rules. Office hours must be provided. Blah. Blah. Blah fucking blah. This is Applied Mathematics in Linear Algebra, not Pop Culture 101.

Most of the kids in this room will drop my class by October.

The rest will change majors by next semester.

What a waste of my fucking time.

I can see the confusion on their faces, practically smell the burning as their brain cells pop one by one.

I stare down the kid in the front row. The one who looks like he ate pussy for breakfast and mushrooms for lunch and doesn't know how he ended up in this room.

Yeah, buddy. This isn't high school calculus.

He opens his mouth to speak but I give him a look. He closes it, clearing his throat and shuffling his books into his backpack.

“The registrar’s office is in Building C. They’ll have a list of classes that are still open for late registration,” I say pleasantly.

He ducks his head, cheeks flushed, and beelines for the door.

One down.

He almost smacks into someone in the doorway, mumbling an apology that includes more words than I’d expect from a . . . I’m gonna guess lacrosse player?

Your daddy would be proud.

Then he disappears and Late Girl strolls in, plopping herself down in the back, dark hair covering her face as she pulls out her books.

“You’re late,” I say.

“This is for open drop-ins,” she says without looking up, still rummaging in her bag.

“If you’re here, you need the time. So make use of all of it, or don’t bother showing up.”

She pauses, her slender hand reaching up to tuck the curtain of hair behind her ear before looking up at me with pursed lips and narrowed eyes.

“I’m a late registrant. I came to catch up.”

Great. She hasn’t even been to the first two lectures.

“We’re on chapter five. Euclidean—”

“Vector spaces. Yeah. I know. I can read.”

I blink, a little taken aback with her tone as the rest of the students glance anxiously back and forth between the two of us.

“You did the homework?”

She scowls at me. “Linear transformations. Orthogonal matrices. Like I said, I can read. I came because I had a question, but clearly this is a waste of my fucking time.”

She slides her books back into her bag and stands up, pausing in the doorway and glancing over her shoulder, her brown eyes flashing and lip quirked up in a smirk.

My cock twitches like it’s been connected to a Dr Ho.

“I’ll do the reading on my own and spare you my attendance. The papers you get this term that are all perfect? Those will be mine.”

And then she’s gone.

Everyone gapes at her, staring dumbly at the doorway. I have to fight to keep my own jaw from falling open.

Who—in the actual fuck—was that?

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2

Kiernan

Great start, Kiernan. Well done.

I slump against the wall, temple stuck to the cool cream-coloured plaster, and gently hit my head on it a few more times.

I promised I'd stay out of trouble. I promised I'd keep my head down and my mouth shut. But one look at that silent classroom and that smug fuck's face, and I could tell he was just there to torture everybody who had made the gross misjudgment to sign up for his course.

My dad had always warned me about tenured professors. Arrogant pieces of shit, he called them. But then he'd never gotten tenure, so grain of salt and all that.

I'd spent the better part of the morning catching up on the lecture notes which—I had to admit—were wildly informative. Some of what he covered was familiar to me, but some of it was new. I'd expected to stumble a little, but the way he structured his lectures . . . It basically looked exactly like the notes I made for myself when I was breaking down problems.

I'd been so intrigued by his slides and descriptions—lyrical, almost emotional which was kind of shocking given the topic—that I'd read ahead to chapter six and then realized I was actually missing the damn tutorial slot.

What a monumental disappointment.

I had been so intrigued to meet the man behind the math, and he was something to look at, that much was for sure, but the way he practically boned his lecture material was a stark contrast with the dark-haired iceberg who looked like he jerked off to the requests for students to drop his class.

Why am I even here?

This whole thing was my guidance counselor's idea. I'd made a joke about Mathletes being more interesting than school, and he suggested I get permission to enroll in university early. I didn't think he was serious until he started showing me course catalogs and a permission letter from the Dean of Admissions.

My parents weren't thrilled. They were spending most of my senior year of high school in Paris, a rare research opportunity for my mother that they couldn't pass up, and felt bad enough about leaving me home alone for close to a year, never mind missing the start of my post-secondary education. But SJ cheerfully reminded them it was nobody's fault that I was a big nerd and starting early.

Maybe I'm not ready for this after all.

I've always had a temper, but teachers in particular have always chafed. Too many years of assholes trying to prove me wrong, trying to catch me making a mistake in front of the class or worse, set me up for one. I can smell a self-righteous teacher a mile away.

Deep breaths, Kiernan. Just calm down.

"You okay?" someone asks.

“Peachy,” I sniff, without looking to see who it is.

“McGrath is a lot.”

I open my eyes and look at the guy with the backwards ball cap and York hoodie on. Tall. Cute. Strong jaw. Looks like a hockey player and—judgy as it is—I’m surprised he’s in this class.

He grins, like he can sense my skepticism.

“Not all athletes are bad at math,” he says.

“If you say so.”

“Can I buy you a coffee? To make up for the heinous crime of being an athlete?”

I sigh, wishing SJ were here. She’d been running interference on men for me since Tony Fotula tried to tell everyone he was taking me to the Halloween dance in sixth grade.

“I’m good. But thanks.”

“I’m not going to strip you in line, you know. It’s just a coffee.”

I eye him and can practically hear SJ screaming that it’s now or never. She’d approve. But she’d approve of most things in a backwards baseball hat.

“Fuck it,” I say.

As we wander towards—I guess a coffee shop? I don’t know, I haven’t had a chance to tour the campus yet—he starts probing.

“How’s your first week going?”

“First day, actually. And I’ve had better.”

His mouth twitches. “I think he broke his teeth clenching his jaw after you left. Most of us decided it was probably a good idea to bail.”

“Yeah, well, I doubt you’re missing much.” I scowl. “Sorry, what’s your name?”

I sound tired. Already. Cool.

“Graham.”

I extend my hand. “Kiernan.”

But Graham is looking behind me and he pales a little.

“James,” says a deep voice.

Goosebumps raise on the back of my neck. Fuck.

“ May I speak with you for a moment, Kiernan?”

It’s not a question.

Graham glances back and forth between the two of us, eyebrows raised, before sticking his hands in his hoodie pocket and shrugging.

“See you in class, Kiernan?” And then he heads off down the corridor at little less than a run.

Super cool.

I turn around to find James standing inappropriately close to me, well within my personal bubble, towering over me with a twitchy glower. I fight the urge to step backwards and glare right back at him.

Dick.

“What do you want?”

He cocks his head and studies me. Like I’m a problem he needs to fix. Like something’s gone wrong in his formula, but he isn’t sure what. He just knows he’s getting the wrong answer.

“I’d like to go over your questions,” he says smoothly, his voice low.

I shrug, still vehemently fighting the urge to back up, my heartbeat accelerating and palms starting to sweat.

“I’ll email them,” I say.

He narrows his eyes at me, dark hazel and clearly irritated, reaching out to cup my elbow and gently steer me back the way I came.

“You’ll ask them now,” he says, his voice falsely pleasant.

It feels like a threat.

I swallow but yank my arm out of his grasp. He doesn’t seem to pay much attention, just continues walking back into his classroom like he fully expects me to follow him and sit at his feet like a dog.

I dump my shit in the same seat at the back of the room despite the fact that it's empty now and cross my arms.

He turns around and frowns at me, his face glacial.

“Oh good,” he says, gesturing at me. “Maturity. I was worried you didn't have any for a minute there.”

I grip the edge of my desk, hands shaking with anger.

Who—in the actual fuck—do you think you are?

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3

James

Jesus, she's mad. I don't know why I find that as satisfying as I do, but my rock-hard cock is screaming at me to keep toying with her. See how far I can push her. See what happens when she snaps.

I frown at myself, surprised. Most of the professors help themselves; it kind of comes with the territory. But I've never had any interest. Younger almost always means dumber, and nothing turns me off faster than a woman who can't spell syllabus.

She stands up and angrily picks up her things. I think she's going to leave again in a huff— good, I can kick her out of my class— but instead she storms past me and drops her shit on my desk, pulling a chair up to it with a screech, and then plops herself down in my chair.

You little fucking cunt.

She says nothing as she opens her notebook, licking her fingers before aggressively flipping the page.

My cock twitches again.

Shit.

She looks up at me, her brown eyes practically glowing red. "Chapter six," she

seethes.

I blink, surprised. She's read ahead? I find myself taking a seat in the shitty, uncomfortable chair she put out for me.

"What about it?" I ask hesitantly.

"I don't have access to the lecture notes yet. Obviously. But I was wondering—" She starts rattling off figures, spinning her notebook around and sliding it across the desk as she talks. I reach for her book and frown; she's laid out her problems more or less exactly the way I lay out mine. Made notes that—

This could be my fucking lecture.

I got stuck with this class. I don't normally teach open classes; if there aren't at least two prerequisites for the course, they don't bother asking me because the answer will be no. But Barry took an extended sabbatical, decided he liked Italy more than his wife, and they asked me to step in.

I chucked all of Barry's notes in the trash before the semester even started.

He was a good teacher, sure. But he hand-held and molycoddled, so by the time they hit my classes—upper-level classes—they weren't ready. Not really. You want to be an astronaut? A physicist? An engineer? Stop wasting everyone's time and get studying.

I'd cut out the introductory bullshit, weeks of review and tutorials, and gone straight to chapter one of a textbook I'd actually helped pen. It jumped right in, no preamble, all business. I figured the majority of the students would drop, and I'd be off the hook for teaching the damn class.

Maybe I should just get her to teach it instead.

“—the textbook is wrong.”

That snaps me out of my reverie damn quick.

“What?” I ask sharply.

She taps on her notes and slides her textbook over.

“See? This doesn’t make sense.”

I almost laugh. But then I do a double-take and pick up the textbook. I glance down at her calculations, her formula laid out in tidy print with a little red question mark in the margin, and I feel my stomach drop out through my feet.

She’s fucking right.

It’s subtle. A typo in the formula. But . . .

“I’ll take it from your expression that I’m right,” she says wryly, snatching her notes back and stuffing them in her bag. She stands and walks around the desk, looking coolly down her nose at me.

“You wrote this one, didn’t you?”

“Co-wrote,” I grit out, trying to burn a hole through the page with my eyes.

“Mm. Well. We can’t all be perfect.”

And she walks out without it, leaving me and my aching cock—possibly for the first

time in my life—feeling absolutely dumbfounded.

4

Kiernan

“I don’t want to talk about it,” I mumble to SJ.

“You can fuck right off with that nonsense! Spill. Are the guys hot? Please tell me they’re hot. What colour is the men’s hockey team dressing room?”

His face was burned into my brain, and it was starting to irritate me. The inky black hair, the stubbled jaw, the cheekbones you could use as a cheese grater . . . If he hadn’t been such a colossal asshole, I’d have gone as far as saying he was inhumanly good looking. But the guy had clearly been marinading in pompous dick for a decade or two. That sneer could make small children cry.

It almost made me cry.

Fuck, he was something. Just standing in his space was like being on one of those Gravitron rides at the fair. Felt like you were being sucked up off the ground and casually tossed against a padded wall. Guts? Missing. Survival? Not guaranteed.

“You met someone, Kier. I can tell.”

I sigh. “I got in an . . . argument with someone.”

She rolls her eyes and flops down on the bed. “You called the professor an idiot, didn’t you?”

“No!” I shout. “Well, not directly.”

“Goddamn, Kier, not even university professors are up to your standard?”

I chew my bottom lip, and she sits up, eyes narrowed.

“He’s hot, isn’t he?”

I shrug.

“Oh!” she squeals. “He’s super hot then! Okay what’s his name?”

I cross my arms, and she rolls her eyes again, snatching my class list from my desk and starts typing frantically on her phone. I know when she’s found a picture because her mouth drops open, and she stares at me.

“ This? You got in a fight with this?” She shoves her phone in my face, zoomed in tight on his faculty photo from the school site. She stares down at her phone again. “Holy shit. How many freshmen do you think he bangs a day? Five? Ten?”

I scowl. “None. Trust me, he’s not doing freshmen.”

SJ laughs. “There is literally zero percent chance that he does not have a naked freshman on his lap right now.”

“Naked woman, sure. But . . .” I pause and suck on my lip again. I’m not sure why, but I just very much got the impression that he has absolutely no patience for anyone my age. Not as students, or as. . . Girlfriends? Lovers?

My cheeks flush and SJ cackles, screenshotting his face. “For later,” she says with a wink.

The rest of the week goes by like normal. High school classes, work after school, dinner at SJ's as much as I can. Home feels empty without my parents even though they call every day. I sleep at SJ's a lot. Mom wanted me to transfer, go finish my final year there, but I didn't really want to leave. Not right at the end.

I catch myself thinking about him all weekend. The stupid professor. Except that he's not stupid. The farther down the rabbit hole I go, the more impressive he is. I know some of the people he's published with, or have heard of them anyway. Names my parents talk about a lot. Names my dad says the way other men talk about football athletes.

My cheeks get hot from irritation at myself for not being able to stop looking at his smug fucking face. Why God thought it was a good idea to make someone that handsome that smart is beyond me.

He should have been a himbo. Make it fair to the rest of the species.

By the time Monday morning rolls around, my stomach is churning with anxiety. I check and re-check my work nine hundred times, and read several more chapters ahead, just in case he singles me out. Just in case he calls on me, tries to humiliate me, or worse.

I'm sitting over to the side in a middle row when Graham appears with an easy smile, slipping into the seat next to mine.

"I wasn't sure you'd show," he says.

"I'm not afraid of dicks."

His eyes twinkle and I flush.

“I was more concerned he’d chop you up and bury you. You know he was in a bad mood all day after that?”

I cock an eyebrow at him. “How would you know?”

“I have another class with him in the afternoons.”

I guess God sent all the smart pretty people to the same fucking school.

I open my mouth to say something, but the room is rendered silent by The Professor—ugh, I scowl at the idea of having to call him that—storming in, shrugging off a black peacoat and striding straight to the chalkboard.

“Matrix inverses and determinants,” he says, his voice booming despite the relatively small lecture hall.

No introduction. No hello. No warmup, no joke, no turn to page sixty-two. Just chalk, and him, and . . . why am I staring at his ass?

He’s wearing snug jeans and a casual crewneck sweater, his hair a little too long and catching on the collar in the back as he frantically writes an equation across the board.

He turns around and glares at the room, his eyes taking us all in, before he sees me and pauses. I tense, ready for him to call me out, but his expression remains neutral, and they shift away. He keeps talking.

I exhale, long and slow.

An hour in, I’ve relaxed a little. He seems to have chosen to pretend I don’t exist which suits me fine; my muscles unclench as I lean back in my seat, close my eyes,

and listen. Without the obvious disdain, without the angry, irritable expressions and near-constant eye rolling at student questions, I can hear it in his voice—the love he has for his work. It slips into his tone, his words rushing together when he explains a particularly complex idea, like his heart rate is accelerating and he’s getting excited.

I wonder what else gets him excited.

My eyes pop open and I shift uncomfortably. Where the fuck did that come from?

Right on cue, my phone vibrates. It’s SJ.

On a scale of 1-10 how nice is his ass? There are no pictures of him from behind ANYWHERE on this website. They need to hire a new IT guy.

I chuckle under my breath to myself and sense him pause. I glance up and my cheeks flush; he’s looking at me, even though there’s no way he could have heard me.

“Time for a break,” he says to the class without looking away.

I feel Graham glancing between us with interest, but I ignore them both, letting my hair fall in front of my face again, stifling a yawn.

“You want to try for that coffee again?” Graham asks.

I don’t look, but for some reason I feel like The Professor (ugh) is still watching me.

I square my shoulders, look up at Graham, and smile. “Sure,” I say loudly. “I need something to help keep me awake.”

5

James

I've been trying not to stare at her for the entire damn lecture.

After she left the tutorial last week I went on a bit of tear. Got Shannon to reach out to the campus bookstore to have the textbook removed and contact the publisher about a new edition. Nothing I can do about the ones students have already bought, but it's bugging me. I never thought I'd be grateful for the day that my students aren't smart enough to understand my shit.

I think I've given myself arthritis from the amount of times I've cracked my knuckles thinking about her. A fucking first year.

I couldn't help myself and tried to pull her academic transcript, but the school didn't have it on file. She was just listed as a continuing education student with a "special circumstances" note from the Dean of Admissions that I couldn't see via my faculty profile.

This is the only class she's enrolled in.

As the room empties out for joints, smokes, coffee, piss breaks, I take the opportunity to adjust my crotch. I've forced myself not to look at her, to keep plowing through the material at a breakneck pace, but I saw her laugh at something out of the corner of my eye and felt a fresh wave of irritation trailblaze its way up my spine.

She was clearly not paying attention, and I'd never wanted to throw something as badly as I wanted to throw her fucking phone just then.

Something to keep me awake, she said.

Little shit.

"Kiernan," I hear myself say. She pauses, her back to me, and cocks her head. "I need to speak with you."

"I'll bring one back for you," the hockey-playing mouth breather says with a shrug.

I stare at him until he leaves. Until it's just me and her. She turns around, her expression neutral, but I can tell by her eyes that she's pissed.

Good.

"How far ahead did you work?" I ask.

"Four more chapters," she says without hesitating. "I didn't find any more errors, if you were wondering."

My jaw and my dick both clench.

"Why did you register late?"

"None of your business."

"Why are you only enrolled part time?"

"Still none of your fucking business."

“Why is this the only math class you’re registered for?”

“Why are you checking up on me?”

I pause, momentarily distracted by her flushed skin beneath the smattering of freckles on her nose. “Kiernan . . . most third- and fourth-year students struggle with these concepts.”

“Most students are idiots.”

I don’t disagree.

I step towards her, and her brow furrows.

“Are you a math major?” I ask.

She says nothing.

“Engineering?”

I take another step towards her, and she takes half a step back before seeming to catch herself. She looks . . . nervous.

Cute.

“Please tell me you’re not an arts major.”

Her mouth twitches. “I haven’t decided yet.”

“Are you taking a year off? To figure it out?”

I take another step towards her. She doesn't back up this time, but I can see her chest rising and falling, her breath speeding up.

I close the distance, stepping into her personal space, her skin shifting from rosy pink to beet red, her fingers twisting together in front of her and her eyes everywhere but on me. She's tense, fidgety, just a few inches between us, her mouth slightly parted and chest downright heaving.

"Kiernan?"

"What!"

"Look at me."

But she doesn't. She just stands there, breathing, and smelling like freesia.

Her fidgeting hands still and then she balls them at her sides, continuing to stare at my chest. Defiant little bitch.

"I said look at me!"

She does, her mouth twisted with irritation and the kind of rage that should have me backing up, but instead I take another step towards—

SLAP.

It echoes like a fucking gunshot, my head jerked to the side, that slap reverberating around the room, filling up the entire damn space with tension.

I raise my hand to my cheek and touch it with my fingertips. She's staring up at me, her expression molten, and my knees almost fucking buckle.

But as she opens her mouth to—I don't know what, scream maybe?—I close the gap between us, grab her chin, and kiss her.

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6

Kiernan

What. The. Fuck.

My palm is on fucking fire but before I even have a chance to register it his hand is yanking my face to his and his tongue is down my throat.

His fingers hurt, his lips hot and angry and desperate, and I'm so completely and utterly flabbergasted that I don't think to push him off. I just stand there dumbly, numb, confused as hell, as his fingers press harder into my skin.

He pulls back after a moment, the tips of our noses touching, his hazel eyes on fire.

"Kiss me back."

It isn't a question.

"No," I grit out.

His free hand snaps out to the back of my head, gripping a fistful of my hair and yanking me backwards so I'm staring up at him. My pulse is erratic, my skin is buzzing, my heart is pounding out of my chest, but I can't move, can't form full thoughts . . .

He grips my chin tighter still, his thumb tracing my bottom lip before he pushes it

into my mouth. My lips close around his thumb involuntarily and I suck, his eyes flaring in surprise.

Then I bite. Hard.

He yanks my head back more, his breathing ragged, expression dark.

“Fuck you, Kiernan,” he says, his voice devastatingly quiet. And then his mouth is on me again.

This time, something in my brain breaks, some kind of invisible dam bursting through my mind and my body, flooding me with a frantic, frenzied heat.

My hands grab his neck, gripping him on either side, digging my nails into his skin. He groans into my mouth, tongue sliding past my teeth, his fist tightening in my hair and his other hand—the one breaking my jaw—slides down to my throat.

I nip his tongue, and he squeezes my throat once in warning, before stepping into me and backing me up at breakneck speed. My ass hits the desk, and he keeps going, bending me backwards, his chest pressing into mine, his mouth wild.

“Get off me,” I manage to gasp out.

“No.”

“Get the fuck off me!”

His fingers flex around my throat, his grip tightening, and my pulse goes ballistic.

“Tell me your major,” he murmurs against my mouth. His left hand unravels from my hair and starts running down my shoulder, then my arm, then drops to my hip.

“I haven’t decided,” I gasp.

His fingers skim the top of my jeans.

“Tell me why you’re only enrolled in one math class.”

“Wanted to make sure I could handle it,” I hear myself saying, my brain in a fog.

He pops the button on my jeans and slowly lowers the zipper, the sound as loud in my ears as that slap.

“Why are you only enrolled part-time?”

“Because I’m still in high school.”

He freezes. Everything freezes. We’ve been frozen in time and neither of us can move. All we can do is stare.

And then he blinks, and I watch the horror bleed into his face as he yanks his hands off me and stumbles backwards a step.

Someone laughs outside the door and both our heads swing around comically fast. I stand up and reach for my open zipper, rushing to button my jeans back up as he discreetly adjusts his fly which is . . . very tight.

He looks a little flushed, but none the worse for wear if you don’t look close too closely at his crotch. I, on the other hand, am pretty sure I’m a hot mess.

“How’s my hair?” I whisper, frantically running my fingers through my dark waves.

He glances at me, his face cold and distant, and scowls.

“Here,” he says, reaching out and smoothing the locks quickly, efficiently. He sucks in a breath through his teeth, eyeing me and the door, that glacial expression he was wearing when I met him firmly back in place.

But then he brushes his fingertips across my cheek. So lightly I almost can’t feel it, heat stirring in his face before he drops his hand just as a couple of giggling girls come wandering back in.

He doesn’t say a word, but he doesn’t have to. I scurry back to my seat and try to count my breaths, focusing on keeping them even.

“You okay?” Graham asks, handing me a coffee as he slides back in next to me.

I don’t answer him and pretend to look for a pen.

The Professor doesn’t look at me again for the rest of the class.

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7

James

I swirl the amber bourbon around in my glass and it spills up and over the sides, running down my fingers.

I'm drunk.

Because I'm still in high school.

Because I'm still in high school.

Because I'm still in high school.

I got pushed in a pool once, when I was young. Before I knew how to swim. Some fat redhead with an ugly brown bathing suit came up behind me while my legs dangled in the water and shoved. I sank to the bottom, water flooding my nose and mouth and throat, and I came up choking and spluttering and gasping for air.

This feels like that.

Tess called twice, but I sent it to voicemail. She said she'd be in town this weekend. But I'm not in the mood for her. I'm not in the mood for anybody today. I canceled my afternoon lecture and came straight home. Keys hadn't even hit the counter before I was pouring myself a drink.

The first of fucking many.

I wander around my apartment barefoot, the glow of the setting sun reflected in all the high-rise windows.

How old is she?!

I can't get the taste of her out of my mouth. No matter how much whiskey I swallow, no matter how much my belly burns, all I can think about is the feeling of her jugular pounding against my fingertips, her teeth scraping my tongue, the soft skin of her abdomen flexing against my palm, and the smell of her.

Goddamn.

Because I'm still in high school.

I throw my whiskey glass at the wall, and it smashes to bits, the amber liquid sliding down the boring off-white paint the decorator picked out.

I flop down on the couch, arm hanging off the side, my dick hardening for the hundredth fucking time today. I shift uncomfortably, crotch aching like a teenager, and I snort.

Like a teenager.

Fucking hell. I'm almost forty.

But my cock continues to press uncomfortably against my fly despite the half-bottle of bourbon.

The way her back arched had my dick weeping. She bent backwards so gracefully,

like a willow tree I wanted to climb—

Fuck. Quit math and become a poet. Jesus Christ.

I try to shake off the thoughts, but I can't. My mind is flooded with the feel of her, my cheek still tingling, my body restless and aching.

I will not jerk off to her.

I will not jerk off to her.

I jerk off to her. Twice.

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8

Kiernan

By Wednesday's tutorial slot, I'm a hot mess. I managed to avoid SJ on Monday evening and all day Tuesday, citing homework (valid) and finding my feet with my new schedule. But mainly, I'm pretty sure she'll take one look at me and know, and I'm not ready to talk about it.

I have no fucking idea what happened. One second he was towering over me looking like he was going to boot me from his classroom. The next he was shoving his hand down my pants. I feel like I have emotional whiplash.

It would be nice if I could get my pussy to stop fucking dripping over him.

Two whole days I've been soaking through my panties, riding the seam of the crotch of my jeans in class. Twice I've had to excuse myself, pressed my cheek to the inside of the bathroom stall and slipped my fingers into my panties to find myself so wet it's embarrassing. I came almost immediately, the sounds of girls chattering and hand dryers drowning out the sound of my panting and quiet moans.

The clock is ticking, and I've been standing around the corner from the tutorial room for twenty minutes. I'd honestly have skipped it, but I have two problems.

One: I actually need his help. I'm stuck on a problem for chapter ten. And while I could wait until we get to that part and ask him in class, it's bugging me that I can't solve it.

Two: I really want to see him again.

I block out all the thoughts that I could just send him an email, or ask Shannon, or do one of a thousand other things that would get me the answer I need. Instead I squeeze my thighs together under my skirt one last time, square my shoulders, and march down the hall with my head held high. But as I enter the room, I'm surprised to see it's empty.

Except for him.

He glances up from his phone, his face unreadable, and just looks at me. I feel rooted to the spot, something terrifying and delicious squirming around in my abdomen, snaking its way downwards and between my legs, flooding my panties and flushing my cheeks.

"Where is everyone?" I ask. My voice is wobbly, weak, mortifying.

"Not here yet."

I frown, annoyance flaring, and clearing my throat. "I can see that."

He shrugs and looks back down at his phone. I don't know why I was expecting a reaction, a conversation of some kind maybe, an acknowledgement, but I'm even more annoyed that I'm not getting one.

"I need your help," I hear myself say.

He stiffens and looks up, expression still carefully neutral, but his eyes have sharpened, and I can feel the intensity he's holding back. It's pumping out of him, tension blossoming like a nuclear mushroom cloud, as we both just stare at each other.

“Show me, then,” he says. His voice sounds funny. Tight. Strained.

I clear my throat and walk over to his desk, standing beside him and dropping my notebook in front of him, and placing my phone down on the desk.

“You’re on chapter ten?” he murmurs. He is definitely tense.

“I can’t get this right . . .” I know I’m talking, know I’m pointing at numbers and saying words, but all I can hear is the roaring in my ears as the hair on the back of my neck stands up, goosebumps raising all over my skin, our bodies only a few inches apart. He shifts slowly, subtly, leaning forward to look at my book, his hand on the arm of his chair inching a little closer to my thigh.

His voice breaks through the screaming in my brain.

“Your scalars are wrong,” he says. “You’ve inverted the multiplication . . .”

But I don’t hear a word he says after that because he slides his chair over an inch, the knuckles on his hand grazing my exposed thigh.

My body short-circuits, adrenaline pouring out of my skin as fast as the wetness pouring out of my pussy. I don’t know if he’s still talking or if he’s stopped. All I can feel is the back of his knuckle on my leg.

I’m imagining this. This is nothing. It’s just a knuckle.

But then he lifts his fingers, palm still on the arm of the chair, and strokes.

I whimper and fall forward, catching myself on the desk, and I hear him suck in a breath as he wraps his hand fully around the back of my leg, fingers gently brushing my inner thigh, stroking so softly I shiver.

“Do you see what I’m saying?” he asks.

“. . . What?”

He pinches me and I jump, but he’s already soothing it, stroking it with his thumb, as his hand creeps higher, disappearing beneath the hem of my skirt.

“Here. Your multiplication is . . .”

I can’t hear him. Everything is buzzing as he slides higher and higher. My cheeks flame, my legs tremble, because he’s going to feel how soaked I am any minute . . .

Oh God. Fuck.

The side of his forefinger presses against the crotch of my panties, and I close my eyes, beet red, flooded with shame but also desperately wanting to grind against his hand.

FUCK.

9

James

The synapses in my brain are firing too hard, and I see stars. The heat pouring out of her pussy is like nothing I've ever felt before. She's drenched her panties, fucking soaked through them so much she'd leave a puddle on one of the plastic chairs.

I'd make her lick it up.

Fuck. This is not good. Not good. But my fingers have a mind of their own as I push her underwear gently aside and slip my fingers past the soaked fabric. I pause— stop, James, stop right now— but she lets out the softest, quietest, most restrained moan I've ever heard, and I'm seized by the desire to hear her when she isn't holding back.

Don't hold back, baby.

Ignoring the alarm bells screaming in my brain, I move another inch and sink my middle finger deep inside her.

I could come from this, just from feeling how wet she is. I slide into her like it's nothing, her tight cunt flexing frantically around my fingers as she starts to pant like a dog, chest and back heaving with her palms down on my desk.

I want her on all fours . . .

I slide another finger inside and she squeezes her eyes shut in concentration, like

she's trying to hold it together. Like she's still keeping her lid on herself.

I spread my fingers into a V shape, stretching her wide, rotating my hand so she's pulled open in every direction, a fresh flood of warmth drenching my fingers and dripping down onto my palm. I'm staring at her face, pink and tense, mouth hanging open, breathing ragged . . . Fuck, you're beautiful . . .

Her pussy is flexing, tighter and faster, and I know she wants me to pump into her, but I continue to lazily pull her apart, wetness sliding down my hand and her thighs, refusing to fuck her with my fingers.

Not until you stop holding back.

Her fists clench, the desk marked with the sweat from her palms, her legs quivering and muscles twitching. She's getting close. I can feel it. She's almost there, almost too far to care if she screams—

“Professor?”

She jerks upright but I shove my fingers up into her to the third knuckle, my hand hidden by her skirt and my arm hidden by the stack of textbooks on my desk.

“Yeah?”

It's Shannon, my TA.

“I just came to let you know Professor Braden's lecture has gone long. I doubt anyone will be making it today.”

I slide a third finger into her and feel her buckle, driving her pussy harder onto my hand, and just as she catches herself, keeps herself from falling, I twist my hand and

press my thumb to her clit.

“Thanks,” I say calmly as she detonates, her cunt spasming, body caving as her knees bow and hit the desk with a thud.

“You okay?” Shannon asks, a look of concern on her face as she watches Kiernan falling apart all over me.

“She’s fine,” I say. “Low blood sugar.”

Kiernan is still coming, her release drowning my hand, sucking my fingers farther into her, deep inside where I lazily swirl them around.

“Ah, my mom’s diabetic,” Shannon says. “You need anything?”

“I’ll take care of her,” I say. “But thanks.”

Shannon hovers awkwardly until I raise an eyebrow at her, and she finally leaves. Kiernan collapses sideways as I pull my fingers out of her and shove them in her mouth.

“For your blood sugar,” I murmur.

And finally— finally— she moans, loudly, unrestrained, her tits heaving as her cum slides down her thighs.

“Good girl,” I whisper.

Her eyes fly open, and she wrenches her head away from my hand, angrily picking up her bag and her phone, storming towards the door leaving her notebook behind.

“Kiernan?”

She glares at me, her legs still shaking. She looks like a baby deer.

“Say thank you.”

Her eyes narrow, pretty pink lips curled up in a snarl.

“Fuck you, James,” she says. And walks out.

I collapse back into my seat, staring down at my hand, running my fingers over the wetness still pooled in my palm, and I can’t help it. All logic and reason is gone.

I pop the button of my jeans, shove my hand into my boxers, wrap my slick palm around my aching cock, and pump.

Twice is all it takes. My head snaps back in my chair as I come, my dick the hardest its ever been in my entire life, my body whacking out as my brain and muscles go haywire.

When I finally finish, I pull my hand back out of my pants and look at it. I’m fucking covered in both of us, a wet, drippy mess.

Not good, I think, but I can’t help but wonder what we’re like, mixed up together like this. Just a taste . . . My tongue darts out, mouth flooding with the taste of both of us, my cock already hardening again.

So. Fucking. Good.

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 3:06 am

10

Kiernan

I want to punch something.

I want to yell and kick and scream.

I want to do it again.

My first time being touched by someone else, my first orgasm that isn't just mine, and it was in front of a fucking TA.

I need to drop out of college. I'm not ready for this.

I try to wipe up my mess in the bathroom, stripping off my panties because they feel like they've been in a pool and shoving them in my bag. My stomach is turning over, anxiety and adrenaline and fear and anger all roiling up into one big, messy game of dodgeball in my gut. I don't know why the fuck this guy affects me like this, but I can't be around him again. Not ever.

My pussy clenches in protest, and I snarl as I throw the bathroom stall door open, stalking angrily to the sink to wash my hands.

That wasn't the best orgasm you've ever had. Nope. Definitely not. No ma'am.

Fuck my life.

I see Graham in the hallway with some other students I don't know, and he beckons me over.

"Hey!" he says. He introduces me to some of his friends, most of them from the hockey team, but I'm having a hard time remembering names. I can't concentrate, distracted by the ache between my legs. He stretched me open farther than I've ever been stretched, the sting almost too much to bear.

Almost.

What the fuck is wrong with me.

"So, what do you say?"

I shake my head, trying to focus. "Um, sorry, what?"

"A party? Do you want to come?"

"Sure. I'm in."

He grins and the group all walks off together, shoving each other and laughing, a few of the girls eyeing me with interest.

"Are you a math major?" Graham asks.

I try to remain vague. "Undecided, for now . . ."

"Undecided but you signed up for a class with McGrath?"

"Fuck that guy though!" one of Graham's friends says. "I have no fucking clue what's going on, and he looks like he'll stab me with a letter opener if I ask a fucking

question.”

“I already dropped that class,” another says, and a few nod.

I stay quiet, and one of the girls drops back, matching my pace and watching me out of the corner of her eye.

“Kiernan, right?”

I nod.

“Can you picture him naked? McGrath?”

I stop dead, my heart flatlining, knees threatening to buckle.

“What?”

“God, I can’t stop imagining it,” she says wistfully, looping her arm through mine.

“I’m Tanya.”

I don’t care, I almost say, but I plaster a smile on my face as we all head outside and across a parking lot.

I need a fucking drink.

11

James

The rest of the day is a blur. I can't concentrate, can't do anything but picture her hair wrapped around my wrist as I slide my dick into her slick cunt.

I'm irritable, have been rocking a semi all day that's chafing against my fly since I ditched the boxers, and try as I might I still can't drown out her words from Monday.

I'm still in high school.

I have no idea what the fuck I'm doing. I've never fucked a student before, let alone a fucking minor. I swallow, hoping to God she's eighteen, but I have a sick, sinking feeling that she's not.

And still, I keep picturing her on her knees, lips wrapped around my cock, those big brown eyes staring up at me as her wetness drips down her thighs.

I should tell Tess to come this weekend after all. I need to work some of this off.

I like Tess. She's . . . efficient. I wouldn't exactly call her cold, and the woman definitely does her yogalates. But she's transactional. We both know what we want. A physically fit partner, someone who you can demand a lot from. And absolutely zero fucking strings. I don't know a goddamn thing about the woman, nor vice versa, and apart from one very brief conversation where I clarified out loud that that was what she was after and she confirmed she was, we've never had to speak about it

again. Perfect scenario, really. At least until recently.

I pull out my phone to give her a call, but the screensaver is a picture of . . . Kiernan?

I stare at the phone long enough that the screen goes black, before pressing the side button and lighting it up again. It's Kiernan, some blonde girl sticking her tongue out, and a decent looking boy with his arm wrapped around her neck and his lips pressed to her cheek.

I picture her grabbing her phone and her bag and storming out. She must have taken mine by mistake. Godfuckingdammit.

My knuckles crack as I squeeze the phone.

Is this her boyfriend?

"Professor?" someone asks.

"WHAT?" I snap, turning around.

It's Shannon, and she looks flustered. She always looks fucking flustered.

I exhale long and hard, and for the first time in years I really want a cigarette.

"Sorry, Shannon." I try to calm down. She's a good TA, for the most part. Does what she's told, never complains, keeps the students happy and off my back. "I'm having a . . . week."

"Want to talk about it?"

"No," I growl.

“You sure?” She glances pointedly down at the phone in my hand, which is still showing the picture of Kiernan and her . . . whoever.

I tuck the phone back into my pocket.

“I said no.”

“I just thought maybe I could—”

But before I can make any more fucking mistakes today, I storm out of the room.

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 3:06 am

12

Kiernan

Music is pounding, my hips swaying to the beat. Sweat is pouring down the back of my neck, and I wish someone would open a window. Maybe it's just all the tequila shots. Whatever.

Someone's hands are on me, their mouth on my neck, and for once I don't give a shit.

Why not? Who fucking cares? What have I been waiting for?

I grind backwards into his hips, trying to remember who I was dancing with. They all look the same, the hockey lot. And none of them are who I want.

"Your ass is vibrating," he yells into my ear.

I don't know what that means. Is that like your ass is fire?

Jesus, I'm really wasted.

"Your phone?"

Oh.

I reach into the pocket of my jean skirt and pull it out but frown, the digits all swimming together, my vision blurry.

I decline the call and stick it back in my pocket.

“You want to get some air?”

Oh. It’s Graham. I’m dancing with Graham.

He takes my hand, and I follow him outside to a roaring campfire that has definitely been being fed by frat boys with too much firestarter on their hands.

“Where is everyone?” I ask. I’m slurring. Even I can hear that I’m slurring. My phone starts buzzing again, and I send it to voicemail without even looking, trying not to stand too close to the raging inferno, my head tipped back to stare at the stars.

“So pretty . . .”

“Yeah,” Graham says, cupping my cheek.

I open my mouth to say something, but his lips are on mine so fast I don’t have a chance.

He tastes like beer. And Cheetos.

I try to kiss him back, but my head is swimming, his tongue thick and wet and flopping around in my mouth like a fish. It’s kind of gross. I start to laugh, and he pulls back a little, his eyebrows knitting together in confusion.

“Sorry,” I say, clearing my throat. “Sorry.” I motion for him to try again, and he makes a funny expression, but he leans in and kisses me a second time, his mouth opening wide and his wet tongue flop flop flopping . . .

I snort again, and he shoves me back a little, irritation and embarrassment oozing out

of him.

“What’s your problem?”

“Sorry, Graham. I just . . .”

“You’re a fucking bitch, you know that? Get me all worked up and then—”

“Are you seriously about to say what I think you’re about to say?” I snort in earnest. Fuck. This is the kind of shit SJ always used to tell me about when she’d get back from parties. I thought she was exaggerating.

He steps into my space, and a warning bell goes off somewhere in my drunk brain. Fuzzy as everything is, that voice—the voice all girls have—starts shouting at me.

We’re out here alone.

My vision sharpens, and I blink, trying to focus, trying to clear my head. Where exactly am I? Am I actually alone? Who else is here? My heart starts to hammer as he wraps his fingers around my wrist, pulling me towards him.

“You don’t have to kiss me on the mouth to keep me happy,” he says, shoving my hand to his dick.

“Fuck off,” I say firmly, but he doesn’t let go.

“Come on, Kiernan. What’s the problem?”

I don’t know what to do. I don’t know how to handle this. I’ve never been in this situation . . . I feel like if I shook him off, he’d swear at me but leave me alone. He’s not advancing, not pressing himself any farther into my space. But something in my

brain is paralyzing me, keeping me from shoving him away, shutting me down from doing or saying anything to protect myself.

He seems to take my freeze as an invitation and kisses me again, but this time I gag a little, the taste of beer and Cheetos mingling with tequila and stress and the spins.

The gag seems to do it for him because he pulls me harder into him, fingers grabbing at my waist, reaching underneath my skirt . . .

“No underwear,” he says. “Nice . . .”

“Get off!” I say, my brain finally catching up and shoving at him. But he doesn’t budge, his mouth hot on my neck, one palm gripping my bare ass cheek, the other snaking up underneath my shirt, awkwardly fondling my tit.

Fuck. Fuck. Fuck.

My phone goes off—again—and he pauses, just long enough for me to pull it out and whip it to my ear.

“Hello?” I say into it breathlessly, my stomach churning as I stare Graham down. I’m seeing two of him.

“Fucking bitch,” he says, raising his hands and walking away.

I sink to the ground, knees digging into the damp dewy grass, my phone still in my hand and on my bare thigh. I blink in a daze and raise it back up to my ear.

“. . . okay? Kiernan!”

“Hello?”

I hear a long exhale. “Kiernan, are you okay? What the fuck was that?”

My head is spinning.

“Who is this?” I slur.

A pause. “It’s James.”

“Jameessss?”

“Kiernan, are you drunk?”

“I’d go with wasted. But yes.”

“Where are you?”

“Um . . . not sure. A house party, somewhere.”

Another pause. “Where’s your ride? Who’s taking you home?”

“Don’t have one. Was gonna call an Uber.”

“Are you fucking kidding me?” he hisses. “Ask someone for the address. Right fucking now.”

“I just need a sec.”

“I said NOW, Kiernan!”

But I hold the phone away from my mouth and vomit all over the lawn.

13

James

I'm losing. My. Shit.

After hearing someone call her a bitch and then having the pleasure of listening to her throw up for a solid five minutes, she finally managed to track someone down and grab the address.

I pull up to the house and it's clearly in mess mode now, the few people outside swaying in the wind or bumping uglies in the bushes or both. I told her to wait for me on the front porch but she isn't there, and I crack my knuckles for the hundredth time as I head around back.

There's nobody out here, just a roaring bonfire and Kiernan, sitting on the back steps with her forehead pressed against the deck railing.

She looks so small and sweet, and I want to pick her up and carry her to my car.

"Kiernan," I say softly.

She looks up at me, her eyes glassy, lips parted while she clearly tries to shake off the spins.

I walk up the steps and squat in front of her, taking her hands in mine and turning them over. They're covered in dirt. I notice the grass stains on her knees, but it's her

shirt, disheveled, the bottom button popped open, that has me seeing fucking red.

“Who did this to you?” My voice is steady. Calm.

People are going to die today.

“It’s fine.” She waves her hand at me dismissively. “Nothing happened.” But her legs shift, opening slightly, and I look away as my brain fully liquefies and dribbles out my ears.

“Where are your underwear.” Lethal.

“In my bag,” she slurs, waving her hand again. “You got them too wet.”

I glance around but we’re still alone.

“You sure you’re okay?” I ask, trying to grab onto the rage boiling in my gut and shove it down, down, down.

“I just need to lie down,” she mumbles.

I stick her arm around my neck and try to help her stand, but she stumbles awkwardly, tripping on the step and losing her balance.

Fucking hell.

I sigh, sliding one arm under her legs and one around her back, lifting her up and tucking her into my chest as I carry her to my car. She’s light and limp and easy to maneuver as I load her into the passenger side, her head lolling, and do up her seatbelt. I touch both her knees, brushing the dirt off her kneecaps with my thumbs, before I stand up and shut the door, gritting my teeth as I walk back around to the

driver's side.

I stare at the house for a few minutes and seriously consider going inside. Someone would know who she was with.

Enough bad choices for one day, James. Just fucking get her home.

But by the time I get in the driver's side she's passed out, and I don't know her address.

As we speed towards my apartment, I smack my head gently into the headrest of my car over and over.

Just one more bad decision, then.

14

Kiernan

My head is pounding.

I open my eyes slowly, groggily, before sitting bolt upright. This isn't my fucking bed.

Snippets of last night flicker through my mind. Beer pong. Shots. Dancing—lots of dancing—hands on my hips . . . Fear .

And then a voice in my ear, and the smell of cedar and expensive cologne in my nose . . .

Oh God. This bed smells like cedar and cologne. Is this . . .

I sense movement and look up. James is standing in the doorway, arms crossed, leaning against the doorframe.

He looks pissed. I swallow. Hard.

"I'm really sorry—" I start but he holds up a hand, and I instantly shut my mouth.

"I made coffee. And breakfast." His voice is hard, cold, and he pegs with me a stare telling me neither are negotiable before he disappears back down the hall.

I throw back the covers, wobbling a little as I've still got the spins, before I glance down at myself. I'm drowning in one of his T-shirts, falling just past my ass cheeks.

Cool. First time a boy sees me naked, and I don't even remember it.

Except he isn't a boy.

I sigh and take a risk, padding over to his dresser and opening and closing drawers until I find one with sweatpants in it, pulling them on and rolling down the waist multiple times. I walk down the hall barefoot, glancing around at his wholly impersonal apartment. It's not shocking. Not really. He's a fucking math professor. But I'd hoped for . . .

I don't know what I'd hoped for. I try not to think too hard about why I'd been imagining his apartment in the first place.

His place is open concept, the kitchen all glass and chrome, floors shiny and black. He's sitting at the kitchen table sipping a cup of coffee, the New England Journal of Mathematics open.

He's wearing faded jeans, a heather-grey T-shirt, and . . . black-rimmed glasses?

I swallow hard, again, because he looks— Fuck, I really wish I had underwear on right now.

He doesn't acknowledge me as I sit down, doesn't look up, just reaches out with his right hand and shoves a mug of coffee at me.

I wrap both hands around it and pick it up, watching him warily, sipping it.

I suppress a moan. Fuck, this tastes good.

The silence is tense but not entirely uncomfortable. I think he's distracted, his forehead wrinkled, and his mouth drawn down as he flips the page.

"What are you reading about?" I ask, taking another sip.

"Math."

I poke the side of my cheek with my tongue. He's spoken six words to me this morning and I'm already annoyed. Cool.

"What article are you reading?"

He glances up at me over his glasses and my stomach clenches. I hide half my face behind the mug, grateful he can't see my lip quivering from nerves.

"The Efficient Numerical Method for Solving a Quadratic Riccati Differential Equation."

I take another sup of my coffee and try to picture the photo that went along with that article.

"By Yirga?" I ask.

His eyes widen, and he leans back in his chair a little, studying me.

"Yes," he says shortly.

I frown. "I didn't understand that one."

He stares at me, like I'm a problem he still hasn't puzzled out. Just like when we met.

“Where did he lose you?”

“Somewhere around the Runge-Kutta method.”

His mouth twitches. “That’s because I haven’t taught that to you yet.”

“You haven’t taught anything to me yet. The textbook has.”

“I wrote the textbook.”

“I thought you co-wrote it.”

I sip my coffee loudly. He looks pissed. Pissed enough to throw something. Or possibly spank me. My stomach clenches not altogether unpleasantly at the idea. Instead he slides the journal forwards, scooching his chair closer, and grabbing a blank notebook and a pencil from behind him on the counter.

“Show me where you can solve to.”

He holds it out, and I can’t tell if it’s a peace offering or a threat, but I take it anyway and glance at the formula, trying to shake off the last of the haze from the night before and remember how to use my brain like a functioning adult again.

I scratch out the general form as a differential equation, and then start breaking down the intervals into subinterval mesh.

I pause again, sucking on the end of the pencil, trying to work it out, but the practical application of y as a free parameter evades me.

I glance up to tell him this is where I’m stuck and find his eyes glued to my mouth. I pop the pencil out and he jumps, eyes sliding up to mine, a hint of something almost

sheepish on his face.

“Here,” he says, plucking the pencil from my fingers and looking over my notes. “Y yields a new formula. It’s a fourth-order rule to provide stability to the equation . . .”

He starts breaking apart the formula into sections, explaining the basic principles of each and how they intersect, layering in the theory of the Runge-Kutta method as he talks. It’s kind of like watching an artist paint from scratch, the numbers and letters filling up the page in logical boxes that make my brain fucking sing, even as hungover as it is.

“Understand?”

I nod, because I do, but I must look a little dazed because he frowns at me and hands me back the pencil.

“Prove it.”

My heart pounds a little, but I scratch out the next equation and break it down just like he did. I stumble a little, this method brand fucking new to me, but refer back to his notes twice before I push through.

When I’m done, I put my pencil down gently on the page and stare at the table, afraid to look at him.

“Kiernan?”

I keep staring at the table. “Yeah.”

“Get back in my fucking bed.”

15

James

Watching her solve that equation is possibly the sexiest thing I've ever seen a woman do, and my erection is literally screaming at me to throw her over my shoulder and fuck her until she bleeds .

“What?” she whispers, finally raising her big brown eyes to look at me, her cheeks as pink as a cartoon.

I stand up, not bothering to hide the bulge in my pants, grip her elbow, and haul her up.

“I said get in my bed.”

“James, I—”

I take a step back, giving her a little space. This is it. This is the moment she can choose to walk away or not. But if she comes in there, I'm never letting her leave.

I wait, patiently, while she looks up at me with a mixture of confusion and heat scrawled all over her pretty little face. But most noticeably, and surprisingly, is nerves.

Yeah, baby, I'm not a high school boy. I'll do you right.

Her eyes run down my chest and torso, pausing at my hips before dropping to my cock. Her breathing accelerates and my patience is wearing thin.

Tick fucking tock, Kiernan.

But she stands there, paralyzed by indecision, and I think about her dirty hands and knees from last night, her disheveled shirt.

Everything cools except my temper.

I take a deep breath and another step back. She blinks, looking up at me, and her soft brown eyes almost have me dropping to my knees.

Shit. I'm pushing too hard.

She's staring at me, searching my face for something. But before I can think too hard about what I just told her to do, I push past her to head down the hall.

"I need a shower," I bite out. "Bloody eat something."

I shut the door to my bathroom a little too hard, angrily flipping on the taps to my steam shower and ripping my shirt off over my head. I step into the scalding hot spray, but my hard-on isn't deterred. I press my forehead to the tile, back burning, and try to calm myself down.

In the past twenty-four hours, I've fingered a high school student in front of another staff member, jerked off in my office, seriously considered murdering someone, driven a drunk, possibly underaged, girl to my apartment, and just as good as ordered her to bend over so I can fuck her.

I'm going to lose my job.

I tap my forehead to the tile and try to ignore the obnoxiously loud voice screaming at me that it would be worth it.

I hear a noise and stiffen, slowly turning my head to see Kiernan shutting the door behind her, her hands behind her back, as she leans against it with her bottom lip sucked in.

She stares at my face for a minute before her eyes drop to my cock, her mouth falling open a little, before she seems to steel herself, grabs the hem of my shirt, and pulls it over her head letting it drop to the floor.

My guts fall all over the floor along with it.

She's pale, slender and smooth, and entirely unblemished and I want to mark every fucking inch of her with my teeth. Her breasts are small, barely a handful, brown nipples tightening into dappled peaks as we stare at each other, chests heaving.

She walks towards me, hips swaying, eyes on mine, face full of nerves again, and I resist the urge to smack her.

Confidence. Where's your fucking confidence?

I reach behind me and turn down the temperature as she steps in so it doesn't scald her. She's so close my skin is humming, cock kicking, but she seems skittish, and I can't help but worry.

"Kiernan . . . are you okay?" I ask.

She looks up at me, her expression almost pissed.

"I'm fine."

“About last night . . . I—”

“Nothing happened. I said I’m fine.”

Her tone is snippy and curt, and my nostrils flare as my eyes track the rivulets of water running down her neck, breasts, belly . . .

“Then why are you so fucking nervous?”

She reaches out and wraps her hand tightly around my cock, and I suck in a breath. She tugs, forcing me to step forward, our bodies pressed together.

“I’m not,” she says, and then she grabs the back of my neck with her other hand and yanks me down, kissing me as hard as she can while squeezing my cock hard enough to make me grunt.

There’s my girl.

I shove her into the wall, her naked back against the tile, my cock so close to her slit I can feel the heat radiating out of her.

“Oh, you’re definitely nervous,” I say, “but it’s too late now.”

I’m going to eat you alive.

16

Kiernan

I'm in a free fall.

He's alarmingly fit for a professor, his broad shoulders and trim hips setting off a funny kind of whistling noise in my head. But his dick . . . SJ always made it sound kind of disappointing, when you actually see one in person. But goddamn if his doesn't have my mouth going dry.

And then I'm backed into a corner as his lips are pulling on my neck, his hands roaming everywhere, hips pinning me to the wall . . . I reach up and grip his shoulders, his muscles bunching and clenching as he bends and his mouth glides towards my nipple, sucking it in and nipping it—hard. I yelp and he grips my chin, standing up again and towering over me, forcing my head back so I have to look at him.

I can't help it. I stand up on my tiptoes and try to kiss him. I want to kiss him again.

He yanks my head back again, harder this time. "No."

I glare at him, temper rising. The truth is, I am nervous, and his mouth on mine is soothing. Fierce, demanding, but soothing. This? His teeth on my skin— on my nipples—and his hands on my body, naked with someone for the first time . . . It has me chock full of anxiety, even as my pussy aches for him, giving me away.

He squeezes my chin again, glaring at me, and my temper continues to rise.

“Did you hear me, Kiernan?”

This is better. Mad is better than scared.

“Yes, daddy,” I say.

His face goes black, and I feel fear prick the back of my neck for an entirely different reason, this time. Before I can open my mouth, or say another fucking word, he grips me by my hips, spins me around, and shoves my face into the tile.

He drops his mouth to my ear. “Apologize.”

“No,” I say in a mocking tone.

SMACK!

I jump, my ass stinging, the sound of his wet slap muffled by the water.

“Say. It.”

“Fuck. You.”

SMACK!

I groan, my skin tingling, pussy pounding, and try to grind my nipples into the wall.

SMACK!

“Fuuuck!” I cry out, ass on fire, muscles twitching from tension. My knees feel weak,

and I slide down the wall a little, but his left hand grips my wet hair, wrapping it around his wrist, and yanks me back up so I'm standing.

SMACK!

"SORRY!" I scream.

He yanks my head back so I'm looking up at him.

"Again."

I could fucking kill you right now.

My tits are heaving, ass chaffed to hell, and I'm pretty sure my adrenal glands are about to give out on me, but he stares me down like he has all. Fucking. Day.

"Sorry," I whisper.

His eyes drop to my mouth, face softening as he releases my hair, one hand sliding around my waist and splaying across my belly, the other drifting to my chest, palming my breast gently. Almost lovingly.

"Good girl," he says, and then he bends his head and kisses me.

My body melts, and he catches my weight with the arm around my middle, kissing me deeper, his tongue slipping into my mouth as he presses his cock to my ass. He grinds against me and moans, the sound disappearing into my mouth, his breathing growing frantic, and his touch growing harder.

"Fuck!" he spits; the only outward sign he's shown of anything other than complete and total self-control. I want him to do it again.

I stand up on my tiptoes and press my ass backwards, my drenched slit gliding along his shaft and taking him totally by surprise.

“Fuck, Kiernan! Shit!” he hisses. His grip loosens and I take the opportunity to turn back around. His hands are already gripping my ass cheeks and hoisting me up as I wrap my arms around his neck, the blunt head of him poking at my entrance.

My heartbeat goes wild as my brain kicks back in.

Fuck, FUCK I need to tell him I’m a—

17

James

This is the tightest fucking pussy I've ever fucking had.

Jesus. Fucking. Christ.

She cries out as I slam into her, but I clamp a hand down over her mouth, afraid that if she keeps making noise I'll blow my load.

My head is buried in her neck, hand on her mouth, and I'm balls deep in a cunt like a vice. I feel like I've just won the damn lottery.

After I give myself a minute to catch my breath I start to move, and I can hear her mewling against my palm, her eyes closed, face tense. But I can feel her, clenching like mad around my cock, muscles fighting me so hard she'd probably be able to push me out if it weren't for the laws of fucking gravity.

I slide her up the wall and drop her back down, angling to get as deep inside of her as I can, her whimpers driving me almost as insane as hearing her call me daddy.

I honestly wasn't expecting to experience near Nirvana hearing those words come out of her mouth, but as soon as she said it I knew it's the only thing I ever wanted to hear her say again. Except fuck and please. Making her apologize for it was just . . .

I don't know what that was.

I need my other hand to hold her up, so I remove it from her mouth, dropping it to the back of her thighs and hoisting her up again.

“Shit!” she hisses out, jaw clenched.

“Open your eyes, Kiernan.”

She tucks her forehead into my neck but I’m not having it.

“Kiernan! Now!”

She lifts her head and opens her eyes, and I freeze. She looks . . . lost.

Shit. Shit, shit, shit. I’m pushing her too hard. I’m fucking her too hard.

“Hey,” I say, smoothing back her hair. “I’m here, okay?” She’s staring at me, big brown eyes wide and scared, and I can’t help but wonder how many men she’s been with. Clearly not a lot. I lean in and kiss her, gently, and she hums a little, like this is the encouragement she wants, and I force myself to loosen my grip and ease off a bit.

Break her in later. Let her breathe for a second . . .

I ease her down even though the idea of pulling out of her right now makes me feel fucking violent. But . . . we should be in a bed. This should be in a bed. I just bit her, slapped her, slid into her rough—she’s clearly been pushed to her limit, and I think we could both use a minute. But as I step back and I look down to watch my dick slide out of her perfect pussy, I notice the blood.

What . . .

I freeze, as shocked—maybe more shocked—than I was in the classroom when she

told me she was in high school.

“Kiernan,” I gulp. “Are you a fucking virgin?”

18

Kiernan

I eye him coolly as he steps away, and I try to ignore the sinking feeling in my stomach at the look on his face.

“Well. Not anymore.”

He pales, the water running down his body and washing his dick clean of me.

I suddenly feel the overwhelming desire to not be naked.

“I’ll go,” I mumble, and turn my back to him, but he catches my arm.

“How old are you?” His voice sounds pained.

“Don’t you think it’s a bit late to ask me that?” I snap, gesturing to his cock.

His fingers tighten around my upper arm. “Answer me,” he growls.

I consider telling him to go fuck himself. My mouth even opens to do it. But the wind has been so thoroughly sucked out of my sails that I feel myself deflate, shoulders curving in as I cross my arms over my naked breasts, shivering despite the steam.

“Seventeen.”

He closes his eyes like he's been stabbed, his jaw tight, breathing in hard through his nose.

I try to pull away, but his grip tightens even more. "Don't," he says, his voice hard but his eyes still closed.

"This was a mistake," I say. "I—this was a big fucking mistake."

His lips curl into a grimace as his eyes flip open, and I almost squeak like a fucking mouse at the look on his face.

"This was . . . not a smart choice, on my part," he grits out, "but it wasn't a mistake, Kiernan . "

He's burning with intensity, like his stare alone could bow my back, crush my bones, bend me into submission. I suppress another shudder, the base of my spine beginning to tingle. He looks like he wants to lock me up and throw away the key. And I'm . . . not entirely upset about it.

He pulls me gently towards him and to my surprise wraps his arms around me, pulling my face into his bare chest, his palm finding the back of my head and cupping it sweetly, gently.

I sink into his body, both of us quiet. I don't know how long we stand there like that but when he finally pulls away he isn't hard and his face looks softer, somehow. He reaches to the side and squirts some shower gel into his palms, lathering them together and then running his foamy hands over my shoulders, my neck, my arms . . . I try to stay still, try not to moan, as he lathers the gel into my breasts, his fingers gently tweaking my nipples, and then moves on to my belly. He stops short of my pussy.

“Turn around,” he says, his voice low.

I do and he squirts more gel into his palms, lathering up my back, kneading the muscles until I relax. Then his hands slide onto my ass cheeks, soft and gentle, gliding over my stinging skin again and again until I can’t even tell it hurts.

He steps into me, keeping his hips away from mine but pressing his chest into my back, his hands on my hips and his lips on my neck, gently kissing the skin he’s sucked and nipped and more or less mauled earlier. Everything is slow, and sweet, and has me puddling at his feet. And then his hand slides from my hip to my lower belly and dips between my legs, gently soaping my left thigh, and then my right, before finally cupping my pussy and rubbing that, too.

I wince, sucking in a breath between my teeth at the sharp, stinging pain.

“Shh, baby,” he murmurs in my ear.

“I would have expected shut the fuck up Kiernan,” I say quietly. I feel the rumble of his chest as he chuckles, his hand gentle, soft, and driving me fucking crazy.

“Shut the fuck up, Kiernan,” he says, but his voice sounds sweet, playful, and I’m glad my back is to him, so he can’t see my smile.

Eventually he stops and pulls me fully under the water as the lather washes everything away. He gives himself a quick, efficient once-over, and I can’t help but notice he’s hard again. Then he turns off the taps and pushes me gently towards the shower door.

“Out.”

He grabs an enormous fluffy towel from a stack on a shelf beside the bathroom and

wraps it all the way around me, over my head and my face and rubs me down like I'm a little kid.

I laugh and he stops dead, and I pull the towel down off my face so I can see what irked him. But he's looking at me the same way he was looking at me in class, the first time he kissed me. When I was staring at my phone, laughing at SJ's message, and he stopped the class . . .

"What?" I ask, sounding pouty.

"You have a beautiful laugh."

It takes me by surprise, the ease with which he says it. He doesn't seem like someone who compliments often, or easily, and definitely not without merit. I feel my whole body blush, and he looks away, grabbing a towel for himself and drying his body with the same quick, rough efficiency he used to clean my blood off him.

Laughing at SJ's message . . .

I frown, something tugging at my memory. Phone . . . My phone . . .

"How did you get my number?" I ask suddenly.

"Hm?"

"How did you get my number? To call me?"

"I didn't."

I run my tongue over my teeth, irritated. "Answer me," I say in a mock voice.

His eyes flash, his sharp features a warning. “Watch yourself,” he says, before pushing me out of the bathroom and into his bedroom.

I turn to face him. “Are you a stalker?”

“Maybe,” he says, continuing to walk towards me. I back up until my knees hit the bed, but he keeps coming.

“What are you doing?”

He pauses and cocks his head, reaching out and tugging on my towel so it falls to my feet.

“Starting again,” he says, and then he pushes me down on the bed.

19

James

That took me a minute or ten to recover from.

A virgin.

Seventeen.

Shit.

I want to say I wouldn't have been nearly so hard on her if I'd known, and maybe I wouldn't have. But the second she stepped into my shower she sealed the deal. There's no way she was leaving the bathroom without knowing what my cock felt like. Virgin or not.

Only now, I want to spread her out and take my time with her.

I kiss her hard, greedy for the feel of her and wanting to slip back inside and hear her moan. But I keep it together, her soft body pliant and sweet, curving beneath my hands like clay. I want to mold her in every way you can mold a body. I want to make her fucking mine.

My mouth slides down her chest between her tits, leaving a trail of wet kisses down her stomach, her muscles clenching with desire and fear as she realizes where I'm going.

“Have you done this before, baby?” I murmur against her lower belly, looking up at her. She’s staring down at me, nerves all over her face again, and I could kick myself for not realizing— it’s too late now. Focus on this.

“No,” she says, but I already know from the pie plates that are her eyeballs.

“Do you trust me?”

To my surprise, she smirks. “Not even a little.”

I nip her belly, and she yelps, hips jolting up off the bed. I run my tongue over the bite mark, and she squirms.

Oh baby, you’re gonna squirm a heluva lot more than this.

I drift between her legs, pushing her thighs apart, and feel the top blow right off the top of my head at the sight of her. Her pussy is red and swollen, and my dick starts to leak from the satisfaction of knowing I did that to her.

I mean to go slow. I mean to ease her into it, give her a minute to get used to it, but I can’t help myself. She’s drenched, and perfect, and I dive right in, pushing her legs even farther apart and trying to just keep myself from shoving my entire damn fist in her cunt. Let’s just start with licking . . .

I drag my tongue up her slit, and she lets out a strangled moan, a strange, high-pitched keening that almost has me coming on the spot. I push my tongue into her hard, desperation leaking out of my body, even though I’m trying to hold back. I want all my body parts in her. I want everything of mine that can fill up that tight pussy of hers to be in her. I want to plug every fucking hole she has until she passes out from the fucking pleasure of it.

I slip my thumb into her as my tongue swirls around her clit and her hips rocket off the bed, hands fisting in the sheets, legs writhing and shaking like she has no idea what to do with her body.

That's it, babygirl. Fall apart.

She's panting, and moaning, and almost sounds like she might be crying, bringing her hands up to her eyes like she's pressing her head harder into the mattress.

"Fuck," she cries out, and I can feel her flood my mouth, her cunt getting sweeter as the wetness pours out of her, her entire body shaking.

"Fuck, fuck, FUCK!" she's half-screaming, but she's stuck on the edge, afraid to let go, always holding back . . .

In a snap decision I slide my left hand up her thigh and sink my second thumb into her soaking hole, stretching her open at the same time as I suck her entire clit into my mouth.

It does the trick. She fucking blows apart, her pussy spasming like mad, her clit pulsing in my mouth, hips rocking into me as she shoves her fist in her mouth to muffle the loudest moan I've ever heard a woman make.

It goes on and on, her legs shaking so violently I know she won't be able to walk tomorrow. She's a panting, moaning, whimpering mess. I finally release her clit and trace her spasming entrance with my tongue before I crawl on top of her. Her face is damp with sweat, and I stare down at her quivering lip, her eyes wide and stripped fucking raw.

"Let's try this again," I say softly, sealing my mouth over hers as I sink back into her, and just for good measure, my hand wraps around her throat and squeezes.

20

Kiernan

I can't breathe.

He's pried me open and sucked my insides out, left me for dead, unable to move or think or so much as blink, let alone catch my breath. But before I can try to remember how to oxygenate my body, he's sealed my lips shut with his mouth and is squeezing my windpipe at the same time as he slides his cock back inside of me.

It's enormous. Nothing like that little bullet vibrator SJ bought me that I like to fuck myself with. It's about the size of a thumb, and from what I can tell he had two thumbs in me, plus a tongue, and now he's shoving his stupidly big dick into my body and expecting me not to pass out.

He pulls out and then slides back in, my pussy weeping around him, running down my thighs, wetter than I've ever been in my entire fucking life. He groans into my mouth as he sinks into me again, flexing his hand around my neck, spots forming at the edges of my vision.

I feel my insides fighting him, the stretching almost unbearable, except that every time he pulls out I want him to push back into me even harder.

He starts to pick up a rhythm, his hand flexing around my neck to his pumps, my vision brightening and darkening as I desperately try to hold on for the ride. His lips never move from mine, never part, and I muster all the strength I have to raise my

dead arms to his back and dig my nails into his skin.

He jumps and groans, mashing our foreheads together and finally breaking his mouth away from mine, panting desperately. I know there's no catching an easy breath with this man. I know I'll have to fight for every scrap of air.

I don't care.

“Are you with me, baby?”

I can't speak, can't answer, so I just dig my nails into him one more time to let him know I'm right on the edge. I'm with you.

“Shit, shit, shit. ” He's swearing as he pounds into me, and all of a sudden he lets go of my throat, sits up on his knees, and drives into me so hard my entire body shatters.

“FUCK!” he yells at the same time, his fingers digging into my hips pulling me even tighter onto him like he wants to break me in two.

I can't . . .

The roaring orgasm renders every muscle in my body completely useless.

The sight of him up on his knees, pulling my ragdoll body tighter onto his dick as he blows his load in me, his neck pulsing, sweat running down his chest . . . It's too much.

The sudden rush of oxygen . . .

He's too much.

“Kiernan?” I hear him say, his voice breathless and raw.

“I’m fading,” I mutter.

I feel him drop back down over me, smoothing the wet hair off my face as I look drowsily up at him, my vision completely whiting out.

He drops his mouth to my ear and runs his fingers gently over my neck.

“Night night, babygirl,” he whispers.

And then everything goes black.

21

James

She goes completely limp, passes the fuck out on my cock.

Now that's an addictive feeling . . .

I ease out of her, and her legs fall open, her raw pussy exposed, and I'm shocked by the amount of cum that starts pouring out of her. I reach forward in awe, tracing her slit and catching it on my fingers, in my palm . . . I raise my hand and rub my fingers together, my cock giving a half-hearted kick as I realize how fucking hard I came.

I lay down beside her and listen to her breathing, but I can't keep my hands off her, my cum still leaking out of her and onto the bed.

I reach down, hesitating for just a minute, before I start gently probing at her entrance, trying to catch it all and push it back inside of her. I still want to be in you.

She stirs, her eyes opening a crack, and I kiss her gently as my fingers keep pushing my cum back into her pussy.

"Hmmmng . . ." she mumbles.

"Sleep, baby," I say, but she's already out again.

Finally her cunt stops leaking, and I cup it gently. I don't know how long I lay like

that for, my forehead pressed to hers, my hand on her pussy, just watching her sleep.
But eventually I start to nod off.

My mind drifts away, dreaming of soft skin and purple bruises.

I'm never letting you go.

22

Kiernan

I wake up for the second time today in a daze, only this time my body is pounding instead of my head. I feel like I've been run over by an eighteen-wheeler.

It seems I've been asleep all day, the sun low in the sky, the bedroom filled with an orange glow. I try to sit up and wince, all of my muscles screaming at me. I think I've pulled them all, inside and out.

I roll onto my stomach and push myself up, crawling to the edge of the bed and sliding off on my tummy. I hobble to the bathroom in search of the sweats from earlier but he's already picked them up along with his T-shirt. Anal bastard.

I sigh and lean against the wall, embarrassed to admit my legs are shaking just from the short walk.

"I need a gym membership," I mutter.

I hear a soft chuckle and blush at the sound, biting my bottom lip and wincing again. It's puffy, sensitive, and sore from all the kissing.

"I think you broke me," I grumble, turning around and crossing my arms over my chest, still very unused to being so casually naked.

He's grinning, his eyes twinkling, and he looks . . . lighter, somehow. More

mischievous.

“Good,” he says, his voice warm as he steps into me, pulling me against his chest and resting his chin on my forehead. I glance at him in the mirror, and he looks unusually relaxed. Thoughtful, but relaxed.

I pause for a moment and can’t help but think about that girl—Tanya—and how much she’d been salivating over him the entire time we talked. She went on and on about how he must have a tiny cock, because nobody with a face that perfect could be hung.

I smile to myself and admire his shoulders and the curve of his biceps. He looks different, somehow. He seems different. Gentle, almost.

I smirk to myself, because my screaming body has a lot to say about James and the word gentle.

Sorry to tell you, Tanya, but his dick is decidedly NOT small.

He shifts his head and makes eye contact with my reflection, slowly running his hand down my spine and watching the goosebumps rise on my bare flesh. He cups my ass cheek and rubs his thumb back and forth. It’s still pink.

“Where did you come from , Kiernan?” he murmurs, his voice low, face serious. The rest of my skin turns as pink as my butt, and he smiles, kissing the top of my head. Then he quietly turns and leaves, shutting the door behind me to give me my privacy.

I catch myself on the counter, blood rushing to both my head and between my legs, my stomach filled with so many butterflies I’m pretty sure I’m levitating.

I take a deep, steadying breath and pull myself together, wash my face, and steal his

toothbrush. I'm a little worse for wear, some purple bruising blossoming across my hip, a thumbprint on one side of my neck and a series of three embarrassingly dark hickies on the other. But I can't stop grinning anyway. I smile even wider as I step back into the bedroom. He's left my skirt and shirt out on the bed, neatly folded, along with my underwear which have definitely been washed. I blush, mortified but grateful, throw on my clothes and head back out into the apartment. He's sitting on the couch, dark hair tousled, blue glow of the computer screen reflected in his glasses. He looks less relaxed now. In fact he's scowling, and I can't help but smile.

There he is.

He looks up and his eyes scan my body, pausing for an extra half a second on my bare thighs before he shuts his laptop again and stands, picking up his keys off the side table.

"I'll take you home," he says.

I try to ignore the sinking feeling of disappointment as I slip on my shoes. We're halfway down the hall to the elevators when he suddenly stops.

"Do you have a coat?" he asks.

I'm so completely taken aback by the question that I can't even answer, just shake my head no. He scowls a little deeper and doubles back, darting into the apartment and reappearing with a navy-blue York U hoodie.

"Up," he says, sounding annoyed. Moody motherfucker, I think, but I raise my arms, and he pulls it on over my head. I'm drowning in it, the bottom longer than the hem of my skirt, and he takes a step back to look at me.

He reaches out and grabs the drawstrings on the hoodie, yanking them so I fall

towards him, his other hand fondling one of the sleeves hanging way past my hand.

“Might get used to this,” he says quietly, and then he drops his head and kisses me senseless.

23

James

It takes everything I've got to let her get in that elevator. I want to throw her back into my bed, handcuff her in there and fuck her a hundred more times, come on every inch of her skin, watch her pass out again.

I'd woken up maybe an hour after dozing off, surprised to find her on her side and curled into my chest, my arms wrapped around her, and my nose buried in her hair. I'd been afraid to wake her, but I had shit to do. Turns out I didn't have to worry; I could have played live trumpets into a microphone, and she wouldn't have moved.

I spent the majority of the day ignoring my hard-on and trying to work, checking on her every half hour or so. Her phone kept buzzing, going off incessantly, but I refused to look at it.

It goes off again in my back pocket, and I pull it out, handing it to her.

She doesn't take it, narrowing her eyes at me instead.

"You still never said how you got my number."

"I told you, I didn't," I say, annoyed as it's buzzing non-fucking-stop now. "Can you take this? It's been going off all day."

She snatches it from my hand and glances down, visibly paling.

“Oh, shit,” she says under her breath, unlocking the screen and pressing the phone to her ear.

I grimace as an unfamiliar and deeply uncomfortable feeling settles in my gut.

“Is it your boyfriend?” I hear myself ask. Why am I asking her this.

“Shh!” she says.

I grit my teeth and crack my knuckles, incensed at being shushed like a fucking toddler. You’ll pay for that. Later.

“Hey,” she says into the phone. “No—I’m totally fine. I went to a party.” She pauses, cheeks flaming red, and turns away from me as if we aren’t in an enclosed space where I can hear every goddamn word she says. “I’m on my way home now.” She’s quiet for a minute. “Thank you. I owe you.”

She hangs up, and her shoulders relax as she lets out a breath.

“Who do you owe?” I ask, my voice sharp.

“SJ,” she says shortly.

I wait for her to keep talking, but she doesn’t. Exasperation is my new skin colour as I fight to keep from rolling my eyes.

“ Why do you owe SJ?”

“She covered for me.”

She. Okay. I frown. “With who?”

She sighs. “With my parents.”

I nearly swallow my tongue. Right. She still lives at home.

Shit. SHIT.

We’re quiet on the walk to the car. She gets in and looks around, brows knitted together like she’s trying to remember being in it and is drawing a blank. Yeah, honey, you were a goner. I’d had to carry her all the way up to my place.

As we pull out of the garage and into traffic she brings her thumb absently to her mouth and starts to chew on her cuticle. My hand reaches out involuntarily at such a noticeable display of nerves, wrapping around hers and tugging it away from her mouth. Interlacing our fingers, I pull them to my lips, kissing her knuckles before placing our hands on the centre console and giving an extra little squeeze.

“Talk to me,” I say.

She blows out a breath, and I realize how much tension she’s been holding. “You’re not really the easiest man to talk to, you know.”

“I don’t suffer fools well, Kiernan, but you’re a far cry from the idiots I deal with all day. Please. Try me. ”

“I don’t think I’m supposed to ask you the things I want to ask you,” she says slowly. “There are rules about this stuff, aren’t there?”

“Unless it’s a differential equation, there are no rules here. Okay? Just . . . fucking ask.” My tone hardens at the end. A demand. Please, talk to me . . .

“What is this?”

Ooookay. She's blunt.

I clear my throat. "I don't know."

"Did this mean anything to you?"

I pause. She's really fucking blunt. "Yes," I say. And I'm surprised by how much I mean it.

"Do you plan to do it again?"

No hesitation. "As much as humanly fucking possible."

She tips her head back and looks at me.

"Do you have a girlfriend?"

"No."

"Are you seeing anyone?"

I frown. "Define 'seeing'."

"Fucking."

"Yes."

"More than one?"

My mouth twitches. "Sometimes."

She pulls her hand out of mine and places it on her thigh, staring me down.

“How many?”

I sigh. “I don’t know, Kiernan. I’m not bringing home a new woman every night if that’s what you’re asking.”

“How many students are you sleeping with?”

I take my eyes off the road and turn to face her, looking her right in the eye. “One.”

“Have you ever slept with a student before?”

“No.”

“I don’t believe you,” she scoffs.

I shrug, annoyed. “Believe me or don’t believe me. I’ve never fucked a student.”

She narrows her eyes. “I find it hard to believe nobody has tried.”

“Just because they try doesn’t mean it works.”

“What’s so special about me, then?”

I take my eyes off the road again and stare her down. “Everything.”

24

Kiernan

He idles at the curb a little way away from my house.

I feel weird. Shifty. I want to touch him, but I don't. I want to kiss him, but I don't. Instead I just sit there, staring at my hands, wishing I didn't have to leave.

"Look at me," he says softly.

I raise my eyes and stare up at him. His expression is soft as he unbuckles his seatbelt and leans across the console, pressing his lips gently to mine. I sigh, and he inhales, his tongue slipping into my mouth, his fingers drifting back to my throat.

He seems to catch himself and pulls away, breathless. Then he nods at the door.

"Go."

I unbuckle my belt and get out, hesitating for a moment before I reach for the hem of his hoodie to pull it off. He shakes his head.

"Keep it. I'll call you tomorrow. Now go."

I smirk. "Yes, daddy." And then I slam the door shut behind me.

I flop onto my bed and stare at the ceiling, thighs aching from climbing the stairs, and

clap my hands over my mouth to keep from squealing with nerves, excitement, delight . . . My phone vibrates and I pick it up, frowning at the unknown number.

You're lucky I like hearing you say that or you'd be due for a spanking

I grin and text him back.

You're lucky I like your spankings or you'd regret saying that

Fuck you, Kiernan

You know you love me xo

As soon as I hit send I freeze, mortified beyond words that I just text him that. Oh my God, oh my GOD, he's never going to fucking talk to me again. OH MY GOD. I feel like I'm going to be sick. I have never been so embarrassed in my entire life. But then my phone buzzes again.

Careful what you wish for

I shudder, my entire body wracked with pleasure, my aching pussy clenching, already greedy as fuck for more. I smile to myself as I save him in my phone as Professor J. I spend the rest of the evening studying and fall asleep late that night with my hand between my legs and his name on my lips.

25

James

My Friday morning tutorial group is . . . okay. Not many students make it this far in the program and this bunch hasn't been entirely useless. Since there's so few of them we usually just meet at one of the campus pubs so I can actually eat. I always schedule as many lectures as I can on Fridays because the only students who bother to show up are the serious ones, but it leaves me short on time for food.

I've been answering their questions about rational inequalities for the better part of half an hour. They're good questions, fair questions, and for once I don't really mind answering them, although I can't help but compare them to Kiernan. These kids probably have what—five, some of them six?—years of education on her, and I'd bet she'd blow every one of them out of the water. Watching her learn was almost as hot as watching her come.

I patiently run through another sample, turning a notebook around and circling the part that . . . fuck, what's this girl's name . . . Denise? Got wrong.

“Here. It's this. Fix this and everything else will balance. The rest of your work looks good.”

I take a bite of my sandwich and then realize the table has been silent for well over a minute.

“What?” I ask.

The group all look sideways at each other, and I glance down at my shirt. Did I spill mayo or something?

“Are you okay, Professor?” someone asks. I stare at her and then look at Denise whose mouth is hanging slightly open. It’s making me feel bristly.

“Why wouldn’t I be?” I snap.

Someone clears their throat, but I’m distracted by my phone vibrating on the table. I turn it over and can’t help it—my lips twitch. Kiernan. I swipe the screen as I put it up to my ear.

“Can this wait?” I say in greeting. “I’m busy.”

“Who are we torturing today? People or animals?”

Little shit. “ You, if you don’t tell me what you fucking want.”

“Just wanted to make sure you were still an asshole is all,” she says.

I scowl, wiping at the condensation on my glass. “I don’t have time for this. I’m teaching people shit.”

She laughs and my cock twitches under the table. So pretty.

“So, definitely still an asshole then.”

“For you, baby, always.”

I hear her sharp intake of breath and blink, surprised at myself for calling her baby like this. Dropping it in bed in the dark is one thing, but in casual conversation on the

phone in front of half a dozen students?

I look up at them and pause, all of them openly staring at me, several downright gaping.

“Call me later?” she asks.

“Maybe.”

“Please, daddy?”

I close my eyes and send up a silent prayer. I was not mentally prepared for this right now.

“Yes, I’ll call you later. Now fuck off.”

She laughs again and hangs up, and I find myself staring down at the black screen wishing she hadn’t.

“Professor?” Josh says.

“Yeah.”

“Marry her.”

They all rumble in agreement.

“I’m failing all of you, you know,” I gripe, and they chuckle.

But the only laugh I can hear is hers.

26

Kiernan

Baby.

Fuck. Me. The man is full of surprises.

I'd called him on a whim between classes, tired of checking my phone for a text that clearly wasn't coming. I hadn't expected him to answer. And I definitely hadn't expected him to call me baby.

SJ is staring at me as I walk into English, the only class we have together. I avoid eye contact as I take a seat and pull out my stuff.

"Nice hoodie," she says.

"Shut up."

"Did you finally french kiss a boy, Kiernan?" she mocks.

"I've kissed a fucking boy before, you asshole." But I'm blushing, because apart from Connor that one time, and the gross kiss with Graham at the party on Wednesday night, I actually haven't. Not really. Not properly, now that I know what properly feels like.

"Kiernan . . . did you more than french kiss a boy?!"

I say nothing, letting my hair fall like a dark curtain between us. She pinches the back of my arm, and I yelp as the teacher walks in, waving his hand for everyone to hush.

“What did you do?” she hisses at me.

“Nothing,” I whisper.

“You’re lying. Why are you lying?”

“Sarah-Jean!” Mr. Moore snaps. “Care to share with the class?”

SJ shuts her mouth and grits her teeth. I know I’m in for an inquisition as soon as she’s able, so I tap out a quick message.

My friend is asking questions. I don’t know what to tell her

I bite my lip, worried he’ll be pissed, but not sure what else to do.

Tell her you got fucked so hard you passed out

I narrow my eyes.

You mean choked out? And I can’t tell her that. She’ll ask who

Lie

She knows me too well. Won’t work

I wait, anxiously nibbling at my cuticle, feeling slightly nauseous.

If you trust her, just tell her the truth

My eyebrows hit the roof. I am fucking floored.

I do trust her. But aren't you worried about this?

Yes

So, why are you okay with me telling her about you?

Because you just lost your virginity, and I'm assuming you'd like to talk someone about it

I blink, literally shocked. Of all the fucking things I expected him to say, this isn't it.

I'll tell her I got into some trouble at a party, and you took me home. She'll prob get distracted by the groping anyway, she's a bit protective

He is slow to respond, this time.

You can talk to me about that too. If you need to

No, sir. I might have been seeing seven of you, but I know what 'murder' looks like

Say that again

That you looked like you were going to kill a man for me?

Sir

I freeze, my stomach clenching deliciously at the opportunity to piss him off, and try not to shift in my seat too much.

Fuck you, JAMES

I smirk, picturing his face, but then I panic as my phone starts to vibrate in my hand. SJ looks over her shoulder and her mouth drops open as she sees Professor J on my screen.

“Oh my GOD,” she hisses at me. “Are you SERIOUS?”

“Not now,” I mumble, declining his call, my face hot.

It starts to ring again.

SJ covers her mouth, eyes wide, and stares at the ringing phone.

I decline again and feel legitimate panic flooding my body. He’s going to be raging fucking mad about this. Shit.

It vibrates once, and I close one eye like I’m watching a horror movie, looking down at the text.

You have 3 minutes to get somewhere private. And you WILL pick up the fucking phone, Kiernan

I’m in class!

Tick tock. 2 minutes left

I gulp, SJ openly reading his message over my shoulder, even her cheeks going pink. I stick my hand up in the air.

“Kiernan?”

“I need to go to the washroom.”

He waves his hand and continues talking, and I avoid eye contact with SJ as I quickly get up and beeline for the door.

What is he going to make me do . . .

I’m in deep fucking shit.

27

James

I'm fuming. The woman has more attitude than anyone I've ever met in my goddamn life and all I want in the world is to fuck it out of her.

I watch the clock tick down and then dial. If she doesn't answer, I'm driving to her damn house. But to my surprise, she picks up on the first ring.

"Hi," she says. She sounds nervous and out of breath, like she's been running.

"Are you alone?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"Bathroom stall."

"Good. Take off your pants."

"WHAT?" she whisper-yells. "This is a public, high school bathroom!"

"Should have thought of that before smarting off. Take. Off. Your. Pants."

She's breathing heavily, clearly angry, but I can tell from the hitch in her rhythm that

she's turned on too.

"Now, Kiernan."

I hear a rustling noise, and I close my eyes, picturing her slender thighs, round ass, swollen pink pussy . . . My cock is kicking like a mule in my jeans, wet with precum as I remember how she tastes. What it feels like to sink into her tight, wet cunt.

Fuck.

I need to see her face. I need to see this. So I hit Facetime and wait, my cock aching, and try to ignore the lurch in my gut when she answers, and I see her flushed, freckled face on the screen of my phone.

"Show me you've done what you're told."

She tilts the screen down, her pants undone and pushed to her knees.

"I said take them off. "

She whimpers, eyes darting to the side, clearly terrified. But I need her exposed. I need her to feel the gravity of this. I want her naked in that fucking stall, where anyone could see her, anyone could walk in, anyone can talk to her.

"OFF!"

She props the phone up on something and slides her pants the rest of the way off, hanging them on a hook on the door.

"Panties," I say, trying not to sound breathless myself.

She is visibly shaking with adrenaline and fear, but she takes a huge, shaky breath and slides them off too, tucking them into the pocket of her jeans.

“Good girl,” I moan as I watch her standing there half-naked and afraid. “Such a good girl, Kiernan. Now your shirt.”

She blushes and looks pleased, but she slips off her T-shirt and I’m pleasantly surprised to find she isn’t wearing a bra. My mouth waters, remembering the feeling of her perfect, tight, brown nipples between my teeth.

She’s twisting her fingers together, always giving away her nerves. I’ll give you something better to do with those fingers.

“Lean back against the stall.”

She does and her chest starts to heave.

“Legs apart.”

She goes beet red, redder than I’ve ever seen her, but she spreads her legs, opening herself wide, and I could drop to my fucking knees at the sight of it.

“Show me your pussy, Kiernan,” I growl.

She reaches down with both hands and hesitates, her fingers trembling, but she does what she’s told and spreads her lips wide open. Even on a screen I can see she’s drenched, fucking dripping, and I’ve never wanted anything as bad as I want to be nose deep in her fucking slit.

“Slide your middle finger in your pussy, baby.”

She does it immediately, her head snapping back, a low moan escaping her lips as she closes her eyes, brow furrowing, tits heaving.

“Pump,” I manage to grit out.

She slides a little lower, bent into a squat as she pumps her finger into herself, covering her finger in her wetness. I can see her arousal glistening all over it every time she pulls it out, glowing under the fluorescent lights.

“Harder.”

She starts fucking herself in earnest with her hand, her hips rising up to meet it, jerking her finger into herself as hard as she can. She adds another finger—without permission—but I allow it because the moan coming out of her mouth is the hottest sound I’ve ever heard in my entire life.

But then she freezes—pure panic on her face—and I hear the echoes of voices and laughter.

Someone’s in here! she mouths, scrambling to stand up.

I glare at her and shake my head no, quickly sending her a text that I know will pop up on her screen.

Don’t you dare fucking stop

She looks petrified, sweat forming on her temples, but her nipples tighten even more, and I smile, satisfied, because I already know she’s going to do what she’s fucking told. Staring right at the camera—right at me—she leans against the stall wall again and spreads herself for me, her pussy clenching and running with cum.

She holds out three fingers and waits. She's asking.

GOOD GIRL I mouth, and nod. And she stares right at me as she sinks all three fingers so deep inside herself, I think I'm the one who's coming.

28

Kiernan

My brain and body are both going bat. shit. crazy.

Adrenaline like nothing I've ever experienced before is coursing through my veins as I listen to what sounds like two of the guidance counsellors having a conversation about the price of cheese while I've split myself wide open, cum running down my entrance and towards my ass, his greedy eyes glued to my pussy as I fuck myself—HARD—with as many fingers as I can handle without pain.

I ride my hand like a fucking rodeo queen, so slippery that my whole palm is coated, the butt of my thumb rubbing my clit as I fuck myself faster and faster.

I keep my mouth clamped shut to keep from calling out, from moaning, from screaming his name.

I've never been so terrified or so exposed or so turned on in my life.

Fuck, I'm gonna come, I'm gonna come!

But he knows and frantically shakes his head no, glaring at me, demanding I wait with just a look.

I force myself to slow down, shifting my hand so the pressure on my clit is gone, and I see a message pop up on the screen.

Show me your ass

I panic, heart ratcheting up to a whole new level of terror, but something about his face tells me I will regret it forever if I don't do what he says, so—sweating—I turn around and bend over, spreading my cheeks open for him to look at.

His mouth falls open, his own face flushed, and I see the phone change angles as he props it up on something so I can see his whole body.

He's in an office I don't recognize, his hips visible behind the edge of a dark wooden desk as he undoes his belt and opens the fly of his jeans, popping his cock out of his boxers.

My neck hurts from cranking so hard to see the screen but my mouth waters at the sight of his cock, head shiny from precum, as he palms it and runs his hand all over the end of his dick.

I want to see your ass as wet as your pussy

I should tell him I've never touched my ass before. I should tell him how scared I am right now. But for some reason—I'm not sure why—I am so compelled to do what he says that I find myself reaching behind me, swirling my middle finger in my pussy and slathering it with wetness before gently dragging it up to my asshole. I circle, slowly, my body clenching at the unexpected feeling.

Wetter

I repeat the motion, scooping out my arousal and dragging it up to my ass, my pussy clenching every time I touch my asshole, my whole lower half in full spasm.

Put your finger in your ass, Kiernan

I hear the women in the bathroom leave, the room going quiet, and I look over my shoulder at him, his hand wrapped around his cock and pumping hard.

“Yes, sir,” I say.

And then I push my middle finger inside my ass.

29

James

The “sir” is so unexpected that I come in surprise, my head hitting the back of the chair, cum spurting out all over my shirt, balls spasming in my boxers.

“Put your other hand in your pussy!” I groan. “I need to watch you come right now! ”

She does it, greedily fucking her other hand as she slowly and tentatively moves the finger in and out of her ass a little. I watch her legs shake, her back muscles clenched with tension, her ass puckering and sucking her finger in even harder, and my cock continues to leak at the sight of it, keeps spilling out all over my fucking clothes.

“Come, baby,” I say. “Come right fucking now.”

She lets out a harsh groan, almost a grunt, and her whole body locks up—head tipped to the ceiling—mouth slack as she shakes like crazy. She pulls her finger out of her ass and uses that hand to catch herself as she falls sideways, body giving out, a panting, sweaty, hot fucking mess.

I give her a minute to catch her breath, watching her beautiful body slowly uncoil from the tension, running my hand up and down the length of my shaft a few more times, cum still leaking out of me relentlessly.

She finally collects herself and turns to face me, her eyes glazed.

“You can get dressed now.”

She pulls her clothes on in a daze, using the walls as leverage while she finds her balance again.

“The next time I tell you to do something, you fucking do it,” I threaten. “I tell you to call me something, you do it. Do you understand?”

She nods dumbly.

“You’re going to go wash your face. You’re going to catch your breath. And then you’re going to go back to class. Do you understand?”

She nods again.

“Good girl,” I purr, warmth flooding my chest. “I’ll call you later.”

“Thank you,” she whispers.

She remembered to say thank you . . .

I’m so fucked.

30

Kiernan

SJ seemed to have decided to leave my dignity intact and hasn't said anything even though my face was the colour of an eggplant when I scurried back into class. Or maybe she just thought I was being awkward—it was unlikely the first thing to cross her mind was “Kiernan stripped naked in the bathroom and fucked herself in the pussy and ass on camera for her university professor.” All she said was we'll talk about this later. I told her I was going to be busy all weekend.

I didn't think I'd hear from him again today, considering. When he said he'd “call me later” I'd expected like, Sunday maybe. If at all. But to my surprise he calls around four-thirty, the phone vibrating loudly on the counter just as I step out of the shower.

“Hello?” I say breathlessly, butterflies exploding in my gut.

“Hi.” There's a rustling noise, like he's putting on a coat and changing hands. “What are you doing?”

I blush. “Um . . . I just got out of the shower?”

He exhales loudly. “I'm really tempted to Facetime you right now, but I think one bathroom encounter was enough for both of us today.”

“Thank you, sir .” He groans, and I chuckle. “You really like that, huh?”

“You have no idea,” he says darkly. “I like it almost as much as your laugh.”

I flush, drying the ends of my hair with my towel.

“Do you make all your girlfriends call you sir?” My mouth drops open at the same time as I drop my phone. Fuck. I’m such a fucking idiot. I scramble to pick it back up and feel like I might barf. Girlfriend?! What the fuck is wrong with me?! “I didn’t mean—I’m not saying—I don’t think you’re my—”

“Breathe, Kiernan. It’s fine.”

“I didn’t mean it the way it sounded. This is fucking mortifying,” I grumble.

“This is fucking adorable.”

“Well?” I snap. “Do you? Make your . . . women . . . call you sir?”

He laughs, an outright unrestrained laugh that makes my skin tingle right to my toes.

“Nobody’s ever called me sir outside of a classroom before. And I’ve never asked anyone to.”

“So, why are you asking me?” I whine.

“I’m not asking you, Kiernan. I’m telling you.”

“But why?” I pout, annoyed. “Sir,” I tack on, albeit irritably.

“Because you’re not the kind of woman who would say that easily. And I’m very, very rarely challenged.”

“By girls?”

“By anyone. ”

I shiver, the undercurrent in his voice causing my lower belly to flip-flop some more.

“You’re showering at home, right? At your house?” he asks suddenly, his voice a little sharp.

“Yes?”

“I’m on my way. I’ll be there in an hour or so. Rush hour.”

My mouth drops open, completely taken aback. “Why are you on your way, exactly?” I ask, my voice very small.

“I’m taking you out for dinner.”

“Why?” I’m fully squeaking now.

“Because you earned it, babygirl. I’ll see you in an hour.” And then he hangs up.

I hurry to find clean clothes— any clean clothes—that might be suitable for an actual date with Mister Hugo Boss. Shit.

I take a deep breath, pick up my phone, and dial again. SJ picks up on the first ring.

“I’m not talking to you,” she sniffs.

“SJ, this is an emergency.”

She sighs. “A ‘I only got ninety-nine percent on my math test’ emergency? Or a ‘Connor kissed me and now I think I’m a lesbian’ emergency?”

“The professor is on his way here to take me out for dinner, and I have nothing to wear emergency.”

“I’ll be there in fifteen minutes.”

31

James

I meant to cool my jets. I meant to go home, have a shower, and try not to think about the images of her blowing my goddamn mind in that bathroom that had been burned into my retinas. But by the time I'd finished my shower, I'd already decided to make the drive. I was hard again before I'd even dried myself off.

The idea of taking her out on a date makes me a bit nervous, if only because I'm ignoring an awful lot of faculty rules and possibly a couple of laws. But the reality is that if she's a senior in high school— fuck, am I really justifying this right now?— she can't be more than a few months away from eighteen, and it's not like the rest of the staff aren't all fucking their students. Not high school ones, but . . .

I'd honestly assumed she'd tell someone about us , given the whole accidental deflowering situation. I know she's a smart girl and assumed she'd use some discretion, so I didn't feel like it was necessary to tell her to keep quiet about it. But the fact that she'd asked me what she should say to her friend had shocked the shit out of me. I don't think she planned to tell anyone about us at all , and I find my affection for her growing as rapidly as my respect.

I'm here

Just need 5 more mins

I want to see you now

10 mins then

KIERNAN

5 mins xo

Hurry up

Stop fucking texting me then

I grimace at my phone. She's such a shit.

She's really nothing like the sort of women I normally sleep with. The only thing they have in common is that they're all smart. But most of them have been close to my age, some older, often academics, and almost always a little bit pretentious. Gerald, my lawyer and sometimes-friend, told me I should have been born French. That I'd have loved sophisticated French women. Why this teenaged bitch with a trucker mouth has me on my knees, I have no fucking idea.

At seven minutes, I throw caution to the wind and get out of the car, walking up to the front porch. Just as I raise my hand to the doorbell the front door flies open and she barrels into my chest, not looking where she's going.

I stumble backwards a step, gripping her shoulders to steady her, and can't help but grin.

"Hi," I say.

"Hi," says another voice, a skeptical looking blonde stepping out onto the porch with us, her arms crossed defensively over her chest.

Kiernan glances nervously between me and her friend before reaching for my hand, but I pause for a moment, wanting to get this right. Kind of. It's been a while since I've had to charm anyone. I can't really remember the last time I met the friends or family of anyone I was seeing.

I hold out my hand to the blonde, and her eyebrows hit the roof.

"I'm James," I say. "You must be . . . SJ?" I glance at Kiernan for confirmation. She nods once, looking a little dazed.

SJ takes my hand, and we shake as I slide my other arm around Kiernan's waist and drop a kiss on the top of her head.

"You smell good, baby," I murmur.

I drop SJ's hand as her mouth drops open. Yeah. I'm not fucking around. "It was nice to meet you," I say, steering Kiernan gently towards the car.

She seems to be in a daze the entire time, SJ staring after us as I open the door for her and wait for her to get in before closing it and getting in the driver's side.

"Put your seatbelt on," I gripe as she stares dumbly out the window at her friend.

"I've never seen SJ speechless before," she says. "Just . . . give me a minute, please?"

"You can have a minute after you put on your fucking seatbelt on."

"You're so bossy. Jesus."

"And you're a fucking pain in the ass. So here we are. Put. On. Your. Seatbelt."

She sighs and drags it across her chest, clicking it into place, and I almost sigh with relief, but then she sticks. her. tongue. out. at. me.

I take a sharp right, pulling into an empty parking lot beside a park. It's getting dark, and we're alone, and she has the wherewithal to look fucking nervous.

I undo my seatbelt and get out of the car, walking slowly around the outside, staring at her through the windshield as I do.

I open the passenger side door and nod my head.

“Get out. Now.”

She scrambles out of the car immediately. “I’m sorry,” she says, her voice a little squeaky. “I just wasn’t expecting you to be standing on my porch. Or to talk to my friend. There’s no way she was expecting it either. I thought . . . I thought this would have to be a secret thing, and I wasn’t thinking and I’m really sorry—”

I put my finger to her lips, and she stops talking.

“Too late, Kiernan.” I grip the back of her neck and spin her around, shoving her down so she’s bent at a ninety-degree angle, her forearms on her seat. I run my hand up the outside of her thigh, grabbing a fistful of the soft material of her pretty dress.

“You look beautiful tonight,” I say softly, and then I shove her dress the rest of the way up, pull back my arm, and spank her.

32

Kiernan

JesusfuckingChrist.

It smarts like a bitch, my whole body jumping at the contact, but I can also already feel my nipples tightening. I'm instantly wet for him. Wet for this.

SMACK.

I groan, low and loud, dropping my forehead on the centre console. Why does this feel so good? Is it supposed to feel this good?

SMACK.

“Fuck,” I whimper.

SMACK.

“The ONLY time”—SMACK—“I will see your tongue”—SMACK—“is when you're licking my cock.” SMACK “Do you understand?”

I nod.

SMACK.

“Yes!” I shout.

SMACK.

“Yes, what. ”

“Yes, sir!”

I hear the frantic clinking of a belt and his laboured breathing as he grips my hips and pulls me out of the car, my dress falling back down as he turns me to face him, fingers roughly gripping the back of my hair.

“Show me you understand, Kiernan.”

I sink to my knees right there on the fucking asphalt, desperate to please him. He’s driven across town, picked me up at the door, made it clear I’m not a dirty secret , and is about to take me out for a very public dinner. He’s been . . . kind of perfect, honestly, and I suddenly regret giving him such a hard time as he stands there with his hand wrapped around the base of his cock, the tip shiny with cum. I hesitate, nerves taking over, unsure what to do.

I look up at him, his chest in his cashmere sweater heaving, eyes dark.

“Tell me what to do?” I whisper.

His face softens a little, his fingers loosening their grip and his hand gently caressing the back of my head.

“Open your mouth,” he says. His voice sounds a little strained.

I do it immediately.

“Wrap your lips around me. Watch your teeth.”

I lean forward and gently suck him into my mouth, opening my jaw wider to accommodate the size of him, a strange, heady, salty taste flooding my tongue. I close my eyes, luxuriating in the flavour of him and the odd, strangled moan he’s making, before I open them again and stare up at him, sliding a little bit farther down his shaft.

“Good, baby, that’s good,” he chokes out.

I experiment a little, pressing my tongue to the underside of his dick, sealing my mouth tighter, closing all the space in my mouth.

“Fuck!” he grits out, head thrown back. Intuitively I reach up and put my hand over his, easing it off his cock as I take over, wrapping my fingers around him and continuing to slide my mouth downwards until my lips are bumping into my hand.

I squeeze my fist as I slowly start sliding my mouth back up.

“Uh huh,” he says, “Yeah, like that. Just . . . like that.”

I do it all again and his hands both fist in my hair, but he doesn’t push me, just sucks a breath in through his teeth and lets me keep going, my tongue exploring freely, my hand starting to rotate and pump a little bit, taking my time, enjoying the feel of him in my palm, in my mouth, against my tongue . . . I can’t get enough of this. It makes me feel like a god. I continue to lick and suck, torturously slow, his cock leaking like crazy onto my tongue, the taste of him sliding down my throat already, and he isn’t even finished.

“Goddammit, can you speed up, please? You’re going to kill me.”

I repeat the motion, slower this time.

“If you don’t speed up on your own I will fucking make you,” he snarls.

Without thinking, I take my hand off his dick, reach around to grip his ass cheeks, and pull him forward so hard he hits the back of my throat.

“Shit!” he shouts, his cock jumping in my mouth as my throat floods with cum.

I choke, more out of surprise than anything. His cock is too big, my mouth stretched wide, and even though it’s choking me my lips still aren’t at the base. I can’t breathe properly, and I need to swallow, and I’m afraid cum is about to start leaking out of my mouth. He seems to notice because he grips my hands on his ass and eases them away, shifting his hips backwards an inch or two so I can breathe and attempt to swallow before I spill him all over my damn dress.

He grunts a few more times, and then seems to relax a little, and I ease my mouth off of him entirely, my jaw aching, before I look up at him again. His eyes bore into mine as I stick my tongue out and lick the head of him clean, strands from the remnants of his cum stretched between his dick and my mouth. When I’m sure there’s not a fucking drop left, I trace my lips with my forefinger and then lick it clean, too.

“I understand, daddy,” I say.

33

James

I'm reeling.

Clearly, it's the girl's first blowjob, and I almost hit the tarmac with her. I probably shouldn't be driving.

We're quiet on the way to the restaurant. She seems content, pleased even, but I'm the opposite. I'm fucking shook.

I'd helped her up off the asphalt and found very stupid words bubbling up in my throat and trying to fall out of my mouth. I kissed her to keep myself from saying them out loud, the taste of my cum hot in her mouth, and then—as badly as I'd wanted to lay down in the grass and have her ride my face until I died—I pushed her back into the seat so we could get going.

She put her seatbelt on immediately.

We pull into Allora, and I cut the engine, staring straight ahead.

“Are you okay?” she asks.

“Why haven't you done any of this before?” I ask. My voice sounds harsh. Angry. Shit, I don't mean to sound like this. Deep breath. Calm down.

“What do you mean?”

“You’re smart— too smart for your own good. And you’re beautiful as hell. Any man would—” I cut myself off, struggling a little with rattling off all of the reasons why everything with a dick will want inside her. “Why don’t you have a boyfriend?”

“Who says I don’t?”

I give her a look.

“Sex and relationships aren’t mutually exclusive, you know,” she seethes.

“Don’t fuck with me. Not right now, okay?” I turn to face her. “ Please. ”

I’m not sure if it’s the eye contact or the please that does it, but she reaches out and places her palm against my cheek, brown eyes warm and sweet.

“I’m sorry, James. I don’t have a boyfriend.”

I let out a breath I didn’t realize I was holding.

She also lets out a breath. “You’re upset James, and I don’t know why, and I got defensive about being asked about being a virgin like it’s offensive, somehow, thirty seconds after you just came in my mouth.”

Yep. Blunt.

“I’m not upset. I’m . . . concerned.”

“About me?”

“Yes.”

“You don’t think this is a good idea.”

“I know this isn’t a good idea, Kiernan. Doesn’t mean I’m going to stop doing it.”

She frowns, confused. “Why are you upset then? You weren’t upset earlier. Mad at me, but not upset.”

“Tell me why you don’t have a boyfriend. Haven’t had a boyfriend.”

She eyes me warily but pulls on her fingertips, fidgeting, giving her away like always. She’s nervous.

“I’ve just never been interested in anyone before,” she says quietly.

“Nobody? Not ever?” I’m not sure why this pleases me so much, but it does.

She shakes her head no. “Nobody. I’ve kissed a few—or they’ve kissed me”—my knuckles crack—“but it just never felt right.”

“Why?”

She blushes and stares down at her hands.

“Tell me why. Now.”

“They weren’t you,” she says quietly.

For once, I’m glad she’s not looking at me because I open and close my mouth at least three times before my tongue starts to work. Don’t say what you’re thinking.

Don't say what you're thinking.

"You know I'm almost forty, right?" I finally blurt out instead.

She looks up at me and grins. "I'm kind of good at math, you know."

I reach over and grab her chin, pulling her close.

"You little shit," I say warmly, and then I kiss her again.

34

Kiernan

He takes my hand as we walk into the restaurant, and I grimace as the hostess does a double take.

Yeah, yeah. He's hot. We know.

Her eyes slide over to me and then down to our hands, and she looks a bit surprised, glancing back up at his face and then blushing.

"Hi," he says after a long beat of awkward silence. "Table for two? Under McGrath."

"Yes, um, right this way please," she mumbles.

"Well this is fun," I mutter.

"What's fun?"

"Being stared at."

He shrugs. "It happens."

"You're used to people staring at you for a living. I much prefer to hide behind an abnormally large textbook at the back of the room, thank you."

He squeezes my hand as we slide into the booth, letting it go slowly like he's reluctant. I'm having kind of a hard time keeping up with his moods, but I feel like that has more to do with who he is as a person than with me. I have no context for boys except Connor who has always just been the boy from down the street with the purple mulberry stains on his cheeks, to me, and I definitely have no context for men, but I'm not stupid. I know he's . . . a lot.

I like this place. It's moody, like him, with black floors and black walls and black booths lit only by glowing orange candles and sparkling chandeliers. I make a mental note to thank SJ ferociously for her outfit choice; I'd have looked like a fucking peasant if I'd worn my jeans.

A server shows up at the table staring at him expectantly and based on her expression, I'd say she isn't disappointed. Cool.

"Hi, my name is—"

"I'll have a negroni," he interrupts her without looking at her. "Kiernan?"

I'm not old enough to drink here, I scream mentally, but he rolls his eyes at my face like he can tell what I'm thinking.

"She'll have a glass of sauvignon blanc. Thank you."

The girl gapes at him, and I stifle a snort. Yeah. He's definitely a lot. She picks up what he's putting down, which is very clearly a fuck off and leave us alone, I'll let you know when I'm ready for you vibe, and scurries away with her head down.

"Well, at least I know you're this mean to everyone."

"I'm not here to have a conversation with her," he says. "I'm here to have a

conversation with you.”

“You know you’re kind of impressively romantic for a complete and total dick.”

He ignores my comment. “You should apply for exemptions to the introductory prerequisites so you can just start in the upper-level courses next fall when you come full-time. Most of the first-year classes aren’t like this. They’re all review and fluff. I guarantee you none of the students in those classes are reading peer reviewed journals on mathematics over breakfast.”

“I can’t get out of the prerequisites, James. They’re prerequisites. ”

“You can. And you will.”

“How?”

“Prior knowledge challenge. Just write the test and you’ll get the credit.”

I chew on my lip. It would be nice to start with some of the classes I’m actually interested in, but . . .

“I don’t really want to fast-track the entire experience. The point of a four-year degree is to spend four years in school. If I challenge the first two years of my degree, I’ll be twenty when I graduate. Who would even hire me?”

“I would,” he says without hesitation, but he waves it off like it’s nothing. “Get your undergrad in two and do your master’s. Same number of years, twice the merit.”

I raise my eyebrows. “Isn’t getting into a master’s degree in this field kind of hard? I’ve heard it’s next to impossible.”

His eyes sparkle. “The admissions board is very . . . particular.”

“Is a blowjob in a park all it takes? Girls will be lining up for that deal.”

“Kiernan,” he says harshly, “I am particular about who I accept into the program because most students can’t handle the workload.”

“What if I can’t handle it either? I haven’t even taken one of your tests yet!”

“Yes, you have,” he says, pinning me with a stare.

We’re interrupted by the server dropping off our drinks. She moves so quickly it’s basically a drive-by, unwilling to linger, since we clearly haven’t touched our menus yet.

I pick up the glass and take a small sip.

“Oh!” I say, and take another. “This is nice.”

He makes a funny face. “You’ve never had wine?”

I shake my head. “High school parties are more of a vodka and cream soda crowd. Not many wine connoisseurs in twelfth grade.”

He grimaces. “Vodka and cream soda?”

I shrug. “Or beer.”

“You’re all heathens.”

“Don’t knock it till you’ve tried it.”

I smile as I sip the wine again, reaching for the menu and flipping it open. I don't know what I expected out of university, but it definitely wasn't this.

“Kiernan?”

“Hm?”

“Challenge the prerequisites.”

I glance up at him over my menu. “Yes, sir.”

He chokes on his negroni.

35

James

I'm embarrassed to admit that I feel a bit like I've smoked a joint. It's the best date I've ever been on, bar none. I hadn't really thought about it much when I got in my car on a whim to pick her up, but if I had, I'd probably have started worrying about what the fuck I was going to talk about with a high school student.

Answer? Everything.

As we head towards the exit, I can't help but wonder how long it's been since I enjoyed myself this much.

"James?"

I pause as I see Armin meandering over, his tweed-suit buttons pulled tight across his belly. Everything about him screams "professor" and I feel Kiernan clam up next to me.

Shit.

Armin holds out his hand and we shake.

"I didn't think you ever left the office!" he says. "Join me for a drink?"

"I'm just on my way out, Armin. Next time."

He waves his hand. “Oh, come now, just one! I’ve been wanting to talk to you about the summer semester anyway. I was thinking we—”

“Not this time,” I say firmly. “But let’s do something next week. Alright?” He blinks at the dismissal but then his eyes finally wander over to Kiernan who is fidgeting like crazy. I fight the urge to elbow her.

Fuck it, I think, and I slide my arm around her shoulders.

Armin’s eyebrows raise but he clears his throat, obviously trying to recover from the surprise.

“Kiernan, this is Armin. Armin, Kiernan.”

She looks like she’s going to faint, but she takes Armin’s hand as he leans down and kisses the back of her hand. His lips linger, and I frown as he stands back up but doesn’t drop her fingers.

“I’ll call you,” I say, my voice sharp. He glances up at me and pales a little, dropping her hand.

“Sounds good, James. Enjoy the rest of your evening.”

“See you at school.”

I steer her through the doors and into the parking lot, my blood pumping and mind going a mile a minute. Why am I being like this?

But as I glance down at her, bottom lip trembling with nerves, I already know the answer.

Because she's mine.

36

Kiernan

“Where are you taking me?”

“Home.”

“This isn’t the way to my house.”

“I’m not taking you to your house.”

I stare at him, his features visible in the lights of the city. He seems lost in thought, like he’s in even more of a mood than he was after the park, and he’s making me nervous. I’m not entirely sure I want to go back to his place, even if I could.

“I don’t think that’s a great idea.”

“None of this is a great idea. We’ve established this.”

I sigh. “I didn’t ask you to out us to my friend, or your colleague. So, if you’re about to act like it’s my fault people know about this, you can pull the fuck over right now and let me out. I’d rather walk home.”

I expect a snappy comeback, something harsh and demanding and very, very James, but he just sighs.

“Did I say any of this was your fault?”

“You’re not saying much of anything right now.”

“We had a nice dinner. I’d like to take you home and fuck you. Isn’t that enough?”

“You’re being weird. And you’re giving me whiplash. What the fuck is your problem?”

He’s quiet, and my heart sinks into my feet as I think he isn’t going to answer me. But then he sighs again, and I see him grip the steering wheel a little tighter.

“You know how you said you had questions, but you said you weren’t supposed to ask them?”

“Yes?” Where is he going with this . . .

“I have things on my mind that I’m not supposed to say.”

I reach across the console and put my hand on his knee. “No rules, remember?” I murmur. “Talk to me.”

“I like you. A lot more than I should.”

I fight the smile, but I’m pleased. I already know he likes me. If he didn’t, I can’t see him having bothered with any of this. He’s clearly not someone to willingly give up his time for no reason, and I doubt he’s ever suffered so much as an inconvenience without really wanting it. But hearing him say it is still nice.

Nice is an understatement.

“I like you too. What’s the problem? Are you just mad that you couldn’t spend the entire evening brooding? Did I mess up your jaw clenching routine?”

“I don’t want you to see anyone else,” he says, his voice hard.

“Okay.”

“I mean it.”

“Wasn’t really a thing, but sure.”

“Are you going to ask me not to see anyone else?”

I frown and take my time before I answer him. The truth? The idea of him dating anyone else makes my blood turn green with jealousy. But it doesn’t feel right to say he can’t. I’m sure there are things he’s going to want to do, places he’ll want to go with a date that I can’t attend. Faculty things. Professional things. Friend things. Adult things.

“Am I in a position to ask you that?” I say quietly.

He turns and looks at me. “Yes.”

He scowls as I unbuckle my seatbelt, but I don’t care. I scramble over to him and give him an enormous hug, him making a wheezing noise as I squeeze his middle.

“I’m driving!” he barks, but he doesn’t push me away. “Get back in your seat. And put your seatbelt on.”

“Okay,” I say, scrambling back into my seat and putting it on right away.

“So, we’re, like, totally boyfriend girlfriend now,” he says in a mock voice.

I laugh and he visibly relaxes, more than he did in the car before the restaurant. Is this really what was bugging him? He wanted to ask me to be his girlfriend? Absolutely nothing he’s done or said from quite literally the second we met has been predictable.

“You’re deeply un boring, you know that?” I say.

“Gotta make up for the math.”

I scowl. “Math isn’t boring.”

“This is why I like you so much.”

My phone vibrates— again— and I take the opportunity to check it knowing full well we’ll be too busy once we get back to his place.

Leave it to you to go from two awkward kisses in your life to being fucked by a Henry Cavill lookalike who doesn’t even feel bad about it

He just asked me to be his girlfriend

I fucking hate you a little bit, you know that?

xo

Is it a secret? Like, in front of other people?

Dunno. He outed us to someone at work at dinner. Doesn’t seem to care too much about who knows

I feel like he'd just threaten anyone who gave him a hard time

Probably

Are you coming over later so I can get the FULL cup of tea?

Not coming back tonight

Tomorrow then?

I'll text you when I'm home

You're staying for the weekend, aren't you

Dunno

That means yes. Can he go more than one round at his age do you think?

You have no. fucking. idea.

Yep I def hate you. ByyyeEEEE

As we pull into the parking garage of his building, I frown. "I don't have any clothes," I say.

He looks at me like I'm stupid. "You won't need them."

37

James

She wanders around the apartment touching my things while I make us each an old fashioned. It's distracting. Images of her in my shower and on my bed flood my brain, miraculously giving me yet another semi. At this rate, I must be at risk of brain damage from the lack of blood supply properly circulating anywhere but to my dick.

I'm feeling a bit raw. I know I'm being fucking stupid by outing us so casually, and for someone who usually takes six months to call a woman back and a year before I learn her last name I'm moving at warp speed. I rarely allow women in my apartment. I've never been partial to sharing my personal space. I've spent more time with Kiernan this week than I've spent with any one woman in the past decade. And like a fucking twelve-year-old, I asked her to be my girlfriend.

I cringe just thinking about it but can't ignore the embarrassingly fuzzy feeling in my chest. It's been a long time since I've had such a good day.

She's staring at the big canvas on the back wall with a frown as I hand her her drink. She takes a sip without looking and then winces, making a face and glaring at the glass.

"It'll grow on you," I say.

She has another sip and openly cringes. "I like wine better." But she looks back up at the canvas.

“What’s wrong with it?” I ask.

“Nothing, I guess.”

I grin. “What a glowing recommendation.”

“It’s just not you. None of this stuff is.”

I glance around at the apartment. It’s all glass and chrome, sleek low furniture, lots of white, neutral and nonoffensive, and I shrug.

“Decorator bought it all,” I say.

“Oh, good. So, I can openly say how hideous this is? It looks like a baby threw a jar of squash at your wall.”

I chuckle. “First of all, you can openly say anything. Always. And second of all, thank you very much for that because now it’s all I can see.”

“You’re very welcome.”

“It’s just an apartment. As long as it’s clean and quiet I really don’t care.”

She frowns. “But there should be something in here that’s got some personality. This place is so . . . clinical.”

“Pick something then.”

“What?”

I pluck the glass from her hand and down it in one sip, before downing my own and

putting both of them on the table.

“We can go shopping tomorrow. Pick something you like.”

“It’s not about what I like. It’s about what you like.”

“We’ll go shopping and find something I like then,” I say, brushing her hair off her neck and pulling her forward. She’s definitely got some bruises but they’re subtle, nothing you’d notice unless you were looking for them.

I trace them with my fingertips.

“I’m sorry I was so rough,” I say.

She looks up at me, leaning into my touch. “I liked it,” she says.

“It won’t always be like that. I was just desperate.”

“You don’t round your edges for anyone, James. I wouldn’t suddenly expect you to in bed.”

I reach out and grip the lapels of her leather jacket, pushing it off her shoulders and exposing her bare arms.

“Turn around.”

She does and I grab the zipper, slowly sliding it down her back, goosebumps rising on her skin. As it splits open I slide it down her upper arms, and she pulls them in so I can get her arms out of the sleeves. It slides down her body, falling at her feet, and she steps gracefully out of it, looking back over her shoulder at me but not turning around. All she’s wearing is a simple black thong, and I’d close my eyes in thanks if I

could get myself to look away. I run my hand over her ass, pink from the spanking in the car, and she whimpers a little.

“Sore?” I ask. Jesus, James, take it easier on her.

But she turns around and grabs the back of my head, yanking me to her mouth and kissing me like the world is about to end.

I stumble back in surprise, her mouth hard and hot and her tongue everywhere, her hands fumbling with my belt and fly. She’s stumbling, she hasn’t undone a man’s pants before, so I reach down and help her out and her fingers clench the hem of my sweater instead, trying to yank it upwards.

“Patience, Kiernan. One clothing article at a time, here.”

I drop my pants and then she scrambles with my sweater, yanking it up over my head, but she’s not tall enough and it gets stuck, my arms tangled.

I laugh as I finish pulling it off at the same time as she yanks my boxers down, and as soon as I’m free she’s got one hand on my cock and the other back in my hair, her mouth frantic on mine.

I grip her ass and hoist her up around my waist, carrying her over to the couch. I sit down, shifting my hands to her thighs as she’s split open on my lap. I reach up and cup her breast, her lips parting as she looks down at where I’m touching her, cheeks pink. Blushing, always blushing.

“Does that feel good?”

She nods.

“Say it.”

“It feels good.”

I slide my hand over her ribs and her hip, thumb digging into her flesh as I squeeze. Then I place my other hand on her hip as well, and gently ease her forward towards my cock.

“Get on,” I say gently.

She sits up and puts her hands on the back of the couch, face close to mine, shimmying forward and raising her hips a little. I give them an encouraging squeeze, but she hesitates, sucking in her lower lip, her fingers drumming the back of the couch.

Nerves.

I grip her harder and she starts to pant, but I force her hips forward and lift my own, pressing my shaft to her slit. She’s soaked, soaked enough that my cock is drenched just from bumping up against her.

“Get. On.”

She hides her face in my neck but takes a deep breath, shifting around a little until she feels the head of my dick against her entrance. Her chest starts to heave against mine, her breath loud in my ear, legs quivering against my sides.

“Just fucking do it, Kiernan,” I hiss.

And she lowers herself onto me by an inch.

“Fuck,” I grit out.

She moans, sounding pained, as she slides down another inch.

“Kiernan, hurry up,” I mutter, sweat blooming across the back of my neck.

“I’m sore!” she whimpers. “Give me a minute. This is a LOT.”

I blink, rocketed by a full-blown wave of shock at the reminder that she has literally only ever had sex one other time, and even an experienced woman would be feeling it for days, the way I fucking gave it to her . . .

“Hey,” I say gently, wrapping my hand around her cheek and ear and pushing her up so we’re forehead to forehead. Her eyes are huge, her face exposed, pleasure and pain scrawled all over it. I kiss her soft and sweet. “I’m sorry for this,” I whisper.

And then I pull her hips down hard, shoving my cock into her to the hilt.

38

Kiernan

I cry out but he kisses me, shutting me up.

I'm too full, stretched open and aching, and I want to punch him a little bit. I'd thought he was going to be sweet. I'd thought when he pressed his forehead to mine he was going to say take your time, baby. But no. He'd clearly used his sweet quota for the day already. He'd lost his patience and forced his way into me, and now I'm fighting the orgasm that's building without either of us even moving purely out of spite.

He's so fucking deep I can barely stand it, his grip biting into my skin, his eyes squeezed shut like he's trying to concentrate.

I shift my weight, sitting back onto my heels a little more, my drenched pussy gliding up his shaft and then sliding back down, and he groans so loudly I almost come.

I do it again, sliding backward and forward, his cock pushing and pulling at my insides as he raises his hips impatiently.

I grab the back of his hair and yank his head back, exposing his throat and scraping my teeth against his skin.

"Fuck you, James," I say, and then I bite him.

He barks out a yell but doesn't stop me as I trace the teeth marks with my tongue at the same time as I start to move up and down, involuntary moans warbling their way out of my throat at the sight of his head held back.

I know he could easily pick me up and flip me over. I know he could wrench my wrist away from his head in a heartbeat. So, the fact that he's letting me take charge, that he's letting me have him like this, is somehow even hotter. It feels like his apology for losing his cool. I grip his hair tighter and yank his head even farther back, and his eyes darken as he guides my hips with his hands, urging me to speed up.

I swat his hands away and to my surprise he complies. I swivel my hips, getting used to the stretching and starting to relax into it, starting to enjoy it a little even though it stings.

His hands drift to my hips again, clearly used to being in charge and feeling impatient. Instead of swatting him away, I take my free hand and wrap it around his throat—hard—squeezing just like he did, my nails digging into his skin.

“No,” I say.

His face goes black with anger, but I can see it—the edge of something desperate in his eyes. I squeeze a little harder. His hips push upwards, trying to get more friction, but I keep squeezing, leaning into it, his cheeks starting to go pink.

Let me be in charge. Let me REALLY be in charge . . .

I feel it, the minute he surrenders, his hips settling and his hands dropping to his sides, palms down on the cushions.

I loosen my grip and expect him to take advantage, to grab me and flip me over and fuck me sideways, but he stays still, quiet, patient, waiting for me to do my thing.

I lean forward and kiss him sweetly, shocked to shit that he's giving me this gift. Take advantage now, Kiernan, you know it won't last.

I close my eyes and tip my head back, riding him at my own pace, swiveling my hips and testing all the angles of our bodies until I find the ones that work best for me.

As I start to speed up, I open my eyes again and he's staring at me with the kind of burning intensity that could melt stone.

"This is for me," I say, continuing to speed up, this angle hitting something inside of me that is making my entire body quiver. I sound breathless, desperate, pistoning myself onto him as hard and fast as I can. Fuck, fuck, fuck . . .

"This one is all mine," I groan. "Do you understand?"

He nods, his mouth slack as I chase my high, still staring at me like he could set me on fire.

"Say it!" I moan.

He turns to face me again, madder than I've EVER seen him.

"I understand," he spits out.

And I come.

My entire body locks up, slamming down on him like gravity has doubled, my pussy clenching so hard and so fast and so frantically around him and I feel like I'm going to lift myself off his dick with just my muscles.

My brain turns to mush, and I lose track of my body, something ringing in my ears, as

I feel a rush of wetness flooding between us.

I fall forward, spent, and can feel myself being moved. Am I falling? But then I feel the cool leather of the cushions on my back and realize he's shifted us around so he's on top, my body limp and tongue thick and dead in my mouth.

He lowers himself onto me and seals our mouths together, his kiss passionate, intense, hot. And then he starts to fuck me, hard quick thrusts that have my stretched, bruised pussy aching all over again.

I know what he wants. I can feel it, feel what he's trying to do. He wants me to come again. He wants me to die of orgasms.

"I can't," I moan. "I cant."

He bites my breast, right above the nipple, sucking so hard I know he'll leave a huge hickey like a fucking brand.

"You can," he says, fucking me harder, harder, harder . . . driving me closer and closer to another release.

I feel like I'm going to break.

I feel like I'm going to split apart.

I feel like I'm going to scream.

We're both sweating, panting, shaking . . .

"I can't," I cry.

He pulls out and rears up over me, wrapping his hand around his cock and staring down at me with rage.

“You WILL,” he says, and just as he pumps his shaft with his fist his other hand drives into my pussy, four fingers stuffed into my cunt and taking me completely by surprise.

I fucking detonate as he blows his load, jets of cum spurting out of his cock and all over my chest, my vision swimming at the sight of his fit body wracked with wave after wave of his orgasm.

He lets go of his cock and collapses forward onto his side beside me, his chest and hips against me, his hand slowly pulling out of me.

We’re both soaked, and panting, and covered in come, and I feel like I am supposed to feel dirty about it, but I don’t. I feel . . . euphoric.

He brings his pussy-drenched hand up to my chest, tracing one nipple and then the other, soaking them in me, before he slides his fingers into the jets of his own come all over my tits, rubbing it into my skin like it’s suntan lotion. Like he wants every inch of me fucking covered in him.

He brings his fist up to my mouth and doesn’t have to say a word—I open my mouth and he stuffs his fingers in as far as he can, my eyes closing as I clamp my mouth shut and suck the taste of both of us off of his fingers.

“I told you you could,” he says, his voice low, guttural, as he pulls his hand out and places his palm on my low belly.

I turn to face him, body heavy, and nod.

“I’m sorry, daddy,” I whisper. “I’ll do better.”

He stares at me, face unreadable, just looking at me in silence for well over a minute.

“Kiernan?”

“Yeah . . .” I sigh, fading fast.

“I love you.”

39

James

What. The. Fuck.

I run my hand gently up and down her side, her soft skin damp with sweat. She's out cold. Again. Only this time, I'm disappointed.

Did she hear me?

I squirm uncomfortably because I'm not sure, and now that my brain is starting to function again I'm not sure if I want to know.

I sigh and stand, careful not to jostle her, and make my way to the bathroom where I hop in the shower for a quick wash. When I get out, I turn on the hot water in the old-fashioned tub. As I wait for it to fill, I lean into the mirror; she's left a hickey the size of a coaster on my neck.

"Great," I grumble. I look like a fucking beatnik in a turtleneck.

I put my hands on the counter and let my head drop, staring down at the cold marble and wondering what in the hell I'm doing. I love you? Really, James? It had been on the tip of my tongue all night, as much a surprise to me as her finding an error in my textbook, but she tore me open with that little stunt of hers. Watching her take control and love it ripped me to shreds in all the right ways. And watching her suck our cum off my fingers had my guts spilling out all over the damn floor.

I've never felt like this about sex. Never felt stripped and raw, and a little out of my league. I snort, the irony of a damn virgin making me feel this way not lost on me, but the girl never seems to do what's expected. I certainly wasn't expecting to be choked and bitten tonight.

Do I love her? Or is this just pure novelty? A beautiful young woman with a sharp mind and a smart mouth who surprises me in bed.

This isn't novelty. This is something else. Something powerful.

I walk over to the tub and test the water to make sure it's not too hot.

I've never run someone a bath before. I've never driven an hour in rush hour traffic for a date. I've never been comfortable with having women in my apartment. I've never even seen the same woman two days in a row. Yet here I am fretting over the temperature of her bathwater like she's a kid.

I sigh, because really? She is. Less than half my age, still in high school, and absolutely one hundred percent off-limits.

So, why don't I give a fuck?

I suppose it was inevitable that I'd eventually meet someone who didn't irk me, or in her case irks me in all the right ways. But for that someone to be a someone who could kill my career? I'd have expected myself to run screaming for the hills, not be thinking about whether or not my cock could physically manage to get inside her one more time today.

I head out into the bedroom and throw on a pair of grey joggers and a long-sleeved black tee, pushing back the sleeves before making my way down the hall to go get her. She'd probably punch me if I try to touch her again. God she must be fucking

sore . . .

She's in the exact same position as when I left. I lean down and softly kiss her forehead, before sliding my arms under her shoulder blades and knees. She stirs as I pick her up, head lolling into my chest as she curls into me.

"What're you doing?"

"Putting you in the bath, baby."

"Mm . . ." she hums sweetly. "That's a good idea."

I lower her into the water, and she hisses as it hits her skin.

"Too hot?"

"Too sore . . ." she groans.

"I'm sorry, babygirl."

"No, you're not," she grumbles, sinking all the way in, leaning her head against the back of the tub.

"You're right, I'm not," I say, kissing her hair. "I'll be in bed. Yell when you're ready."

Her eyes open, and she gives me a suggestive smile. "What are you going to do in bed?"

I ruffle her hair. "Read."

She pauses. “Read in here?”

I hesitate. I’m not sure why, but for some reason this feels like a superbly intimate request, and I almost laugh at myself; I can take her virginity, call her my girlfriend, and tell her I love her, but I can’t sit and read a book while she’s in the tub?

“Okay,” I say. “Gimme a minute.”

I grab my book and my glasses off the nightstand and drag a chair from the corner of the bedroom in behind me, plunking it down at the head of the tub where her hair is spilling over the side. I lean back in my seat, sticking my legs out in front of me and crossing them at the ankles, settling in and opening my book.

She rolls over in the water so she’s on her stomach, and I look over the top of my glasses at her. She crosses her arms over the edge and lays her cheek down on her forearm, staring up at me with soft eyes.

“Read to me?”

I open my mouth, but my tongue gets stuck.

Don’t say it again. DON’T fucking say it again.

I clear my throat. “Sure.”

“What are you reading?”

“Sapiens.”

“By Yuri Harari?”

“Yeah.”

She smiles, closes her eyes, sinks deeper into the water. “I love this book.”

Do. Not. Say it.

“Me too,” I say quietly.

40

Kiernan

Apart from the deep, aching internal bruising, I feel like a million bucks. I'd basically woken up in a bathtub, and then he'd read to me about evolution until the water started to get cold.

I wander out into the main room in my towel. He's talking on the phone with someone, but his eyes are glued to me, and I smile warmly at him before bending down to pick up my dress off the floor.

"Hang on just a sec," he says into his phone. "What are you doing?" At me, this time.

"Um, getting dressed?"

"Why?"

"So you can take me home?"

"I'm not taking you home."

"James, I should really get home."

"Kiernan, no you shouldn't."

I hear murmuring and realize the person on the other end of the line is saying

something.

“No, I’m not calling you back, just hang on a minute,” he says to whoever it is.

I roll my eyes at him. “James. We’re going to get sick of each other at this rate.”

His face falls. “You’re sick of me?”

I could swear I hear laughing on the other end of the phone.

I roll my eyes. “No, I’m not sick of you. But don’t you think this is a bit much?”

“No,” he says. Zero hesitation.

I throw up my hands. “Fine! Can you at least find me a pair of sweatpants then? I’m cold and all of your fucking furniture is leather. My ass will stick to the seat!”

He grins at me and whips his joggers off and holds them out for me, and I have never felt so flabbergasted in all my life. James McGrath, world’s biggest dick—literally and figuratively—is standing in the middle of his living room in FULL Winnie the Pooh, just so I won’t be cold.

Maybe I didn’t imagine him saying I love you . . .

I shake off the thought and snatch them out of his hand, hopping awkwardly to pull them on.

“Wait for me in bed, baby. I’ll be in in a minute.”

I narrow my eyes at him. “Bed. For sleeping.”

He laughs and leans forward and kisses me sweetly. “Maybe.”

I grumble and waddle down the hall to his room, helping myself to one of his T-shirts and crawling under the covers. The sheets smell like him, and I feel my eyes closing, heavy, as I start to nod off.

I feel him slide into bed next me and try to open my eyes, but I can’t.

“You’re making me narcoleptic,” I mumble.

“Sleep, Kiernan.”

“If we really are gonna sleep, why did you want me to stay?”

“For your excellent company.”

“I’m good company when I’m sleeping?”

“You’re good company when you’re quiet.”

“I have to go home tomorrow.”

“Okay,” he says. He sounds like he’s humouring me.

“I mean it.”

“Okay.”

“James! I have to work.”

“Where do you work?”

“The Rogers Wireless store.”

“Cell phones?”

“Yes.”

He scoffs. “I’m way better.”

“I don’t disagree, but I still need to work.”

“Why?”

I roll over to face him and find him shirtless, still wearing his glasses, his book flat on his chest. I wince as my pussy clenches involuntarily at the sight of him, and he grins like he knows.

“Because I need the money.”

“Why do you need the money?”

“What the fuck do you mean why do I need the money? What do you pay for things with, James? Insults?”

He waits quietly, staring at me, like he genuinely wants to know.

“I used all my savings on your class. I don’t qualify for student loans because I’m still in high school and only in one course.”

“How much is the class?”

“Close to a grand.”

He frowns. “But you qualify for student loans for the summer semester?”

I blink, confused. “I’m not starting full-time in the summer, I’m starting in the fall.”

His brow furrows. “Why would you wait? If you take a full course load this summer and just stack your semesters. you can start your master’s by 2025.”

I groan, loudly, and flop onto my back, staring up at his ceiling. “That’s assuming I even take the challenge exams. And that I pass them. And that I pass all my senior-level courses with good enough grades to get in to a master’s program.”

“You will,” he says. No doubt. Not a question.

“I can’t afford to start school this summer. I need to work full-time. I need some money. And honestly, I feel like you’re a little biased since you’ve been balls deep in my mouth and my pussy already today.”

He levels me with a look. “Watch it, Kiernan.”

I raise my hands. “I’ve had my fill.”

“You have another hole, you know.”

My heart jumps into my throat as he stares me down, eyes hard, but then he relaxes a little and picks up a bookmark off his night table, closing his book and putting it down so he can roll over onto his side and face me.

“Take the challenges. Why waste money on classes you could pass with a test?”

I open my mouth, but he has a point, and he smirks at me like he knows it.

“I honestly don’t think I could pass them. I’m not just being modest here. I know I can learn it. But I don’t know this material, yet. How can I be expected to take a test on it?”

“I’ll teach you.”

I eye him warily. “Why do I feel like we won’t get much done?”

He grins and pokes me in the ribs under the covers.

“Ow!”

“I take math as seriously as I take sex. I’d be happy to spend all of my time doing both of those things with you.”

“Why?”

He levels me with a look. “You know why.”

He’s staring at me, that strange razor-sharp intensity on his face again, and I feel myself start to squirm.

“Fine. But I still have to go to work tomorrow.”

“Call in sick.”

“You’re a terrible fucking influence for the grown-up here!”

He grins. “Come to class with me instead.”

I pause, tempted and intrigued. “You don’t teach on Saturdays.”

I raise an eyebrow. “I don’t lecture on Saturdays. Have you been checking my schedule, Kiernan?”

I fidget. “No,” I mumble, annoyed, but he just keeps smiling.

“There’s an informal tutorial session for master’s students on Saturday mornings.”

“Do you purposely torture these students? Friday classes and Saturday tutorials?”

He shrugs, and I roll over, pulling the blanket over my head.

“Fine, I’ll call in sick. But you’re buying me breakfast because I’m too poor for campus bagels. And you’d better not ask me any fucking math questions in front of a bunch of master’s students.”

I hear him chuckle followed by the click of him turning off his lamp, and then his arm snakes around my waist as he pulls me closer to him, lips gliding along my neck.

My skin heats up and my nipples tighten, but I elbow him lightly.

“Don’t.”

“Why not,” he says against my skin.

“I can’t.”

He stops, and I can feel his wicked smile as his hand drifts towards my abdomen.

“You can’t!” I squeak. But he shifts his hips, pressing his very amenable dick between my ass cheeks.

My heart starts to race as his fingers toy with the drawstring on my pants— his pants—but I flinch in earnest as my pussy clenches.

I reach down and touch his hand gently, turning my head to look over my shoulder at him.

“Please?” I beg. He looks at me for a minute, quiet, thinking, and then his fingers drop the strings, and he presses a kiss to my temple.

“Okay, baby. Sleep. We’ll get you broken in soon enough.”

And as painfully sore as I am, as much as I don’t want to admit it, I’m a teeny tiny bit disappointed.

41

James

She's fidgeting again, nervous, and I want to smack her. For a smart woman she doubts herself an awful lot. We stop at the campus store on the way in for her to buy a proper pair of sweatpants that fit. She's drowning in one of my hoodies again though, and I'm pleased that she opts not to buy another one. She lets me pay without argument and for some reason I find it charming. The stupid university brand sweatpants are a hundred bucks. She'd probably have to work an entire weekend to pay for that, and I'd much rather she spend an entire weekend choking on my dick.

We talked about it over breakfast, and I'll be keeping my distance. Armin was one thing, but a room full of students is entirely another. And I want her focused. I want her to know she can handle this.

Tess was a bit shocked when she called, to hear a woman in the background. I always insisted on a hotel, in all the years we'd been seeing each other, I had never once had her at my place.

I didn't tell Kiernan about it. Didn't really want to bring up exes if I could avoid it. But in another universe, Tess and Kiernan would probably actually get along.

Tess said she approved of a woman who gave me that much shit and wished me well.

I waltz into the room a few steps ahead of Kiernan and my dozen or so master's students all sit up straighter, faces sharp. They're a competitive bunch, and for one

short minute, I feel a brief wave of anxiety for her as they eye her warily. But I shake it off and ignore it.

“Who’s first?” I say irritably.

Everyone’s hand shoots up at once.

They start firing off questions about the material, and I write things out on the blackboard, Kiernan’s brow furrowed. She isn’t making many notes, mostly just reading the board, and I want to tell her that she doesn’t need to understand it yet, that this is beyond what she’s learned, that I just want to show her that her learning methods will hold up in an advanced class. That breaking out these problems is the same as breaking out the ones she does now. But I bite my tongue and say nothing, hoping she isn’t discouraged, frustrated that I can’t just ask. If I were a kinder teacher, if I bothered asking how people were doing more, it wouldn’t stick out so much to check in on one.

“Any more questions before break?” I ask.

“Professor?” It’s Shannon.

“Yes?” I say, irritated with her.

She smiles at Kiernan. “Is this your niece?”

Kiernan snorts, and I force myself not to glare at her. She fakes a coughing fit to cover it up.

“No,” I say shortly. “Everyone back in fifteen.”

The room empties out, and I close it behind them, before turning to face her, knuckles

cracking. She glances at my fist and smirks.

“Everything okay, Uncle James ?”

I’m gonna fucking kill her.

I grip her arm and yank her out of her seat, shoving her backwards so she stumbles into the wall.

“Turn around.”

She flushes instantly, but glances at the door. “This is a bad idea, James . . .”

I may as well get that tattooed on my fucking chest at this point.

“Turn. Around.” She does it and I grip the back of her head, shoving her cheek to the plaster. “Palms on the wall.”

She places her hands flat on the wall, but I resist the urge to praise her. Not yet. I grip her hips and scoot them towards me, so she’s fully bent over.

“Fuck me quick,” she says, her voice breathless.

I lean over her, chest to her back, and whisper in her ear. “You won’t be getting off that easy.”

I slide my hand down the front of her sweats and dive straight between her legs, groaning in her ear.

“Jesus Christ Kiernan, you’re fucking soaked . . .”

She just whimpers.

Tick tock, James . . .

I reluctantly pull my hand out from between her legs, grab hers, and shove it down her pants.

“Keep going,” I say. “Don’t stop, and don’t move.”

She starts to rub herself, fingers on her other hand flexing against the wall, little muted mewling noises coming out of her mouth, and I hurry over to my bag. I pull out the little satin satchel, hurrying back over to her.

I undo the drawstring and reach inside, feeling the smooth surface of the little anchor-shaped butt plug against my fingertips. I bought it on a whim, the morning after I kissed her the first time, after I couldn’t stop thinking about how good it would feel to fill every goddamn one of her holes.

I hold it up to her cheek, tracing her skin with it, and her hand slows, eyes opening wide. I slap her ass hard.

“Did I stay stop?”

She keeps her hand moving but she looks nervous, and I know if I didn’t already have her occupied she’d be fidgeting. Good.

“Open.” She opens her mouth, and I stuff it in. “Suck.”

She does, hand starting to rub faster, her hips humping the air trying to get friction, and I can’t help but smile. She looks so fucking perfect.

I yank her pants down exposing her bare ass— I'm never letting her wear underwear again— and sweetly caress her right butt cheek.

SMACK!

She jumps and moans but we're running out of time. I pull the plug out of her mouth and stuck it between her legs, coating it in her, her moan loud and unrestrained like she's forgotten we're in public. I drop to one knee and spread her ass cheeks apart, running the plug over her asshole, her whole body tensing up.

I slap her again.

“Relax.”

“What are you going to do . . .”

SMACK!

“Fucking relax.”

She breathes hard, putting her forehead to the wall, hand gliding up and down her slit, and I watch as she tries to relax, the backs of her thighs loosening, ass muscles unclenching.

I put the tip of the plug to her asshole and push, the hissing sound of her breath almost making me come in my pants.

“Fuck,” she chokes out.

“Shh!”

I push it in a little more, her body resisting, but I can smell her arousal, can see her wetness starting to slide down her thighs.

We don't have time for this, I think, and shove it in the rest of the way.

“AAARGH!” she yells, but cuts it off, trying to stay quiet.

I stare at her, ass full, handle perched against her perfect cheeks, and can't help myself. I lean forward and lap at her thighs, licking her creamy wetness off her legs, watching her pump her fingers in and out of her perfect pussy.

The next time I'm on one knee, I'll be holding a ring for you.

Fuck.

42

Kiernan

My ass feels so full! Everything is flexing and clenching, a hundred times stronger than when it was just a finger, his tongue lapping at my thighs.

“I’m gonna come,” I moan.

He grips my wrist and yanks my hand out of my pussy.

SMACK!

He slaps my ass again as he quickly stands up, pulling my pants back up, gripping my fingers and licking them clean.

“No, you’re not,” he says.

Then he backs away, smirking, and gestures for me to have a seat.

“Are you fucking kidding me right now?” I hiss at him, just as someone opens the door.

“I brought you a coffee, Professor,” the girl who asked if I was his niece says, handing him a Tim’s.

“Thank you, Shannon,” he says without looking at her. He’s looking at me.

My nostrils flare as I walk over to my seat— fuck this is too much— and gingerly take a seat, his eyes flaring wide with lust.

I glare at him. Look away you fucking idiot, you're giving us away!

But he doesn't, Shannon's brows drawing down as she glances back and forth between the two of us. She opens her mouth to speak just as the rest of the class starts making their way back in, and I shift uncomfortably, torn between anger, fear, and desperately needing to come.

As the class settles, he stares at me over the rim of his coffee, taking a sip. I frown at him, something unpleasant uncurling in my gut— shit. I'm fucking jealous. I don't like that Shannon brought him a coffee. And I don't like that he accepted it.

Shit. Shit. Shit.

He starts to talk, and I struggle to concentrate. I'm bitter that he didn't let me come, annoyed that he's clearly got a vast multitude of student admirers who aren't afraid of him, but more than anything else really wishing that the pleasure I'm experiencing from my pussy madly clenching at nothing while my ass frantically clenches around this plug was happening in private where I wasn't at risk of moaning in front of twenty people.

I start to sweat a little, trying not to fidget as every movement presses the plug farther into me causing a fresh flood of warmth between my thighs.

Concentrate, Kiernan! Concentrate!

Some of this is unfamiliar, but I've been picking up enough as the morning wore on that I started scratching out a few of the problems and was pleased to discover I was getting the right answers.

I rock back and forth subtly in my seat, gently fucking my own ass and trying to get friction on the seam of my sweatpants, trying to keep my mouth from falling open or my chest from noticeably rising.

My fingers clutch at my thighs, nails digging in, and I close my eyes for a moment.

“Kiernan!” he barks, and I jump. I almost moan, the feeling of rising up off my seat and back down on the plug too fucking good. Sweat blooms across my lower back.

“Mhmm?” I force myself to open my eyes and look at him. His face is neutral, relaxed, but I can see it in his eyes. He’s wound just as tight as I am, hanging on by a thread.

Aren’t we a pair.

“Am I boring you?” he asks. I can hear it, the challenge in his voice. He knows I wasn’t listening, knows I’m distracted.

“No, sir, ” I say. His eyes glint dangerously.

“Valuations on polytopes,” he snaps. “If X is the convex body in euclidean space \mathbb{R}^n .”

“Is map Z a subset of X ?” I ask. My voice wobbles a little, and I clear my throat.

His eyes glow with pride. “An abelian subgroup. X_n . What is the contravariant?”

I slide around in my seat at the look on his face, aware that the class is watching us with interest but not entirely able to care.

“Um . . .”— fuck fuck fuck— “real value or vector value?”

He narrows his eyes at me. “Both.”

Fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck.

I pick up my pencil but he shakes his head. “Out loud.”

“Um . . .” stop staring at me, stop staring at me! “If $V_0(P)=1$, P isn’t an empty set. The euler characteristic would put it at -1 . . .”

He leans back on his desk, sipping that fucking coffee and staring me down. “Go on.”

I swallow, trying to think, my thighs slick with arousal and my body teeming with strain. “The corollary rule would mean X is . . .” I can hear myself talking but have no idea what I’m saying, words and numbers tumbling out of my mouth as my brain is filled with static, my body frantically pushing against the plug and my pussy so wet I’ve soaked right through my sweats and am sure I’m puddling through on the seat.

“Kiernan!” he snaps, like he knows I’m not focused.

“Uh . . . I’m sorry, I don’t . . . know the rest of this one . . .”

“Yes. You do.”

I’m panting, but so is he.

“I don’t know,” I whimper.

“Figure it out.”

I close my eyes, hovering on the edge of an orgasm, my whole body spasming. Oh fuck, oh my God, keep it together. I will not come in front of all these people, I will

NOT come in front of all these people . . .

“The contravariant is . . . It’s . . .”

“THINK. You can do this,” he says, his voice sharp.

I can almost hear it, the you WILL come in front of all these people.

“I can’t.”

“You can.”

Fuck. Fuck. FUCK.

“NOW, Kiernan.”

I open my eyes and look up at him.

“On the function map . . . the answers are $SL(n)$ and $C(R)_n$, respectively, with a positive or negative coefficient of one.”

He stares right back at me, face bursting with pride.

“Good girl,” he murmurs.

And I fucking explode.

43

James

The room has faded out to white, and all I can see is her. All I can hear is a faint ringing in my ears.

She's sucked in her bottom lip, and I know it's to keep from screaming. She's gripping her thighs so hard she'll probably be bruised, the veins in her throat pulsing as she tries to pretend she's breathing normally. Her eyes are open, glazed, unfocused, but she's looking at me. She's looking right at me.

“Professor?”

I blink, force myself to look away from the most beautiful thing I've ever seen, for . . . Samir? Fuck you, Samir. Fuck you and your fucking question. I'm missing this for YOU.

“What?”

“I don't understand how she got a positive. No matter how many times I run this problem, I get zero or negative two.”

I'm missing this for you and your STUPID fucking question.

“Kiernan?” I say, shifting my eyes back to her. My knees nearly buckle; she's subtly rocking her hips, her top lip sucked in too, and I can't tell if she's still coming and

riding it out or trying to make herself come again, but either way I'm about ready to blow my load in my pants. Feels like I half-have already.

"Yes?" she says. Her voice sounds remarkably normal.

"Care to explain why he—"

"You're not applying the subgroup rules. I think?" She looks at me for confirmation, and I nod.

Goddamit, I really am going to come in my pants . . .

"What subgroup?" Samir asks, but I can see him looking over his notes and realizing he completely ignored an entire principle.

"That's enough for today. I want notes and ten more pages on your thesis topics by Wednesday. I will review, we will discuss next Saturday. Now get out."

Everyone shuffles around collecting their things, mumble their goodbyes, and scurry off except for Shannon who hovers awkwardly, blocking my view of Kiernan.

"I was wondering if maybe we could meet sometime this week? To go over my thesis development. I'm not sure . . ."

Kiernan's head snaps up at meet sometime this week, her eyes zeroing in on Shannon's back despite the sheen of sweat coating her forehead.

I don't know what Shannon's saying, and I don't care. I tuned her out. A year ago.

"Shannon, your thesis is developing fine. Send me the pages like everyone else. We'll talk in class."

“But—”

“He said you’ll talk in class,” Kiernan says, her voice quiet but sharp.

Shannon turns around to say something, but I put my hand on Shannon’s back and lead her towards the door.

She glances at Kiernan one more time, and leaves without a word.

I look back at my girl, and she’s staring at the doorway like she’d like to burn a hole in it. God she’s fucking perfect . . .

“I need to be in you. Now.” My voice is ragged, desperate, but I don’t care.

“Yes, sir,” she says, and I almost lose it.

She stands, eyes fluttering as she does, listing forward like she’s drunk. I hurry over and grip her arm, practically dragging her behind me.

“Where can we go?” she pants.

“My office . . .”

“Where’s your office?”

“Next building.”

“TOO FAR!” she shouts in a whisper, and I take a hard left, shoving open the door in the hallway on our right, a small janitorial supply closet. “This is better,” she says, gripping the front of my shirt and yanking me towards her. Her tongue is down my throat before the door’s even closed all the way.

We kiss passionately, wildly, hands on each other's faces and necks, groaning into each other's mouths.

"You're fucking brilliant," I mutter, pulling at her hoodie and yanking it over her head. "That was a master's class and you—"

"No more math," she interrupts, her voice pleading. "Please. I need you."

My heart flatlines. I need you. I need you. Why does that feel so fucking good? I need you.

I hold her face in my hands, a few inches away, and stroke her cheekbones with my thumbs.

"Whatever you need, baby," I murmur.

She leans in to kiss me, slower this time, sweet, and slides her sweats off, letting them drop on the ground. She's naked and my hands make their way down her neck, shoulders, arms, then across to her breasts, squeezing and kneading until she's moaning my name into my mouth.

"Please," she begs.

"Okay, baby," I whisper. But to my surprise, she turns around, putting her hands on the wall like she did when I put the plug in.

"I need you now," she says. "Please."

I swallow, hand running over the flared handle pressed against her cheeks.

"Please," she says. She's looking at me over her shoulder, face in profile, just like the

first time I met her, when she walked out of the classroom.

I was a goner from the beginning.

I grip the handle of the toy and push it into her a little before I withdraw it most of the way, watching her throw her head back in ecstasy. I could watch this all day, just push this little toy in and out of her ass until she physically couldn't stand it anymore, but my weeping cock is screaming against my fly and all I want is to be inside her, so I push it all the way back in and leave it.

I undo my fly and shove my jeans down, kicking them off, and then dropping my boxers to my knees before gripping the base of my cock and pushing it against her wet slit, swirling the tip of my dick all over her pussy.

"Oh, god, it hurts," she says, "I'm so sore, James . . . it hurts so fucking good . . ."

"I know, baby," I say in her ear, reaching for her hands and weaving our fingers together. "I'll go slow."

I push myself into her and fight not to come as I slide into her sopping pussy, drenched for me like always, just fucking dripping. I grunt as I disappear inside her cunt, inch by inch, the pressure from the plug moving around in her ass from all her frantic muscle spasming pushing me to the edge. And I'm not even all the way in yet . . .

"How does that feel baby?"

"I feel so fucking FULL," she moans, squeezing my hands. "Oh my GOD . . ."

"Good, baby . . . I want you to feel good."

I gently push into her the rest of the way, the pressure of my abdomen pushing the plug deeper into her ass, and she grunts like a fucking whore making my cock kick so hard inside her that her fingers start to flex involuntarily to the rhythm of it.

I try to keep it together but the slick heat drowning my dick is too much.

“I’m not gonna last like this,” I say. “I’m too worked up.”

She turns her head and looks at me over her shoulder again, her expression nervous and sweet.

“James?”

“Mm?”

“I want you to come in my ass.”

I still, holding my breath, muscles tense, trying not to blow my load inside her cunt while she’s telling me exactly what she wants.

“We should maybe . . . work up to that,” I choke out.

“No,” she says, staring at me, resting her chin on her shoulder. “I want your cock in my ass. I need your cock in my ass.”

I fucking love you. I love you.

I say, “Okay,” instead.

I slide myself out of her, my dick bouncing against my lower belly, and I reach down for the plug again, twisting it gently as I pull it out.

I toss it on her sweatpants and then spread her cheeks open, her little hole puckered and ready, pink and begging for it.

“I need to get your ass nice and wet, baby.”

“Please,” is all she says.

I reach between her legs and am floored by how much she’s dripping for me. This won’t be hard . . . I slide a palmful of her arousal up her crack and smear it all over her ass, and then grip my cock which is still drenched—still coated in her—and press the tip to her asshole.

“Kiernan,” I say gently. “You say stop, we stop. Okay?”

“Okay,” she pants, shifting her hips so she’s pressing backwards against my dick. I smile warmly at her eagerness, and push a little harder, trying to get her to open up for me, rolling my wet cock around, trying to push my way in and break through the resistance.

“Here we go,” I say in warning, and she nods as I push harder, my head squeezing past her entrance and into her ass.

“Fuuuuck!” I groan, praying I can keep from coming before I’m even all the way in. Her stretched asshole is gripping my cock like a vice, frantically trying to push me out.

“Are you okay?” I ask her.

“Oh my God,” she moans. “Please, please keep going, James. Please . . .”

I slide in another inch, rocked by how slow I’ve been shoving myself into her

considering how desperate I am for her. This is the only place I ever want to be again. I'm never taking my cock out of her again.

"More," she begs.

I push in farther, half my dick disappearing into her asshole, and I put my hands on her beautiful cheeks, caressing them, worshiping them with my fingers as I watch myself keep sinking into her, watch her stretching open to accommodate my length.

"Okay, Kiernan, almost there . . ."

She nods. "I want it all. I want all of you."

And with a half groan, half grunt, I push the rest of the way in, balls deep in her ass, and try to stay still for a minute to let her adjust.

When she turns to look at me, her eyes are black with lust, ravenously hungry.

"I needed this," she says quietly. "Thank you."

As a reward I slide my hand around to her front and dip between her legs, splitting her pussy lips apart with my thumb and pinky and using my middle three fingers to pump into her. She's swollen, pure liquid, and I cannot get enough of it.

I start to pump in and out of her ass, matching the rhythm with my hand in her pussy so that she feels like she's being fucking stuffed. I already know I can't make this last. Not like this. She's clenching around my fingers and my dick, the pulses growing more rapid, and I know she's there with me. She's going to come, and fast, and I've never wanted her leaking my cum from every orifice more than I want it right now.

I speed up a little, throw my head back and enjoy the ride. Her ass is as tight as her pussy, and I'm barely hanging in.

"Baby, I need you to come soon. I want us to come together."

"I'm close," she moans. "Right on the edge."

"Me too," I pant, speeding up even more. "Let go, babygirl. I want to see you let go."

Whatever tension she was holding drains out of her, her entire body relaxing except for the holes I'm currently in.

"Let go, Kiernan."

She moans, loud and sweaty and sweet. She sounds . . . grateful.

"I've never felt so good," she cries out. "I've never felt so full, and I'm entirely full of you."

She's starting to unravel a little, her hips bouncing as she starts to ride my cock in earnest.

"I'm close," she moans, "Oh fuck, oh fuck, oh fuck . . ."

But I can see she's stuck, feel that she's stuck, and all I want in the world is watch her fall apart again where we have a little privacy this time—where I can watch in awe without interruptions.

"Kiernan," I say gently as I start to fuck her harder, deeper. "You're fucking perfect. You're beautiful, and smart, and perfect in every goddamn way, except that you aren't coming on my dick right now! "

I reach for her breast with my free hand and start rolling her nipple between my fingers.

“Come for me,” I growl, as I pinch her nipple hard.

She cries out and I feel her soak my hand, spraying the floor with come as she squirts fucking everywhere, her ass flexing frantically around my dick. I keep fucking her ass and keep driving my fingers into her pussy and feel another wave of warmth coat my hand before she squirts all over the floor again, her body going haywire as I keep her standing with just my dick.

She’s making a horrible mess, squirting all over the damn place, before she finally collapses forward onto the wall and turns her head to look at me again.

“James?”

“Yeah, baby . . .”

“I love you, too.”

I blow so hard I’m surprised I didn’t fly across the road, all the muscles in my back tensing hard as I see stars, filling her ass with my cum, shooting it straight into her, practically blind with pleasure.

When I finally finish, I pull my cock out of her ass and smile with delight at her stretched hole. Her muscles are still flexing, and my cum starts to drip out of her, sliding down towards her slit.

“No!” I growl, not wanting to waste any, wanting all of it inside of her. I bend low and lap up what’s dripping out of her ass, tonguing her hole and make her whimper like the good girl she is, and then I reach down and pick up the plug, pushing it back

into her ass, trapping everything inside her.

I stand and yank my boxers up, then reach for my jeans, but still she doesn't move.

“What's wrong, baby?” I ask.

“Why did you put the plug back in?” she asks.

I smile at her. “So we don't waste,” I say. I hold out the legs of her sweatpants for her to get back into them, sad to see the butt plug disappearing from view but thrilled that it's holding in all my cum, save for the little mess I already licked up.

She pulls on her clothes as quickly as she can, huffing little sighs of pleasure as she shifts around with the plug in her.

She said she loves me. While I was balls deep in her ass.

She's the fucking one. I know it. So, I lean forward and kiss her until she legitimately can't breathe.

44

Kiernan

I'm blushing as I pull my pants back on, crotch soaked, ass full of cum and a plug. But I feel . . . sated.

Happy.

James looks like a delighted little puppy, eyes big and smile wide as he yanks his jeans back up his thighs.

"God I made a mess . . ." I mutter, staring at the spray on the floor. I don't even really know what it is, my body has never done that before, but it felt fucking euphoric , and I really, really want him to make me do it again.

He pulls a mop out of the mop bucket and runs it over the floor real quick before chucking it back into the yellow container and I laugh. He smiles at me, looking very pleased with himself.

"How do you feel?" he asks.

I just fidget and flush, and he grins like an idiot as he pushes the door open, and we head out into the hall.

"I can't believe you made me come in front of all your students . . ." I say, staring down at my feet, my stomach squishing with embarrassment now that we're out in

the brightly lit hallway.

“You made yourself come, baby,” he says, walking close by my side. I can tell he’s itching to touch me, take my hand or touch my back, but he keeps his hands to himself, just brushing my arm with his every few steps, my breath hitching every time, the plug in my asshole keeping me from fully concentrating on where we’re going.

We make it back to his car, and he opens the passenger side door for me like a gentleman, watching me squirm as I take a seat and leaning over to buckle up my seatbelt for me, stealing a quick kiss while he does it.

This is insane. I have no idea how we got here, but it’s fucking insane. He’s fucked every hole I have but my damn nostrils, kept me overnight at his apartment twice, outed us to a colleague, and we’ve both said I love you all in the span of a couple of weeks.

“There’s no way this is sustainable,” I say as he gets in on his side. “There’s no way we can keep this up. Relationships aren’t like this.”

“No, they’re not. Which is why it’ll work.”

“James. There’s no way you can keep me full of come round the clock. At some point we are going to need to be”—I struggle to find the right word—“boring.”

“You could never be boring, baby,” he says, not really paying attention as he puts his arm on the back of my seat, turning around to check behind him as he backs slowly out of the parking space.

“I think we should talk about what an actual relationship is going to look like beyond my ass dripping with your cum, James.”

“Whatever you want,” he says, and I roll my eyes.

“I’m being serious.”

“So am I.”

He turns to shift the car out of reverse when—

SCREEEEEEEEEECH! The car is jolted, hard, my chest flying against the seatbelt which locks up tight, keeping me in place.

“What the FUCK?!” I shout, adrenaline spiking hard.

“Are you fucking KIDDING ME?!” James is shouting. A crappy, beat up looking Honda Civic has just reversed out of its spot full speed without looking and smacked into the rear passenger side of the car.

“Are you okay, Kiernan?” he asks me frantically.

“I’m fine, I’m fine.” I take a deep breath. It wasn’t a crazy hard impact, not even enough for the air bags to go off, but he leans in close to check me over, check my side of the car, check where the seatbelt crushed my airway for a hot minute . . .

“I’m really fine,” I say firmly. “You’ve cut off more air supply than that did.”

His lips twitch. “This isn’t funny.”

“Take your frustration out on whoever just hit your car. I’m too sore for a hate fuck today.”

He turns his attention to the civic, the passenger door of the car opening and someone

ambling out.

Probably still drunk from last night. Good job.

“Oh for fuck sake,” James snaps. “It’s a fucking student. Goddammit, Graham . . .”

As James gets out of the car and slams the door, alarm bells go off in my ether. Graham . . . Fuck . . .

I hear the muffled sounds of James’ bossy, short-tempered voice half-yelling at someone and almost feel bad. But as I slowly turn around to look out the back, my palms instantly break into a sweat.

Graham. Fucking asshole Cheetos tongue Graham . I stare straight ahead, hyperventilating a little. Nothing happened. You’re fine, Kiernan. Nothing happened and you’re perfectly okay. He left you alone. He was just being a drunk dick.

Except he didn’t leave me alone. He only left because I was on the phone, because I managed to answer my phone. James’ phone.

I hear James reaming Graham out but can’t concentrate on the words. Eventually it gets quiet, and I see him walk around the front of the car and open my door.

“I need you to get out for a minute, Kiernan,” he says gently.

I shake my head. “I’d rather stay here.”

He sighs. “Just for a minute.”

But I don’t move, staring at my thighs, and I can see him frown out of my peripheral vision.

“Are you hurt?” His voice is worried. “What’s wrong?” He squats down to get a better look at me, reaching up with his hand and touching my temple, my cheek, my shoulder, feeling all over for signs of injury.

“I just want to stay in the car.”

He looks really worried and opens his mouth to speak, but Graham interrupts. “Kiernan?”

He has wandered over to us, bags under his eyes from an obviously heavy night of drinking, worry written all over his face as he glances at the rear end of the car.

I tense up at the sound of his voice, and James’ eyes narrow, sharp gaze taking in my fidgety hands, and I watch his entire body stiffen, a black cloud passing over his face and parking itself there.

He stands up slowly and my heart starts to thunder, lodged in my throat, as he turns to face Graham.

“You said fucking bitch ,” he says, his voice deathly quiet.

“What? I’m really sorry, Professor, I’ll pay for the—”

“Kiernan. You called her a fucking bitch. ”

“What? What are you talking about!”

“At the party. On Bleeker. She picked up the phone, and you called her a fucking bitch.”

His voice is steady. Sharp as razors. I brave turning my head to look at them and see

all of the blood drain out of Graham's face.

"She was practically riding my cock in front of the whole room and then she—"

Blood spatters everywhere as James' fist connects makes his nose two-dimensional with a sickening crunch. I wince as Graham stumbles backwards into his car.

"What the FUCK!" he shrieks, touching his face and looking down at his blood-soaked hand. "Are you fucking crazy? She—"

Graham's head snaps back—again—as James plants one right in his fucking mouth, his back landing flat across the trunk of his car.

I scramble out of the door wishing—for the first time today—that I didn't have a toy in my ass just as James pulls his arm back again. I catch his elbow, and he stops, panting, shaking with rage.

"It's not worth it," I say.

James turns to me, eyes full of pure rage.

"Yes. It is."

I squeeze his arm a little harder, genuinely touched. Who did this to you . . . It echoes in my mind, plays on a loop at night when I'm not thinking about his cock splitting me open or trying to actually study.

Graham spits and there's a funny little tinkling noise. We both look over at him, and he's spit a tooth out onto the concrete parking garage floor.

"He's had enough," I say quietly.

James cracks his knuckles. “I’m going to fucking choke him to death.”

I smile warmly at him, strings of blood dripping from Graham’s mouth as he stares at us in a panic, clearly dazed—probably concussed—with fear in his eyes.

“There’s only one person you’ll be choking today,” I say.

His eyes flare, but I can feel that he’s torn. That he’d very much like to stay and beat this piece of shit into pulp.

I lean into his ear, my palm on his abs, and whisper to him. “Please, daddy. Take me home and choke me.”

He closes his eyes, body shuddering, collecting himself a little— I think.

He puts his hand on my back and pushes me towards the car. I hesitate, but he looks me in the eye and seems to have rediscovered rational thought because he nods.

“Get in the car. We’ll leave in a minute.”

I get in and put my seatbelt on right away, and he smiles down affectionately at me before turning back to Graham.

“You’ll be paying for this in cash. I’ll email you the quote,” he says in a casual voice. “And if you ever so much as bat an eyelash at Kiernan again, I will remove your skin with my letter opener and use it as a toilet seat cover. Do you understand me?”

“Professor, I—”

James steps into his space and grabs him by the throat, lifting him right off the trunk of the car.

“I said do you understand me?”

Graham nods and James drops him, making his way back to the driver's side and getting in, slamming the door, hard.

“James?”

“What.”

“I was being serious. You've made me jealous.”

He turns to look at me. “Jealous?”

I place my hand on my neck.

“I don't want you to choke anyone but me.”

45

James

I call my lawyer on the drive home.

“James? It’s been a long time.”

“I punched a student.”

“As good at small talk as ever, I see.”

“And threatened him.”

I hear his heavy sigh as he sticks his glasses on the desk. “What did he do?”

“Hit my car.”

“You couldn’t have just grabbed his insurance?”

“He also put hands on my girlfriend.”

Gerald swears. “Did either incident happen on campus?”

“Yes.”

“Is there video surveillance?”

“Probably.”

“Come to my office tomorrow. We’ll have a . . . chat. And James?”

“Yeah.”

“She must really be something, if you’re so worked up.”

I glance sideways at her, and she blushes.

“She is.”

“I’ve never heard you call someone a girlfriend before. Would have sworn you were gay.”

Kiernan snorts, and I can practically hear Gerald’s shock on the other end of phone, that she’s in the car, that I’m discussing this in front of her. I know I’ll be grilled within an inch of my life when I see him, but he seems to be restraining himself.

“I’ll see you tomorrow,” I grumble.

“Always a treat, James.”

The call disconnects, and I stare straight ahead. I can feel Kiernan’s eyes on me, but she says nothing.

I say nothing.

The air gets thick but not uncomfortable as we both marinate in the aftermath of what just happened.

I should care. I know I should care. But all I can think about is turning the car around and wrapping my hands around his throat until he's fucking purple.

I don't want you to choke anyone but me.

Fuck.

I keep driving.

46

Kiernan

I have no fucking idea what just happened.

I came in class, told him I love him, and watched him pummel someone in public. I could feel the rage in him. The fury. Who did this to you?

It was all for me.

He is all for me.

I don't know what I was expecting, but I know it wasn't this. Maybe I've read too many romance novels, but I thought he'd want this to be a secret. That I'd be shameful. That he'd give me a long speech about his career, and regularly complain about how we shouldn't be together, how I'm too young, how people won't understand.

Instead he's declaring his love for me, taking me out in public without blinking twice, and is apparently willing to do hard time for murder over my honour.

Could have done worse for my first boyfriend.

He pulls onto the QEW, and I frown.

"Are we going back to your place?" I ask.

“No.”

“Where are we going?”

“I’m taking you home.”

I try not to pout and can feel his lips twitching.

“Don’t you want a night off?” he asks wryly.

“From you?”

He frowns too. “From sex.”

“We can spend time together and not have sex, James.”

“No. We can’t.”

I snort, and his lips twitch again. He sighs deeply and pulls off at the next exit, turning around and heading back onto the highway towards his apartment.

“Good boy.”

He narrows his eyes, his face hardening in warning, but when he reaches out to touch my cheek it’s soft. Gentle. He cups the side of my face, and I lean into it as he strokes my cheekbone with his thumb.

“You’re kind of sweet, you know,” I hear myself say.

He stares at me for a long time, the bloody knuckles on his other hand casually resting on the steering wheel.

“Just don’t tell anyone,” he says.

I’m not the secret. He’s the secret. Having a heart is his secret.

“I love you,” I blurt out. Again.

“You talk too much,” he says.

But as he turns his head back to the road, he can’t quite hide his smile.

It’s all for me.

47

James

I tuck the comforter in around her naked shoulders, brushing her wet hair off her cheek. I cracked a bottle of wine while she was in the shower, but she had crawled onto the bed and passed out before she'd even had a sip.

I climb into bed beside her and put on my reading glasses. I try to focus on my book, I really do, but my eyes keep wandering. She smells like my shampoo. Like my laundry detergent.

She smells like me.

I want her to smell like me forever. I want to cum all over her, have her wear it like perfume, ward off anyone who thinks they can touch her. Thinks they can touch what's mine.

I flex my hand and wince; my knuckles are busted and swollen, and my bank account is about to take a serious hit for Gerald's legal bill. I assaulted a student on campus; Gerald or no Gerald, I'm in deep shit.

She must really be something.

He has no idea.

I can't recall ever caring this much about a woman. I can't recall ever caring this

much about anything except my research if I'm being honest. Would have been super great if I hadn't fallen for an underage high school student, but hey—probability is a bitch.

We can spend time together and not have sex, James.

I want to. I want to spend time with her. And a lot of it. Which is in and of itself shocking; I can't generally tolerate people for more than a few hours at a time. But Kiernan is as comfortable for me as quadratic equations. Except I don't want to fuck a parabola.

I've had job offers outside of the university but have always enjoyed the freedom and lack of oversight of tenured academia. Once you get tenure, you're untouchable. You can do whatever you want.

I pause.

. . . I'm untouchable.

We are untouchable.

Something that had been tightly coiled in my abdomen relaxes, and I let loose a deep breath. We are going to figure it out. We are going to make it work.

I put my book down and slide closer to her, touch her bare back, and run my fingers down her spine. She hums and shifts a little, hands unclenching and blindly reaching for me, her eyes still closed. I catch them and kiss each one of her knuckles, and she sighs happily, growing still again.

I stare at her hands, her slender fingers with her chipped navy-blue nail polish, and find myself running my thumb over her ring finger...

I blink, surprised as always when I'm around her. Why the fuck am I thinking about rings?

She's seventeen.

She's seventeen.

She's seventeen.

A relationship is one thing, but marriage? She's not going to want to marry me. I'm twice her age. The lustre will wear off, once school starts in earnest and she's living in residence, being hit on every night by—

I can't finish the thought. My hand throbs, and I realize I'm clenching my knuckles again, and try to relax my fist.

But what if she did want to marry me, someday? What if . . .

. . .

. . .

. . .

My cock stirs, as excited as I am at the prospect of a lifetime of falling asleep with this woman in my bed and waking up with her in it too.

The waking up is better, because as much as I love that she smells like me? There's nothing on earth that gets me harder than my bed smelling like her.

I spend the rest of the evening Googling unique jewelers with Kiernan snoring softly

into my chest.

My bank account is definitely going to take a serious hit.

Just one more thing to not give a fuck about.

I kiss her head and breathe her in.

I'll cum on her later.

48

Kiernan

I wake up to the smell of bacon and rub my eyes blearily. It wasn't even dark when we got back to his place. I showered, and then lay down for just a minute, and now it's apparently morning.

I grab the blanket draped across the end of the bed and wrap myself up in it, padding down the hall, mouth watering. I didn't eat supper. Just passed the fuck out. Oops.

"Morning," he says without looking up from his laptop.

"Morning," I say. I sit down and he slides the croissants towards me. They're still warm. He pushes the bacon towards me too, still not really paying attention, focused on whatever is on his laptop.

I shift uncomfortably and my wince seems to have involuntarily gotten his attention.

"You okay?"

I shrug. "Just sore."

He frowns. "How sore."

I roll my eyes. "I'm fine, James."

“Don’t roll your eyes.”

I stick my tongue out at him, and his hand snaps out, gripping my hair and tugging it playfully, tilting my head up.

“Behave,” he says. “I don’t have time for this right now.”

He lets go of my hair and smiles at me, his eyes crinkling, the warning half-assed as he’s clearly distracted. But his affection is genuine. It’s like he wants me to know he’s not ignoring me, he’s just in the middle of something.

I’m not sure why I find that so charming. Maybe because he took my call during his meeting with his students. Maybe because he seems to make all the time in the world for me, and even in this tiny moment of I have a life he still wants me to know he cares. Or maybe it’s just because his smile has me soaking onto the blanket; God that face should be illegal. But it’s with no small amount of pride that I think about the fact that he doesn’t seem to smile for anyone else.

“Everything okay?” I ask tentatively.

“Hmm,” he says noncommittally.

“Lawyer stuff?”

“Lawyer stuff.”

“James, how much trouble are you in for this?”

He looks over at me and seems to assess how much or little to tell me. I wait patiently, quietly, because if I’m actually his girlfriend I feel entitled to know. But it’s also my fault he’s in this mess— sort of— and I don’t want to push.

He's earned some trust, that much I know for sure.

He rubs his chin, his stubble distracting and I think about how good it feels between my legs . . .

"I'm not sure, to be honest," he says. "I haven't heard anything, so he clearly didn't go to the school or the police. At least not right away. That may change. It's hard to say."

"What kind of trouble would you be in with the school?"

He shrugs. "Not the kind that matters. And if it did there are other jobs."

I blink, surprised with the nonchalance with which he casually tosses out mention of abandoning his tenured position.

"Are police a concern?"

He sighs. "I don't know, Kiernan. I need to speak with Gerald."

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean to push—"

He puts his hand on mine. "You're not pushing. I just don't have answers."

"You're supposed to always have the answers," I grumble.

He laces our fingers together and drags our interlocked fists to his mouth, softly kissing our knuckles.

"Yet here we are," he says, a twinkle in his eye.

“What’s THAT supposed to mean?!”

“That you’re an unsolvable equation, babygirl. A gift from the multiverse, to put me in my place.”

“Maybe that’s the answer,” I chide. “Your unchecked ego equals me.”

“Prove your theorem,” he says.

I drop the blanket on the floor like a pillow and drop to my knees.

He did warn me never to stick out my tongue at him.

“Yes daddy,” I say as I reach for his fly.

49

James

“You’re late,” Gerald says.

“Not my fault.”

“You’ve got it bad for this girl, don’t you?”

I scrub my hand down my face. “As bad as it gets.”

“So, who is she? Another teacher? You said the kid you assaulted put hands on her—”

“Gerald, I’m going to be completely up front here. Since you’re my lawyer and all? She’s a student.”

Gerald whistles and leans back in his chair.

“That’s slightly more complicated.”

“And she’s seventeen.”

He waves his hand. “Doesn’t matter. It’s the student part that’s tricky.”

“It doesn’t matter that she’s underage?”

“Age of consent in this province is sixteen. I mean, I can’t say it won’t raise eyebrows, and I have to admit I’m fighting a bit not to raise mine. But mostly because I know you, and I’m shocked you can tolerate the company of anyone under the age of thirty for more than sixty seconds.”

“She’s brilliant.”

“I’d expect nothing less if she can hold your attention,” he says matter-of-factly. “But what does your contract say about student relationships?”

“Why am I paying you if I have to read my own contract?”

“For a detail-oriented man, your lack of interest in contract negotiation has always baffled me.”

“I like numbers, not words.”

“You love to hear yourself talk, though.”

I clench my fists. Gerald has always been able to push my buttons. Which is why I hired him. He can work opposing counsel up into a silent frenzy but has yet to ever upset a judge, be held in contempt, or so much as receive a fine in the courtroom. They call him Sweets on the circuit for his unflinching ability to talk his obnoxious, offensive, white-collared criminal clients out of any and every mess while single-handedly putting more attorneys for the crown on stress leaves than all of Queens Park.

“Look, here’s the rub. The girl isn’t really an issue unless you make it an issue. Your contract is vague—probably because they’d have to fire half the faculty if it weren’t—and unless a witness steps forward to report the incident or the kid himself speaks up, I really don’t see much of a problem here. Let’s just hope the kid is smart

enough to keep his mouth shut. In the meantime, just be discreet about the girl.”

I make a face. “About that . . .”

This time Gerald doesn’t hide his surprise, and his eyebrows pop all the way up. “You’re . . . going public with it? How long have you been seeing each other?”

“A few weeks.”

“A few . . . weeks? Jesus Christ, James.”

I shrug. “When you know, you know.”

“Next you’ll tell me you’re marrying her.”

“I thought I’d have to wait till she was eighteen, to be honest.” Gerald’s mouth drops open. “Or that I should wait until she graduates high school, at least, I guess.”

“SHE’S STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL?”

“She got dispensation from the dean to enroll early. Like I said, brilliant.”

“Are you having a midlife crisis?”

“Probably. But she’s stuck with me for it, so . . .”

Gerald sighs and opens his desk drawer, pulls out a bottle of Woodford Reserve and two glasses, and pours us each a finger.

“To your impending nuptials,” he says, looking genuinely flabbergasted. “For better or for worse.”

“Definitely for better,” I say, and we both knock back our glass.

“Stop punching people then,” he grumbles.

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50

Kiernan

I do come home eventually, for clothes and my laptop and other personal shit. But my bed doesn't smell like him, and I can't sleep.

Are you up?

No

Don't be a dick

Don't text me at 2am and expect me to be nice

It's called do not disturb, asshole

I like your asshole

Goodnight

Are YOU up?

Shut up

Want me to come get you?

It's 2am

I'm on my way

I squeal with delight when his car pulls into the driveway, throw open the front door, and toss myself at him, loudly smooching his cheeks and mouth. When he finally slides me against his body to put me down, I can feel his cock pressing into my belly. He huffs a little, like he's restraining himself, but he takes my bag and tosses it in the back seat, nodding at the front door.

"Lock up," he says.

"You sure you want me to stay over? You aren't sick of me yet?"

"Kiernan?"

"Yeah."

"I'm not doing this again."

"Doing what?"

"Coming here at two a.m."

"I didn't ask you to—"

"Doesn't matter. I'm telling you I'm not doing it again."

"So, you are sick of me." I cross my arms and pout.

He sighs, rolling his eyes and staring upwards at the sky like he's begging the lord for

understanding, or patience, or something.

“I’m saying just move in.”

My tongue feels like it’s been dipped in cement.

We drive back to his apartment in silence, uncomfortable on my part and amused on his. I want to punch him in the dick, a little, for putting me on the spot like this.

I want to say yes. My immediate, no hesitation reaction was to say yes. But I’m not supposed to move in with my first—brand new—boyfriend (?) when I’m still in high school. Right?

He taps his bandaged fingers on the railing in the elevator as we head up to his apartment, and my tongue still feels like stone.

Come on, James. Break the silence first.

He opens the fridge and pulls out a bottle of white. Without thinking, I grab two wine glasses and hand him the corkscrew. I’ve spent more time in his apartment the past week than I have anywhere else . . . He has a strange expression on his face, something warm and sweet. He’s clearly enjoying that I know my way around his place. That it feels like a routine. That it feels like something we’ve always done.

“It’s too soon,” I say, sipping the wine nervously.

“Why.”

“Because it’s only been a few weeks?”

He shrugs, like it’s totally normal to ask someone you’ve just met to move into your

house with you.

“I’m too young?”

He snorts and raises his glass, taking a large gulp of his wine. “There’s no getting around it, babygirl. That ship has sailed.”

“You’re too old?”

He narrows his eyes, and my thighs clench involuntarily. I swallow and hope he doesn’t notice, but his gaze drifts to my throat, and I see his fingers flex.

He takes a step towards me, and I take a step back.

“Kiernan,” he says, his voice low, as he puts down his glass and starts to unbutton his shirt. “Do you have any legitimate reasons for not moving in?”

The sight of his bare torso is distracting.

“We just shouldn’t?”

“Not a real reason,” he says, dropping his shirt on the floor.

“You will get in trouble at work?”

He waves his hand dismissively, like it’s already been taken care of, and reaches for his belt. I take another step back.

“You haven’t even met my parents?”

He pauses, his belt open, and cocks his head to the side like he’s considering it. “We

can go see them in Paris on reading week,” he says, before sliding his belt out of the loops.

I can’t stop staring at the buckle, my heart ratcheting up to something akin to terror, as my back hits the painting I picked out from that shop. He’d hung it that day. Left the old one in the lobby with a sign that said free.

“Kiernan?”

I whimper.

He doesn’t say anything else, just bends his head and kisses me until my brain and body are Jell-O, until I can’t remember his name, my name, words . . .

“Move in with me,” he murmurs.

“No.”

My feet leave the floor as he picks me up and we start moving towards . . . I’m not sure. The couch?

Doesn’t matter, and I don’t care. I grind myself into him, the thin cotton of my pajamas doing nothing but getting wet and getting in the way, and he groans as one of his hands leaves my ass and reaches for something . . .

I hear the sliding door open and feel the cool air on my skin.

Why are we going outside?

But before I can really question anything, he’s propped me up against the wall, deftly wrapped both my wrists in his belt and slung it over the wrought iron light fixture.

“What the fuck are you—”

He clamps his hand over my mouth just as there’s an explosion of laughter from the other side of the privacy screen. I hear the clinking of bottles and the low, slurred speech of late-night drunks, but my arms are stuck above my head and his hand is blocking my airway.

He slowly pulls his hand away from my mouth and puts a finger to his lips.

Shh.

I’m not quite tall enough and have to stand on my tiptoes. I feel stretched out, on display, and completely fucking helpless. The entire high rise in front of us could be watching this for all I know.

Clearly he doesn’t care as he runs his palms up my ribs and then pops the neck of my tank top down so my tits are trussed up and exposed, nipples tightening in the cool air.

He drops his head, pulls one into his mouth, and I stifle a moan, his fingers teasing the waistband of my pajamas, running back and forth as he scrapes my nipple with his teeth.

He kisses his way up my sternum, across my collarbone, up the side of my neck until his lips are in my ear.

“Move in with me,” he whispers.

“No?” I squeak.

He hooks his thumbs into my pajamas and yanks them down leaving me bare and

exposed, every inch of my skin tingling, the wetness between my legs starting to drip down my thighs.

Just the way he likes.

He pulls my other nipple into his mouth, and I jump as there's another burst of laughter from his neighbours.

Oh, god . . . Anyone could just look through the lattice. The only thing keeping them from seeing my soaking wet pussy is a wood screen and a fucking fern.

“Move in with me,” he mumbles against my stomach.

I shake my head no, and he nips my abdomen, before dropping to his knees and running his hands up the insides of my thighs.

“Fuck, Kiernan . . .” he whispers as his fingers slip inside me. “Goddamn.”

I clench around him, desperate for friction, but he takes his sweet-ass time. His fingers are splayed wide inside me, pulling at me in a way that is making my entire body quake. I bite my lip to keep from moaning as he slowly moves his hand in and out, spreading all his fingers open like a flower, my thighs shaking violently, and my feet cramping from being on my tippy toes.

He slides out and then back in, farther, deeper this time.

“Fuck!” I shout.

I hear the pause on the other side, the voices quieting at once.

“You out here, James?” someone calls.

He spreads his fingers open, and I want to scream.

“Yeah, just having a smoke,” he says, voice calm and neutral.

He eases his hand out of me.

“I didn’t know you smoked!” the voice says.

He slides back in, deeper than anything I’ve ever felt, and I want to grab on to something, I want to push him away, I want to shove him out of me because I’m going to fucking break!

“Sometimes,” James says, voice still casual, but his eyes are glued to my pussy, his mouth slack, chest heaving.

He slides his hand out and then looks up at me. Move in with me, he mouths.

But before I can answer he pushes his hand up into me all the way, and I feel myself completely stretch open around his entire fucking fist.

No No NO NO NO NO NO this is too much this is too much this is . . .

Oh, fuck

Fuck

FUCK

51

James

Her pussy is spasming around my fist, her wetness dripping down my wrist.

My good, perfect girl . . .

She looks like she's in ecstasy, her semi-suspended body shaking, her muscles rippling with tension as her orgasm rips through her, pussy muscles frantically trying to shove me out of her, finding pleasure in the resistance, amping her up even more . . .

I feel her build up around my fist for another orgasm, a rivulet of sweat running down her neck, and just as she's about to come again, just as I can feel her entire body seize up, I yank my fist out of her, stretching her entrance one last time, and she fucking explodes.

She squirts everywhere, drenching her pajamas and the outdoor patio rug, her chest heaving and legs essentially limp.

“Want to join us for a drink?”

I watch as another stream pours out of her.

“I'm good right here,” I say.

She whimpers and goes completely limp, so I wrap my arms around her thighs to help hold her up and keep the pressure off her shoulder sockets. As I slide up her body while supporting her weight, her head tips forward onto my shoulder, breath hard and hot on my neck.

“You need to stand for a minute baby,” I whisper. “So I can undo your wrists.”

She wobbles a little as she puts her weight in her legs, but I make quick work of undoing her and she collapses into me, sagging like she’s just a bag of skin and bone.

“You sure you don’t want to join us for a drink?”

I look at Kiernan, pink and sweaty and half naked, clutching my shoulders, unable to speak yet.

“Move in with me,” I whisper.

She takes a deep breath and tests her ability to stand. She seems able to support her weight—sort of, anyway, kind of like a baby deer—and then pulls back her hand and slaps me so hard it echoes off the other high-rise buildings.

I open my mouth to speak but she clamps her hand over it, a gleam in her eye.

“We could use a drink,” she calls.

“Who’s that?” the guy yells.

Kiernan looks at me for a long time.

“I’m your new neighbour,” she says.

52

Kiernan

8 months later...

It's very strange, seeing James sitting in my high school gymnasium. It's even stranger seeing him seated beside my mom and dad.

My parents were wary when I told them I was being treated to a trip to Paris by my new boyfriend. Wariness faded into outright shock when they realized he wasn't the valet. But James turned on the charm—schmoozed them in a way that almost made me jealous since he had never bothered to be kind to anyone but me up until that point—and had them both eating out of the palm of his hand before dessert.

My mother was half in love with him, and my father—despite his historical hatred for tenured professors—had talked physics with him late into the night in the lobby of our Parisian hotel. James had fallen into bed beside me drunk as shit, slurring about how much they loved him and how we had nothing to be worried about.

Nothing ever came of the beating in the garage. Graham was conspicuously absent from campus for a while, and when I eventually ran into him in line at Tim Horton's he abandoned his coffee and donut order and hightailed it out of there. I didn't bother bringing it up to James. He was moody enough already; his obsession with going to sleep and waking up with his cock inside something of mine had him soaring as high as his irritation at my music choices, and "girl shit" all over his bathroom counter had him sinking into surly lows. But he loved me, showed me the time of my life in Paris,

could never be found in public without his arm around my shoulders or lips on my neck, often resulting in quickies against brick walls in alleys or dressing rooms at the mall.

We'd decided to keep quasi-quiet about our relationship while on campus, at least until I was done high school and in attendance full-time. But the current of tension tethering us together was hard to hide. I'm sure most students just assumed we were fucking and didn't think much of it. But we kept the school property trysts to a minimum, and I didn't attend his tutorials. Being alone together in that room was . . . a lot.

"Kiernan Baker," they call, and I walk across the stage, shake hands with my teachers and the principal, swap my tassel to the other side . . . I know I should be paying attention to this, that people are saying things to me, and that I'm saying things to people, but all I can see is him, eyes locked on me, brimming with pride and lust and clearly itching to kiss me.

I hurry down the opposite side of the stage but instead of returning to my seat I go straight down the aisle to James who is already standing. My parents tut at us, my dad rolling his eyes, my mom misty and dabbing at her cheeks, as he steps towards me.

Fuck it. I jog at him, and he scoops me up in his arms, kissing me hard, tongue pushing into me like I know his cock is dying to, until my dad clears his throat, and we break apart.

He drops me to the ground, and I expect him to blush or look sheepish, but he just kisses me once more, soft, chaste, despite half the gymnasium openly staring at us, most of the women very openly staring at him.

He doesn't seem to notice. Or he just doesn't care.

“Alright, alright,” my dad says, blushing on our behalf. James smiles at me, a whopping nine thousand megawatt smile that one hundred percent has caused a tidal wave of wet panties in the immediate vicinity, and then takes his seat beside my dad. I hurry back to my spot and can feel his eyes burning a hole in my back, my neck tingling with anticipation. I barely notice when everyone tosses their caps—just turn to go back to James but bump right into his chest. He’s already come over, is already grabbing me by the cheeks and kissing me again, his enthusiasm intoxicating. He has hated keeping things quiet on campus. Has hated not being able to freely touch me at will when I’m there. And this was our milestone marker. He has free reign now.

He ducks down, and I feel his lips against the shell of my ear.

“We need to find a bathroom,” he says, voice husky and desperate.

“My parents are here,” I whisper.

“I don’t care.”

He grabs me by the hand and takes off, nobody noticing in the chaos of hugs and excitement. We slip out the doors and down the hall, and he drags me into the nearest bathroom.

He pauses for a moment, glances around, and then looks down at me.

“Which one,” he asks, his voice desperate.

I know what he’s asking, and I point to the second stall.

He shoves me in and kicks the door shut behind him while unbuckling his jeans, kisses me roughly, and then spins me around. I slap my palms to the wall just as he rips my panties to the side and—

“Fuck!” I hiss.

No preamble. No fingers. No warning. Just his cock thrust up into me so hard he almost lifts me off the ground.

“God, you’re wet,” he says, sounding extremely pleased. But I know him, and I know that catch in his throat, and he is barely holding on to his self-control.

“Always for you, daddy. I’m yours.”

He snaps, his hand finding my throat and squeezing, cock grinding into me so hard I know I’ll hurt tomorrow despite the extreme pussy workouts he regularly puts me through.

“God damn, Kiernan, fuck . . . fuck . . .”

I hear voices as people come in, but he doesn’t stop, just shuts up and covers my mouth with his other hand, his pace increasing.

“I just can’t believe the Bakers are okay with this,” someone says. I’m not really paying attention, can’t really focus on anything but James’ cock about to make me come very hard in the high school bathroom with other people in the room.

“He looks like he’s closer to their age than Kiernan’s . . .”

My body is tensing up, and he squeezes my throat harder, fucks harder. like he’s daring me to come without a sound. Like he knows that I can’t.

“Kiernan is such a sweet girl. I’m so surprised.”

Shit, shit, shit . . .

“I mean, I get it, I do. Look at him.” There’s giggling. “But doesn’t he want to be with someone his own age?”

“You mean like you?” More giggling.

James loses it first. I feel him tip over the edge, feel him filling me up, and I can’t help it—my pussy contracts, spasming all over his cock, and something about being in this bathroom again, with him inside of me this time, has me unable to hold it back.

I moan, loud, and he clamps his hand down even harder, but I feel him shaking with silent laughter. I can hear the women pause on the other side of the door, and he shakes more as my thighs start to buckle.

“Hello?” one of them says.

I slump to the side, and James releases my mouth, peppering the back of my neck with kisses.

“Say something,” he whispers.

I wave my hand at him, dizzy and spent, my head swimming and my tongue not fit for speech. He sighs heavily, kisses me again, and then loudly says, “Yes?”

I can hear the shock in the air.

“Um, this is the women’s room?”

“I’m aware.”

James slides out of me, a rush of warmth gushing everywhere , and he shoves his dick back in his pants at the same time as he lowers himself to the backs of my legs and

starts kissing them tenderly, tonguing his way up my inner thighs.

“What are you doing in there?”

I shudder as he slips his tongue inside of me.

We are my favourite flavour, he told me once, in a Baskin Robbins. The girl scooping the ice cream almost dropped an entire tray of ice cream cones.

“Can you please fuck off?” I shout at them. “We are busy!”

I hear the shocked grumbles but can’t focus as he laps at my soaking pussy. I don’t even try to stay quiet this time. I come with abandon, grinding myself backwards onto his face, feeling his left hand grip my ass cheek and his right thumb slip into my asshole. It feels like I come for fucking ever.

When I am finally able to turn around he is still on his knees, looking up at me with such love I almost come again. But he doesn’t stand up right away, which is odd, since he loves to kiss me when one or both of us taste like cum . . .

“Kiernan?” he says.

“Yeah.”

“Marry me.”

My heart sputters to a stop, my brain immediately launching into a mile long list of reasons why we can’t.

I’m still seventeen.

You're my first boyfriend.

You're so much older.

People won't get it.

It's not something people do.

My parents.

And then the insecurities start scratching away.

He'll get tired of you.

You'll be divorced before you're twenty.

This can never work.

But he reaches into his pocket, pulls out a little velvet box, and pops it open with a creak. Inside is a black band with beautiful gold-leaf filigree, encrusted all the way around with diamonds.

It's dark. And different. And so unfuckingbelievably perfect that I can never imagine myself wearing anything else.

"Yes," I breathe.

Because if anyone can prove this equation, it's us.

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I'm not sure why I'm nervous, but I am.

"Relax," SJ says. "You're fine. It's fine."

I take a deep breath and she puts her hand on my forearm and gives it a squeeze.

"You're going to be fine, Kiernan."

It's the first day of the fall semester. My morning classes have all been bullshit—outlines and a review of the syllabus and bad dad jokes—but SJ has been enjoying herself immensely. Our afternoons look vastly different; she's on her way to A History of Vampires in Literature, and I'm on my way to Numerical Methods of Partial Differential Equations.

I hover in the doorway, afraid to go in.

She rolls her eyes. "Kiernan, I really don't know why you're so nervous. You're—"

"Kiernan," he purrs.

That's why I'm nervous...

I close my eyes at the sound of his voice. Why does he always fucking sound like he's licking me? My brain is flooded with images from this morning—his idea of a first day of school send-off—and my lips part, breath quickening.

SJ clears her throat. "James," she says drily.

“Sarah-Jean.”

I can picture him nodding curtly as he says her name. He won’t call her SJ—not since she gave him shit for proposing on the floor of a bathroom—and they’ve been circling each other like wolves all summer. I roll my eyes behind my closed eyelids.

SMACK! I yelp and scoot forward, eyes flying open and ass stinging.

“Don’t roll your eyes,” he says.

I stick my tongue out at him and his jaw clenches.

SJ sighs and turns to head down the hall. “Whelp, that’s my cue to leave,” she says. She blows me a kiss. “Don’t forget you’re the smartest one in the room!”

James narrows his eyes at her but she’s already fluffing off and around the corner, attracting the attention of many-a lacrosse player.

“Be nice,” I say to him. “You wanted to impress her, once upon a time. Remember?”

“I’ve never wanted to impress anyone but you, baby,” he murmurs, catching my elbow and steering me into the classroom.

“I want you two to get along.”

“We do.”

“James.”

“Kiernan.”

“Just once, could you—”

He spins me around and pushes me against his desk, my body bowing backwards as he grabs a fistful of hair and kisses me—hard—like half a morning apart was too long.

I push him away a little and try to catch my breath. “Stop distracting me from this conversation—”

His hand finds its way between my legs and my hands slacken. He smiles against my mouth and presses his hips into me. I can feel his cock—hard, always hard for me—on my thigh as he grinds the heel of his hand into my pussy, rubbing me through my jeans.

“I’ve been thinking about you all day,” he murmurs.

“It’s not even lunch,” I gasp.

He bites my lip and I yelp, but he’s already kissing it, licking it, soothing it with his mouth.

“Be my TA,” he says. His voice sounds husky, a little bit desperate. “Finish this semester and then be my TA.”

“No.”

“Yes.”

“No.”

“I can’t go all day without seeing you. Not anymore. Not after this summer...”

His lips slide to my throat and he starts to suck, gently, softly, his hand grinding harder into me and his hips matching as he rubs his dick against my leg like a horny

teenager. My hands slide into his hair and I rub my thumbs over his temples—he's got a little bit of grey, there—and smile.

“It's not a good idea, James.”

He sucks a little harder. “Why not?”

My breathing is fast, shallow, my pussy clenching against his hand. “Because you're a math professor, not a porn director.”

“Maybe they'd actually learn something...” he grumbles.

I tip my head back and laugh and he pauses, his whole body still, as he pulls back and looks at me. He's staring at me like he's hungry. He's staring at me like he's never seen me before. He's staring at me like he just won the fucking lottery.

“ Hem hem...”

I jump at the noise but he doesn't budge, just keeps staring at me. I turn my head and flush at the sight of a student in the doorway, shifting his weight and looking profusely awkward. I slide sideways off the desk, face beet red, and try to remember if I was carrying anything. Did I have a bag? Did I have books?

Students start pouring in and a familiar face in the crowd—Jordan, maybe?—from last semester grins at me.

“Banging the students already Professor?” he says.

James turns to look at him and his grin fades, a little.

“You mean my wife?”

There's a splattering sound and we all turn to look. Shannon is standing in the doorway, her mandible at risk of detaching from her face her mouth is hanging open so far, with two extra-large Tim Horton's cups making puddles at her feet.

"You got some on your jeans," I say coldly as James slides his palm against my lower back and flexes his fingers.

"Go sit baby," he says, dropping a kiss on the top of my head.

I take a seat a few rows back and watch him watch his students. He looks—as always—unimpressed. But I can feel his gaze on me, always drawn back, hot and heavy and I know I am going to be sore as fuck tonight when he gets home. I clench my thighs, wondering if he's going to hang me up on the balcony again...

"Everyone turn to page eighteen, please," he says loudly. The class quiets down and Shannon settles in her chair by the door. He picks up a piece of chalk and starts drawing—

"Sir?" someone asks.

"What." He doesn't even turn around. I feel my mouth twitch.

"Um, are we going to cover the syllabus, or..."

He pauses mid-formula, shoulders tense, and turns around slowly. The girl shrinks back in her seat and I wince on her behalf. That fucking look. He could melt concrete.

"Can you read?" he asks pleasantly.

She furrows her brow.

"I assume you can read. I wasn't aware that needed to be listed as a prerequisite for

this class.”

I close my eyes and take a deep breath. God you’re such a fucking dick, James.

“Yes, I can read...” she says quietly.

“Good. Because my lesson plan doesn’t include reading things out loud for you, ” he says, voice like razors.

The guy—Jordan—bravely sticks up his hand. James narrows his eyes but Jordan just shrugs.

“Listen, I don’t feel like being eviscerated in public or anything, but the bookstore was sold out of the supplementary material on the reading list. Do you have an electronic version, so I can make sure I’ve read it before we cover it next week?”

My mouth twitches again. James will like this guy. He’s already read the syllabus and knows next week’s lesson plan.

“E-mail my TA. She can provide you with—”

I pull my copy out of my bag and hand it to him. “Here,” I say.

James and Jordan both frown, and I flush a little at the feeling of 100 people staring at the back of my head.

“You don’t need it?” Jordan asks, taking it from my hand.

I shrug.

“Thanks...” he says.

“Oh come on,” the other girl whines. “You’re going to pretend you don’t need the textbook just because you’re fucking the teacher?”

The silence is deafening.

I stare at him— my husband— his hackles up and a pheremonal warning quite literally oozing out of him to smother anyone who could have ever questioned my right to be here. Tall, handsome, the meanest and kindest person I’ve ever met. The man who golfs with my dad on Sundays even though he hates golf. Who pretends he doesn’t like SJ but quietly respects how territorial she is, and secretly feels guilty about stealing me away in the night and denying her Maid of Honour status. Who wakes me up at four a.m. to fill every hole I have with cum and eat it out of all of them. Who doesn’t like when the sheets are fresh, because they don’t smell like me.

“She doesn’t need the textbook because she spent the summer drafting it,” he says in a falsely pleasant voice. The room is so tense you could slice it like pie and serve it with ice cream. He looks at me, his face softening for a moment, and then he turns his face back to her—hard and cold, again. “ She wrote it.”

I smile and bite my lip.

“Co-wrote.”