

Font of Fertility Chapter 21 Beta

By BreaktheBar

The following is the Alpha Draft of Font of Fertility Ch 21. As a Beta draft, this is not the final work and may see major changes prior to final posting out in the wide world.

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All Characters are 18 years or older.

This story is a continuation of the Font of Fertility series. I would suggest reading Chapter 1 if you have not already. This chapter includes a lot of relationship development.

Jeremiah and the girls start putting pieces together and making things official.

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The human eyeball was both relatively simple to understand, but *fucking complicated* to know the details of. I sort of knew the basics from my Grade 10 Biology course that had been a necessary credit to graduate, but beyond that, I hadn't ever really considered how an eyeball actually worked.

"Fuck, I feel like an idiot," I groaned. I'd watched a couple of detailed YouTube videos on eyeballs, and I was trying to work my way through an excerpt from a Med School textbook that I'd found online. The videos had made it easier, but it was still dense and dry.

"You can do this, Jerry," Lindsey said, getting up from my bed and coming over to stand behind me, wrapping her arms around my chest to hug me as she leaned down and kissed my cheek. "You're definitely smart enough to handle the information, you just need to internalize it. Think of all the fantasy worlds, and characters and storylines you've got filed away. This is just another bunch of information like that."

I'd gone down to greet my parents a little while after they'd gotten home from their New Year's party and had been able to sneak one last goodbye kiss from Jordan as Stacey had offered to drive her home. That had left Lindsey and Lauren to hang out with me, and they'd joined me up in my room as we told my parents that Lauren and I needed to do some studying and Lindsey was going to help.

That wasn't untrue - we just didn't tell them *what* we were studying. Unfortunately, the Anatomy lessons weren't the fun kind.

"It's not really the same," I said, leaning my chin down so I could kiss Lindsey's forearm as she hugged me. "Stories are different from facts."

“He’s not wrong, Linds,” Lauren said from where she had spread out on the floor of my bedroom and was flipping through the notes that I’d taken so far. “It’s not like this is engaging stuff.”

“OK,” Lindsey said, standing up straight again and putting her hands on my shoulders. “You’re right, the facts and the data are dry, but you need to look at it from the right perspective for it to be engaging. Step one, remember what you’re doing this for.”

“I need to heal Maya’s eyes,” I said after taking a breath.

“Right, but why?” Lindsey asked.

That made me stop for a moment to think about it. “Because it’s the right thing to do?”

“And?” Lindsey prompted.

“Because... she deserves to be able to see,” I said. “And she doesn’t deserve to be punished for what happened to her. And I don’t want Annalise to have to live with knowing she was the cause of Maya going blind.”

“Good,” Lindsey said. “So there’s your motivation, right? How about this - what else can knowing about eyeballs and vision help you with other than healing Maya?”

“Seeing things,” Lauren pointed out. “Like, with magic. Any spell you cast about seeing things you can probably make more detailed and limited, which should reduce the cost.”

That clicked in my head with something else I’d run into a couple of days before. “And it should help me figure out how I can try and make invisibility work. When I tried casting that before going after Stoker the cost was super high and would keep costing more. I’ll probably need to learn more about light as well as vision, but it’ll help.”

“Oh, look,” Lindsey said with a little smirk. “You two *can* be good at school.”

“Hah,” Lauren smirked. “You know my GPA is almost as high as yours was, Linds. And Jerry isn’t a slouch either, this just isn’t his kind of speciality.”

“I know,” Lindsey said. “But I’m still the genius in the family.”

Lauren stuck out her tongue at Lindsey, who did the same back, so Lauren grabbed her leg and pulled her down to the floor and started tickling her.

“Yep, making it super easy to stay focused,” I mumbled to myself.

“Jerry,” Lauren said, calling my attention. I looked over and Lauren was on her back with Lindsey on top of her, and Lauren had pulled Lindsey’s shirt up over her bra and was flashing me her cleavage. Lindsey was giggling and shaking her head.

“Gah,” I grunted, reaching out and wanting to play with the boobies but knowing I needed to stay on task.

“Good boy,” Lindsey said, pulling away from Lauren and coming back to give me another kiss. “Stay focused.” She went down to her knees and then started unzipping my pants. “Relax, and read.”

“I don’t think that’s going to help, Linds,” Lauren said as she got up on her knees as well.

“Probably not,” Lindsey said as she pulled my cock out and took a long lick of it.

“Well, come on,” Lauren said. “You can at least share.”

That made me and Lindsey both laugh, and a moment later I was fighting to keep my eyes on the computer screen.

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“OK, Maya,” I said as we sat on the bed of her room at the Bed and Breakfast. “Tell me when you’re ready.”

She took a deep breath and nodded, but then immediately shook her head. “Sorry, I’m- I’m nervous,” she said.

“It’s OK,” Annalise said. She was sitting on the edge of the bed and reached over to take Maya’s hand. “I’m here, and you know Jerry wants to help. Take your time.”

“If it’s any help, Jerry is pretty cute,” Lauren said with a little smile at me. “You’re missing out on a good view.”

That made Maya snort a little laugh.

“Hey, why is that funny?” I teasingly asked her.

“I was just thinking you better be cute as hell if you’re fucking my sister and three other girls,” Maya said.

“Maya, language,” Annalise scolded her lightly.

“Really? Language?” Maya scoffed. “Try that again when I haven’t heard through the walls what you say to him in bed.”

That set Annalise to blushing as she glanced at me. “Still,” she said.

“Okay,” Maya said in a low, goofy voice. Then she took a breath and nodded. “OK, I’m ready.”

“Alright,” I said. “We’re going to stand up, and then teleportal like we did from the motel to a place where I can amplify magic - it should help make the spell easier, and work better.”

“Sure,” Maya nodded. “Just taking a blind girl on a teleportation adventure. Cool. Sounds like a plan.”

We got Maya up and Annalise took one of her hands while I held the other. Lauren got in the chain behind Annalise, smiling at the dark-haired woman assuredly. I opened the door to the room after focusing on the Sanctum teleportal door and I led them out of the Bed and Breakfast and into the cool Amplifier room.

“Linds, they’re here,” Stacey called as she hopped up from her sitting position at the Amplifier stage. I had dropped her and Lindsey off there before going with Lauren to pick up the Stoker sisters, trying to make the most economical use of magic for the teleporting. Adding one or two people to a jump wasn’t much of a change in the cost, but more than that got larger - I had a feeling it was something to do with the physical contact with me, and that chaining a bunch of people together stretched out the magical connection. “Hey, Annalise. Hi, Maya.”

“Hey, Stacey,” Maya said, letting me guide her towards Stace.

“OK, this place is like... weird,” Annalise said.

“Oh, it’s not that weird,” Lauren said, looping her arm through the Fire Mage’s and pulling her further into the room. “I mean, sure, it’s not exactly our aesthetic but it’s got good lighting so it doesn’t look like a dungeon or anything.”

“It just needs some better decor,” Lindsey said, coming out of the master bedroom. Her hair was wet, and I assumed she’d taken a dip in the hot tub while she and Stacey had been waiting for us. Stacey had taken Maya’s hand and pulled her into a hug, so I was free to pull Lindsey into a quick kiss.

“I’d love to give my opinions on the lighting and the decor,” Maya said. “But, y’know, eyeballs.”

That made me chuckle. “Alright, let’s get you in position.” I went and took her hand again and led her to the edge of the Amplifier stage, and Stacey helped me help her up the big step.

“You know,” Lindsey said. “It’ll work best if Jerry’s getting some head while he casts the spell. Wanna do the honours, Anna?”

“Um,” Annalise hesitated, clearly torn between wanting to make sure the spell had the best effect but also feeling awkward about doing that in front of her sister.

“That’s not necessary,” I said, giving Lindsey a look that just made her smirk and shrug. Sometimes she was incorrigible. *‘She’s worried,’* I psychically spoke to Lindsey. *‘Stop teasing.’*

‘I wasn’t teasing,’ Lindsey thought back at me. *‘It’s the truth. Hell, the best possible setup would be with you fucking Maya while you cast the spell but I didn’t suggest that, did I?’*

‘Linds, I love you,’ I sort of sighed through our connection. She wasn’t wrong, but it wasn’t going to happen.

“Come on, Maya. This shouldn’t take long,” I said. We sat her just off-centre from the middle of the Amplifier, and I sat across from her with both of us cross-legged so that our knees were touching. I took her hands in mine. “I did a lot of research, with Lindsey and Lauren’s help, so I’m fairly certain this shouldn’t hurt. Maybe some numbness as it’s happening..”

“Jerry, for real,” Maya said. “The more you talk, the more nervous I get. Maybe let’s just do this?”

“OK,” I chuckled. “Sorry, I’m dealing with some nerves here too. Let’s get started.”

I took a deep breath and half-closed my eyes, focusing on my pool of power and letting it connect to the gilded runes of the Amplifier chamber, and feeding that connection through my hands into Maya. She sucked in a breath when the connection linked up. “That tingles,” she said.

“Bad tingle?” I asked.

“No, just... weird,” she said.

Lauren and Stacey had flanked Annalise just off of the Amplifier stage and were each holding one of her hands tightly, trying to reassure her. Lindsey, meanwhile, had taken a notebook out of her bag and was quickly scribbling notes as she tried to watch everything that was going on at once.

With the connection made, I took another breath and focused on what I had learned about the human eye, its connections to the occipital lobe of the brain, and the nerves that connected near them. Before I could do anything to try and fix Maya’s eyes I needed to temporarily block the connection to the brain and the nerves so that she wouldn’t get any weird feelings or effects.

Then, with that part of the spell in place, I used the connection to imagine how a healthy eyeball was supposed to function and layered that over the actual state of her eyes.

After all the research about eyes, I had also tried to research what sort of damage Maya had sustained. We'd come up with a few possibilities, but since her eyeballs hadn't just burst from the heat, the most likely issue seemed to be the one we were dealing with - basically, Maya had been overwhelmed by the intense brightness of Annalise's fire during the fight. It was like she'd looked right at the sun for an extended period but all at once, which caused the cells of her retina that sensed light to over-stimulate which then caused damage to the back of her eye. It was 'flash blindness' on a permanent scale, like when you had to blink after flash photography.

With all of that in my head at once, I isolated the damaged areas of Maya's eyes and rounded out the spell to only affect those areas, and finally the tail end of the spell would reopen the nerves and pathways to the brain.

I released the breath I'd been holding and let the spell ooze out of my consciousness and into the pool of power, and it almost felt like it got swept away from me through the pool and into the connection of the Amplifier, pulling away and travelling up through the rivers and streams of magic that danced along the arched columns over the structure before swimming back down and splashing over Maya, absorbing into and through her.

She gasped and blinked open her eyes.

"Holy shit," she said.

I opened my eyes fully, looking at her warm, brown irises as I smiled. "Can you see?" I asked.

She was flushed and she nodded as she looked around. "Yeah," she said. "I can." And then she started to cry, and she rolled up onto her knees and wrapped her arms around me, hugging me tightly. "Thank you," she whispered. "Thank you, thank you, thank you."

"You're welcome," I said, hugging her back.

Annalise came up onto the platform and rushed to us and tackled us over onto our sides in a hug, starting to cry as well as she hugged both of us hard.

Once the babbling thanks, and the hugs, and even the kisses from Annalise, were dying down I took Maya through a quick check of her vision, making sure that she had good sight in both eyes, her peripherals were good, and she wasn't overly sensitive to light. Everything seemed to be good to go.

"Anything else feeling weird?" I asked. "The focus was the damage to your eyes, but I'm not a doctor so I don't want to have missed something."

“Well, there is one thing,” Maya said. She was still flushed from the experience.

“What is it?” Annalise asked, suddenly nervous again.

Maya bit the inside of her cheek, glancing around at everyone, and then sighed. “I’m like... really fucking horny,” she said. “My nipples are rock hard right now.”

Annalise looked dumbfounded, and Lindsey snorted as she covered her mouth. That made Lauren swat her sister on the arm.

“I’m sorry!” Lindsey said, still trying to stifle her giggles. “I’m sorry, OK? But that’s not super unexpected. Jerry’s magic is powered by sex, and the Amplifier is attuned to that, so it makes sense that Maya would be infused with that sensation after the spell connection.”

“It’ll go away, right?” Annalise asked, looking between me and Lindsey.

“I know one way we could make it go away,” Maya said, licking her lower lip with the tip of her tongue as she looked at me a little shyly.

“No,” Annalise said. “No, no, no.” She turned to me. “You promised, Jerry.”

“I know,” I said, raising my hands. “I know. Maya, you’re a beautiful girl, but-”

“Oh my God,” Stacey sighed. “Get a grip, people. Stop pussy-footing around.” She grabbed Maya’s hand and started pulling her towards the bedroom. “Come on, Maya,” she said. “You can handle yourself in here. You’re not old enough to start getting fucked by a Sex Wizard.”

“It’s not like I’m a virgin,” Maya protested even as she let herself be guided away.

“Wait, what?!” Annalise asked, starting to follow. “Since when-?”

“Not right now,” Stacey said over her shoulder, closing the bedroom door behind her and Maya.

“Shhh, it’s OK, Anna,” Lauren said, wrapping an arm around Annalise’s shoulder and holding her in place. “Maya isn’t an adult, but she isn’t a kid. Just let her take care of it in peace and get the feelings out.”

“Oh my God,” Annalise groaned, covering her face with her hands for a moment. “Everything is so fucking...”

“Weird,” I offered.

“Insane,” Lauren suggested.

“Fun,” Lindsey said with a little grin.

Stacey came back out of the bedroom and shut the door behind her. “OK,” she said. “She’ll come out when she’s ready. Sorry to be so blunt, but for a sex wizard and his concubines, you guys can be a little timid sometimes.”

That made me crack a grin and chuckle, which set Lindsey off, which caught on to Lauren. Even Annalise couldn’t help but ruefully smile and let out a little scoff of a chortle.

Once the giggling had released the tension from the room, Annalise came over to me and hugged me again, looking up at me. “Thank you,” she said. “It means the world to me.”

“You mean the world to me,” I said, hugging her back.

“To us,” Lauren said, coming and joining the hug, quickly followed by Stacey and Lindsey.

After the hug, we ended up heading through into the old Library, which opened up the Wow-factor for Annalise all over again about the Sanctum. Looking out from the window over a lake of lava deep in the heart of a volcano was definitely the kind of view that made you go ‘Holy shit.’ We grabbed some of the chairs that were scattered around the room at the empty desks and pulled them around one of the tables, and Lauren and I started to fill the other three in on the Council meeting.

Annalise had never met another Seat, so she was as in the dark about most of them as the rest of us. Lindsey was fascinated to find out that Genghis Khan was another Fertility seat, and that he was still alive. The fact that he was third-youngest among the Seats was also a bit of a shock. She immediately flipped to another page of her notebook and started taking notes about mine and Lauren’s thoughts and observations on the different Seats.

The dry political stuff was hard to remember a lot of, though I tried to recall any of the firm decisions that had been made. The more magical stuff was easier to recall - even Annalise was surprised to find out about the Vampires and ‘Shapeshifter’ tribes, or that there was a sect of magic users that wanted to create an apocalypse to cull humanity.

“I never realized there were... I don’t even know what to call them,” Annalise said. “Clubs? Groups? Different factions of mages. I mean, I guess it makes sense. Maybe that’s why our Father moved us way out into the desert - he didn’t want to be part of one of the groups, or didn’t want them knowing what he was doing.”

“That’s probably the case,” I nodded. “That or he was doing something secret *for* a group. We know he’s connected to at least one Seat. He might be part of a bigger conspiracy.”

“Ugh,” Annalise groaned, running her fingers through her hair. “I feel like I should know more about this stuff, or about him.”

"It's OK, Anna," Lauren said, reaching over and rubbing her arm. "It's not your fault *at all*."

"The good news is that Aidra should be able to help with some of this stuff," I said. "She's from a long line of witches, so I would bet that between her and her mother they are a lot more tapped into the magical world than we are."

"I was thinking about that, actually," Stacey said. "On the one hand, I do know a little about Aidra and based on what you and Lauren have said I think she's fine to connect with. But we don't know *anything* about her Mom. We should probably be careful about revealing too much."

"Agreed," Lindsey said.

"OK," I said. "At some point, we need to just make the decision to trust people or not. Part of me wonders if that flying book incident that warned me not to trust anyone was just a red herring to keep me isolated. But we'll take it slow."

"Remember that Yaroslav's Prime, Anna," Lauren said and glanced at Annalise, "Or, I dunno, 'Other Anna,' wants to meet and apologize to us for the magazine fiasco. We don't know if she is trustworthy or not, but she's another place to start."

"There's also the dinner with Esmerelda," Lindsey pointed out. "That was a good idea, setting up another meeting with her. I definitely want to be there for that."

"We could do a family dinner," Stacey suggested. "Or, like, 'harem dinner' I guess. Try and humanize us to her, and maybe she'll be more open to being humanized back instead of a scary Seat."

"That's a risk, isn't it?" Annalise asked. "Showing her all the people closest to you?"

"It is," I agreed. "But it might be worth it. Stacey is right - she's weird, but I think she's spent a bunch of time only interacting with people who are centuries or thousands of years older than her. I still don't know how old she actually is, but the fact that her ghost-dad's skull wears a conquistador helmet makes me think she might have become a Seat sometime in the early 1500s, and Genghis Khan was supposed to have died in 1227."

"That still makes him closer to her age than we are," Stacey pointed out.

"But," Lauren said. "She's been the youngest Seat for all that time. She might be way more modern than the rest of them socially just based on her being the youngest."

"We'll figure it out," I said. "But it's another lead on information. The only thing I can really be sure of is that she's not the Seat who attacked me."

“What about Ndia?” Annalise asked. “If she’s another Fertility seat, and the oldest one, should you be setting up a meeting with her, too?”

I frowned slightly, and Lauren shook her head. “I think it’s best if we keep our distance from her right now,” Lauren said. “Unless you all want to get an earful about getting pregnant as fast and often as possible.”

“She’s like another magnitude of power above me,” I followed up. “Or two or three. I’m really hoping to wait a while before I need to go to her or Uwe. And Xi Zuang. I couldn’t really get a good feel for them, and I think they’re playing games on another level.”

“Steep learning curve,” Lindsey mumbled, pursing her lips in thought.

“That’s almost exactly what Jerry said,” Lauren smiled.

Lindsey flashed a smile at me as well. “Great minds,” she said.

“OK,” I said. “So now you all know what’s going on with the Council stuff, there’s something else we need to talk about.” The girls all refocused themselves. “Tonight we’re meeting with Angela, and she’s going to let us know if she wants to join our relationship. Before she says yes or no, we need to introduce you to her, Annalise, because she has a right to know everything she’s getting into. But that also means we need to decide if we’re telling her about magic or not.”

“I already vote to tell her,” Lauren kicked in quickly. “I think we should just have two kinds of levels for sexual partners for Jerry. Harem members and non-Harem members, and Angie is definitely joining the Harem and should know everything.”

“I vote to tell her, too,” Lindsey said. “But I’m biased.”

Stacey sighed. “OK. Devil’s Advocate - what if we tell her about the magic and it freaks her out? What happens then?”

“She won’t freak out,” Lindsey said.

“But what if she does?” Stacey asked.

“Annalise, what do you think?” I asked.

“Oh, I don’t know,” Annalise said. “I don’t think I-”

“Wait!” Lauren said. “Stop, stop.” She got up from her chair and went around the table and hugged Annalise from behind, resting her chin on the curvier girl’s shoulder. “You, my dear, are all the way in. You are in the Harem. You’re one of Jerry’s concubines. Your opinion matters and your vote counts. Don’t you dare think you’re less than us.”

“Agreed,” Lindsey said.

“Absolutely,” Stacey smiled, reaching over and taking Annalise’s hand.

Annalise opened her mouth for a second, and then closed it, and then opened it again, but was obviously still unsure of what to say. Lauren quirked her lips into a little smile and shifted her hug up to be grabbing Annalise’s big breasts and then kissed her full on the mouth.

“Stop overthinking it,” Lauren said as she pulled away from the kiss.

“OK, OK,” Annalise chuckled. “I get it.”

“Good,” Lauren said and let go of her after giving one last squeeze of her boobs, and then went back around the table to her seat next to me. “So, what do you *really* think?”

Annalise pressed her lips together and took a breath before answering. “I think there’s a reason why we keep magic secret from most of the world,” she said. “So telling people should be done carefully. Maya didn’t know about me *or* our father until everything happened. Our brothers still don’t know, and I don’t know if I’ll tell them the full story or need to make something up to make it more... understandable. They don’t *need* to know. So this Angela woman... does she love you?”

“That’s part of what we’re talking about tonight,” I said.

“If she is in, like *really* in on the full relationship, then you should tell her,” Annalise said. “I don’t know how you’re going to do that without making it weird, but you should. If she just wants to stay fuck-buddies or whatever, then it should be fine not to tell her.”

“I’d argue she already knows the weirder parts of our relationship anyways,” Stacey said. “Lauren and Lindsey being step-siblings by marriage, and me being raised by Jerry’s parents. Magic is just like... a bonus.”

“Yeah, well, you took it pretty well when we told you,” Lauren said. “We were worried it would go a lot worse.”

“OK,” I said. “So... if she *does* say she wants in after meeting Annalise, and then we tell her about magic and she freaks out, what should we do? Because I do agree she deserves to know at that point.”

“Depends on the level of freak out?” Lindsey hedged.

“Let me put it another way,” I said. “What’s the line in what I do to fix things? Like, worst case scenario, I don’t like the idea of it but am I... erasing her memory?”

“Yes, absolutely,” Stacey said.

“That would be easiest,” Annalise said at the same time.

“No way,” Lindsey said.

Lauren stayed quiet.

“Wait, you guys are OK with that?” Lindsey asked.

“Well, not doing it lightly,” Stacey said. “But he said the worst-case scenario, so I’m imagining her having a mental breakdown and running into the street screaming insane shit to anyone who will listen. In that case, yeah, I’d much rather her forget it happened and she can go back to her life none the wiser.”

“I thought it was a fairly humane fix,” Annalise said. “Even in something less dramatic than Stacey’s scenario. Even if she just says no, she doesn’t want to join the harem after learning about magic, she probably shouldn’t be allowed to just walk out knowing about that stuff.”

Lindsey grimaced. “I can see the logic, but the ethics of it... that’s a slippery slope argument that can lead to bad things.”

Lauren still didn’t say anything, grimacing a little at the conversation but not adding in. I took her hand under the table and squeezed, and she glanced at me with an ‘It’s ok, don’t worry’ look.

“As the only person at the table, that we know of at least, that’s gone through something like what we’re talking about, I think it makes sense to use it cautiously,” Stacey said. I had explained everything that had happened to her early on, and had repaired her memories - it had made her a little dizzy for a moment, but hadn’t been anything dangerous.

“What do you mean?” Annalise asked, frowning as she glanced between me and Stace.

Stacey quickly explained what had happened between us, how I had panicked when I had seen her so emotionally wrecked after our dry-humping encounter, and how I fixed it when she seemed ready and explained.

“I-” Annalise hesitated, turning to me. “I kind of hate feeling like I need to ask, but you didn’t do that to me or Maya, right?”

“No,” I said, knowing that the potential for that kind of thing would always be a burden on me. Anyone I got intimate with and knew about my magic would have that little, tiny nugget of a question unless they fully trusted me. “I never did anything like that with you or Maya.”

“OK,” she said. “I trust you.”

“Thanks,” I said, leaning over the table to grasp her hand.

“What do you think, Laur?” Lindsey asked.

“I think I’m somewhere between Stacey and Annalise,” she said. “I don’t super like the idea of it, but I think it’s also an important tool to keep normie people and us safe. If Angie changes her mind after saying yes to the harem but no to magic, we shouldn’t make her walk around with that in her head.”

“Three to one,” Lindsey sighed and looked to me. “What do you think, Jerry?”

“I think you all had good points,” I said. “And I really hope I don’t need to do it to anyone, but it makes sense for the same reason that putting a shield on George’s magic was more humane than just killing him immediately.”

“OK,” Lindsey said. “Fair vote. Mind-alteration is on the table to protect secrets.”

“So what now?” Annalise asked.

“Now someone better start having sex with Jerry,” Stacey said, raising her hand. “Oh, look, I volunteered first.”

“Actually,” I said. “While I would love to start something with any of you, or all of you, there’s something else we need to do while we’re here.”

All of the girls raised at least one eyebrow. “What’s that, babe?” Lauren asked.

I looked at Annalise.

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“What... the fuck... is going on out here...?” Maya asked as she opened the door to the master bedroom and looked out at what, I had to admit, was probably a really weird sight.

“Oh, shit,” Annalise grunted, the fire jetting from her hands and feet sputtering out as her embarrassment took over her concentration, and she started to drop the five feet to the very hard floor of the Amplifier.

I rushed to try and catch her, which was mostly successful as she plummeted and crashed into me, both of us going to the floor but neither of us getting injured beyond some bumps.

“We’re figuring out how to get your sister to fly,” Lauren said to Maya.

“Yeah, I get that part,” Maya said with a wide-eyed look. “But why is she in her underwear?”

“Other than that she looks fantastically sexy?” Lindsey asked with a little teasing smile.

“Because her fire burns her clothes unless Jerry uses magic to make them fireproof, so it made more sense to strip down than waste magic. I thought she should go full monty, but she was too shy for that.”

Maya looked from Lindsey to Annalise and I picking ourselves up from the floor, her sister still blushing hard. And then she broke into giggles.

“It’s not funny!” Annalise shouted at her sister.

“No, I know,” Maya gasped between giggles. “But also it kind of is!”

“Says the girl who just spent an hour masturbating,” Annalise shot back.

That made Maya start blushing but didn’t stop the giggles she was trying to hold in.

“Alright, let’s try it again,” Lindsey said, tapping her pencil on her notebook. “‘Ironman Style’ definitely gave you the best control, so we should try and develop from there.”

“But I can’t *touch* anything while I’ve got fire coming off of my hands,” Annalise said.

“Well, focus on trying to get more force off of your feet, and just use your hands for directional control,” Lindsey said.

“Fine, fine,” Annalise said, standing back in the centre of the Amplifier.

“You good?” I asked her, putting a hand on her lower back.

“Yeah, I’m fine,” she said. “Thanks for catching me.”

“Any time,” I smiled at her.

She rolled her eyes. “You just liked that my boobs planted into your face.”

“That was definitely a bonus,” I laughed, and then quickly leaned down and kissed her before skipping a few steps back. “Alright. Count her down.”

Stacey, Lauren and Lindsey all started counting down from five, and Maya joined in at three. At one, Annalise took a deep breath and closed her eyes to focus, and at zero she released a focused blast of fire out of her feet and started to rise off the floor of the Amplifier leaving a blackened scorch mark below her.

“Holy shit,” Maya said. “She can actually fly.”

“She can actually, really fly,” Lauren said, hugging Maya around the shoulders. “Your sister is pretty amazing.”

Maya grinned and nodded. “She’s my hero.”

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It was kinda funny, the issues that come up with secretly being one of the most powerful users of magic in the world.

The problem that arose late that afternoon wasn’t some international crisis, a magical rogue running amok, or even a mishap with a magic spell. No, when we teleported back from the Sanctum, there was a much more mundane issue at hand.

“No, you cannot skip family dinner,” Mom said. “And girls, your Mother is expecting you at home in about ten minutes.”

“Awe, man,” Stacey, Lauren, Lindsey and I all groaned in unison.

My Mom just rolled her eyes. “Get going. You can all hang out afterwards.” She said it with a smile on her face but steel in her voice - there would be no arguing from any of us.

“OK,” Lauren sighed. “Thanks for letting us know.”

“We’ll walk them out,” I told my Mom.

“Be quick, dinner is on the table,” Mom said.

Stacey and I walked Lauren and Lindsey back out the door. We’d been pretending to ‘be out’ together, which really wasn’t that big of a lie since we *had* been out together, just not on the continent.

“We’ll push back the Angie meeting,” Lauren said once we were all outside. “Make sure she knows it’s not a thing.”

“OK, thanks,” I said.

I ended up getting a quick kiss from both Lauren and Lindsey, and then they skipped into their car and got on the move so that they wouldn’t be late to make an appearance with their own parents.

“This is getting complicated,” Stacey sighed as we watched them pull out of the driveway.

“I know,” I said. “Part of me feels bad not telling my parents about the magic, but the rest of me really, really doesn’t want to know how they’d react to it all.”

“What do you think would go down worse,” Stacey asked with a little smirk. “The fact that you’re having a whole bunch of wanton sex, or that you’re dating four-soon-to-be-five girls?”

“Is that what we’re doing?” I asked with my own teasing smirk. “Cause I thought you were my concubine.”

She elbowed me in the side and laughed. “That’s ‘Miss Sexy Concubine Girlfriend’ to you, buster.”

I gave her a smack on the ass and darted for the door, and she chased me in threatening to pinch mine in return.

Dinner was a normal affair once we were all around the table, which was nice in a way but also made me wish ‘normal’ could officially include more people. My parents told us all about the party they had attended the night before - it had been a fundraiser that they had won tickets to, and they ended up running into a couple of friends-of-friends that my Dad knew through golfing. Them ‘suddenly winning’ tickets had me suspicious and a quick glance over at Stacey at the right time let me know that she and Lauren had definitely manufactured the ‘winning’ to make our own party happen. Not that I cared; my Mom had a lot of fun dressing up and spending the night in a fancy hotel, and my Dad got to network and hobnob and feel part of the ‘cool club’ for old people.

Then we had to make up some stuff about what we had done that night. Stacey talked about Jordan and a couple of her friends who had come to crash, and I said that Jay had been here with his Canadian girlfriend Clarissa. That ended up with me needing to dodge or bullshit through several questions about the Canadian Girlfriend.

Talking about Jay seemed to remind my Mom of something though, and as she was serving herself a second small helping of mashed potatoes she raised her eyebrows. “Speaking of your friends, Benji dropped by this afternoon looking for you. Is something going on with him? He didn’t exactly look well.”

“Oh,” I said. “Um, I don’t know.”

“He wasn’t here last night along with Jay and Lauren?” My Dad asked.

“No,” I said.

“Don’t tell me you two are still arguing about whatever happened last week,” Mom said.

“Well, he hasn’t apologized yet,” I said. “That has to happen before anything else.”

“Are you sure you aren’t being stubborn, Jeremiah?” Dad asked. “No argument is one-sided.”

I grimaced. “See, that’s the problem. He probably thinks he deserves an apology, but I *know* that he’s the one who screwed up. Big time.”

“Well, what did he do?” Mom asked.

Now I had to swallow. “I’d rather not talk about it.”

“Actually, Jerry is in the right here,” Stacey said. “I know some of it, and Benji really did screw up, and I don’t blame him for not wanting to talk about it.”

That, of course, made my Mom want to know all the more about what was going on but between Stacey and my Dad she decided to let it go. I shot Stacey a thankful look across the table, and she reached her foot out under it and stroked my leg for a moment.

“Well, if we’re not solving world hunger or Jerry’s interpersonal relationships,” my Dad said, “How about you tell us about your new place up at school, Stacey?”

I almost choked and spit out the drink that I’d been taking a sip of. Out of the frying pan, into the fire.

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“So Maya is OK for the evening?” I asked as we pulled out of the Bed and Breakfast parking lot.

“Yeah, she’s fine,” Annalise said. “She’s got the laptop and is catching up on some of her shows now that she can actually see. Jerry... thank you so much for healing her. I don’t know what-”

“Anna,” Stacey said from the back seat where she’d moved to let the ‘new concubine’ have the front. “You don’t need to keep thanking him. He knows. Just be with him.”

Anna flashed us one of her little smile-frowns and nodded.

“Can I be honest?” I asked as I reached over and took Annalise’s hand in mine. “I know you’ve been through a hell of a lot, but I’m starting to miss the Annalise who showed up in my driveway with some grit and determination, and told me exactly what a shit I was being before your Judgement.”

Annalise’s jaw dropped a little as she looked at me in surprise.

“What?” I asked. “I like your temper. And remember, you’re actually the oldest out of all of us. You’ve got the most life experience in the group. You’ve lived alone for years, making your way in the world as a welder and artist. We’re all just getting started here.”

Anna clicked her mouth shut and blinked her eyes a few times. “I’ve... God, have I been that bad?” she asked.

“No, hon,” Stacey said, reaching forward from the back seat and rubbing Anna’s arm. “Not bad at all. And we get that you’ve been through a lot. Jerry is kind of being a jerk about it because he’s a guy; I’d bet your brothers would say something similar. You’ve just been sort of timid about everything, going along with things when you might have had a different opinion. This afternoon in the library was a good example; you only felt OK giving your opinion when we practically pulled it out of you.”

“Timid,” Annalise chuckled softly to herself, shaking her head. “I don’t think anyone has ever called me that before.”

“I’m sorry if I’m pushing you too hard,” I said. “You really *have* been through a hell of a lot, and maybe you’re not the same person after it all. And that’s OK too. I just want you to know it’s OK to... I don’t even know what I’m trying to say.”

“Don’t worry about doing or saying something that we won’t like,” Stacey filled in for me. “You’re one of us now, and we’ll never stop wanting you even if we disagree about something.”

“I’ll try,” Annalise said. “I want to be more of me again, too. Just, I might need some help if you notice me pulling back at all.”

“That’s OK,” Stacey said. “We’ll figure it out.”

Annalise reached up and put a hand on Stacey’s on her shoulder, and squeezed mine that was holding her other.

I pulled the car into the parking lot across from Happy Tan’s, a Chinese buffet that stayed open late in town where we’d decided to meet. Lauren and Lindsey’s Dad’s car was parked a few spaces down so they were already inside, but I wasn’t actually sure what Angie drove, or even if she drove or just took the bus to work.

We got out and I quickly went around the car so that I could take both Annalise and Stacey by the hand as we crossed the street and entered the restaurant. The place was a weird mishmash of obviously older classic ‘Chinese restaurant’ decor and an attempt at modernizing sometime last decade, but it was clean and the food was good so most people I knew didn’t complain about the tacky interior. There was a line for the takeout pickup area, but we bypassed that and headed for the main restaurant area. The place was dimly lit except for over by the actual buffet line where the bright heat lamps shone down on the saucy and deep-fried delights.

I looked around and quickly spotted the blonde hair of both Lauren and Lindsey, and we headed over to them. Both of my girlfriends rose when they saw us coming and a moment later Angela stood as well.

It was kind of weird, greeting all three of them with a warm, full-bodied hug and a kiss on the lips. Angela hesitated a moment after Lauren and Lindsey but did the same thing.

“Hi, gorgeous,” I said. “Did you have a good day with your parents?”

“It was nice, mostly,” she said. “Stressful near the end, but fine. I can only take so much of them at a time at this point.”

“Must be nice not being constantly under their thumbs,” I said. “Um, Angela, this is Annalise. Annalise, Angie.”

Angela had noticed that Stacey and I weren't alone, and now the two brunettes were looking each other up and down a bit. Angela was almost a head taller than Annalise, but her decently impressive bust was clearly outmatched by Annalise's. They were both wearing simple winter outfits, Angie with a long sleeve sweater and tight jeans along with a cute thin scarf around her neck while Annalise had on a cardigan sweater with a deep neckline and buttons down the bottom half and a T-shirt underneath. She was wearing a loose beanie that matched the sweater and her black leggings.

“Hi,” Angela said. “I'm... it's nice to meet you.”

“You, too,” Annalise said, offering her hand. Angela shook it. “I'm guessing I'm news to you?”

“Yeah, sort of,” Angie said, glancing at me with a raised eyebrow and then back at Lindsey.

“We'll do, um, more introductions once we're sitting down,” I said.

“Sure,” Angie said.

I wanted to pull out a chair for my girlfriend, but with four-maybe-five of them at the table that wasn't exactly an accomplishable task and Lauren quickly pushed me into a chair as I hesitated for where I was going. Almost as soon as we were sitting down one of the waiters came over, a big jovial guy who seemed to always be working there, and he took our drink orders and then gestured that we could head to the buffet whenever we were ready.

“So...” I started.

“Let's just wait until we've got our plates and drinks,” Angie said. “I think I might need a sip of something before we start this conversation.”

“OK,” I nodded.

So then we were delaying the conversation more as we headed for the buffet. Angie practically yanked Lindsey with her towards the opposite end, talking quietly to her, and I could tell Lindsey was reassuring her everything was fine. Meanwhile, Lauren had taken Annalise under her wing and was reassuring *her* that everything was fine.

Which left me with Stacey.

“Going great so far, huh?” she said to me with a little smirk.

“Yeah, awesome,” I said with a shake of my head. “Really just over the moon.”

“Hey, no one said having a harem would be easy,” Stacey teased me.

“How the fuck am I going to have this conversation?” I sighed.

“Exactly how you have every other conversation, dork,” she said, reaching up and fixing my hair a little and then patting me on the cheek. “You’ll stumble around and word vomit something halfway understandable, and then one of us genius girls will translate for you.”

“Ha. Ha. Ha,” I said dryly.

“You’ll be fine, baby,” Stacey said, sliding her arm around my waist as we sidled up to the buffet line and snagged plates to start filling with food. “Just tell her the truth.”

We all got food and filtered back towards the table. Stacey, Lauren, Lindsey and I had all eaten at home so we went a little lighter than we normally would, but Annalise and Angela hadn’t so they had equally full plates. We sat, and just as I was opening my mouth to say something our drink orders arrived. Lindsey, Annalise and Angie were all drinking, while Stacey, Lauren and I held off since they knew we weren’t of age here.

“OK,” I said once the overly-friendly waiter finally left us to start our meal. “So.”

“So,” Angie said and then turned to Annalise. “I’m sorry if I came across as cold or anything, I was just surprised.”

“That’s OK,” Annalise said. “I totally get it.”

“Thanks,” Angela said.

“So do you want to start, or should I?” I asked.

Angela hesitated. She'd likely planned this conversation out in her head and we'd already thrown her a curveball before it even started. "I think... I think I want to hear from Lauren first, actually," Angie said.

"Me?" Lauren asked.

"Yes," Angie said. "You're the Official Girlfriend, right? Or original, or whatever. And we had a ton of fun last night, but I want to hear the other side of things."

"OK," Lauren said. None of us had touched our food yet, and she gestured around at our plates. "Someone eat something. At least make it look like we're not weirdos."

That broke the tension a little bit, and we all started slowly taking bites of our food.

"Right. So, yeah, I'm the original girlfriend. Girlfriend Prime," she said, with a little smirk over at me. "I love Jerry. I'm going to marry him someday. Years from now, but someday. Before him, I was... I don't know, casually bi-curious? I appreciated an attractive lady, but wasn't interested in dating someone, if you know what I mean."

"I do," Angela said with a little smirk and a glance over at Lindsey, who crinkled her nose when she met the look.

"Right. Well, when Jerry and I got together, after our first time I said I was open to him having sex with other girls and that I would want to participate too. Then Lindsey came home and really needed some connection with both of us, and I realized that I loved her *and* him so it made sense to get them together, and seeing the way he was with her, and the way she reacted to him, it was obvious they loved each other too and I was totally fine with that. Then stuff started with Stacey, and I've always loved *her* like a sister too and I was fine with all of that, and I was still fine with him getting with other girls too, obviously. So we kind of all made it official late on Christmas day, and we were joking about being his harem. And while all that was shaking out, we also met Annalise here. She's from out of state originally, but Jerry and I helped her out with some stuff and we ended up all sleeping together before she headed back home. Then Jerry hooked up with you and went on his date with you after Christmas, and it was supposed to just be a fun thing, but it's Jeremiah and you're you so obviously you two started falling for each other. And then Annalise came back into town recently and we already thought maybe she would want to join the harem, and then Lindsey kind of pushed the question and she said yes, but you were still in limbo about things and it was a weird thing to talk about so we wanted to wait until a serious conversation to tell you, but also wanted to make sure we told you about everything before you made any big decisions so you could change your mind if you wanted to."

Lauren took a big breath after she finished her extremely brief recap of everything that had happened in my relationship-life over the past four weeks. It was kind of wild, hearing it all laid out even without any of the details and magic parts. Hell, she hadn't even included all of the sexual partners.

“So, any questions?” Lauren asked, then speared a chicken ball with her fork, slathered it in the sweet orange sauce that came with it, and took a bite of it.

“Um, a lot,” Angie said. “I guess... OK, so this is all officially a poly relationship now. Jerry is in a relationship with all four of you.”

“Well, we’re technically in a relationship web,” Lindsey said. “Before Annalise, all four of us were kind of feeling out being in a relationship with each other too, with Jerry at the centre of the triangle. We haven’t had time to figure out Annalise’s feelings about the rest of us so far, so technically she would only be with Jerry.”

“I’ve... sort of been thinking of them more as friends, or partners like-” Annalise flushed a little. “God, it sounds dumb coming out of my mouth, but like sister-wives or something. I’m not really romantically interested in women, but some fun is OK.”

“The more you know,” Lindsey said, smiling at Annalise and reaching a hand across the table to catch hers and squeeze her fingers for a moment.

“Honestly, we’re going with ‘harem,’” Lauren said. “None of us are going to see other people romantically outside of the group, and especially not any men. But we’re still open to Jerry being with other women.”

“So that’s not just a joke?” Angie asked.

“I’ll answer that with a question back at you,” Stacey said. “And I’m being serious. You’ve been on a full date with Jerry, plus spent other time with him, and slept with him, what, six times? Something like that? Do you think, if you were in a full-blown relationship with him, you would ever need another guy? Especially when you’re being loved and supported by the rest of us at the same time?”

Angie bit the tines of her fork nervously and looked across the table at me, then flicked her eyes to the others around the table, then back to me. Finally, she pulled the fork from her mouth and sighed. “Like, actual harem shit,” she shook her head a little disbelieving.

“Let me sell it to you like I sold it to Annalise,” Lindsey smirked. “But dirtier, ‘cause I know you, girl. Join the harem. We’ve got a ‘Concubines Only’ group chat and we might make T-shirts. And wouldn’t it be so fucking kinky to know that you’re an honest-to-God concubine for a guy who loves you and fucks you like Jeremiah does?”

Angie looked across the table at you, her face flushed. “What do you think of all this?” she asked me.

"I think I'm the luckiest guy in the fucking world," I said. "And I desperately want to make sure I don't let down any of them, or you."

Angie took in a deep breath and nodded. "So, here's where I'm at," she said. "I- Fuck." She fanned herself for a moment, though I wasn't sure because she was feeling a nervous heat or thought she might tear up. Lindsey, who was sitting next to her, rubbed her back. "Sorry," Angie said. "Um, so I'm fucking mad at you. Both of you, actually," she glanced at Lindsey. "Like a week and a half ago I knew what I was doing with my life, and sure it wasn't like... a big deal or anything. But I felt stable. Then Lindsey introduces you to me again, Jerry, and I haven't been able to get you out of my mind since. I'm all screwed up inside, and I don't just mean how you rearrange my guts with that magnificent cock. I didn't *want* to start falling for you, I'm not that girl, but every time we're together I just keep feeling so fucking comfortable, and every time you look at me I can tell there's this fight in you to want to leer at me like I'm a sexy little fucktoy but also that you want to like... guard my heart. And I really wasn't sure if I was fucking terrified of that or not. But then the past couple of mornings seeing you before going to work I was just so happy *all day*, and yesterday knowing that I was going to play that little trick on you and show up at the party and see you again I was on cloud nine and didn't even care it was New Year's at the goddamn mall. But this is *weird*, right? Like, poly relationships aren't normal, and I can barely manage a regular relationship for more than a few months and I don't want to fuck this up. And now it's not just a poly relationship, it's- It's a fucking harem. Like, what am I supposed to do with that?"

"Enjoy it," Lindsey said to her friend. "I mean, seriously Angie. Stop worrying and enjoy it. You know I love you. Would I want to hurt you?"

"No," Angie said. "But you might be brainwashed by Jerry and you're all in a cult and I'm most of the way through the brainwashing and at some point in the future we'll be murdering people to serve the greater cosmic harem in the sky or something."

"I... don't know how to say 'I promise this is not a cult' without making it sound like it's definitely a cult," I said.

That brought on a snicker from Lauren, and Lindsey and Stacey both cracked grins. Annalise, for her part, just frowned a little deeper which was her version of smiling a bit more. Or maybe it was frowning more, sometimes it was hard to tell, since we still had to break the *other* thing to Angie.

"OK," Angie said. "I'm going to trust that this isn't a cult. And yes, Linds, this whole situation is kinky as shit and you know I love the idea of it just for that."

"So is that a yes, then?" Lauren asked.

"I don't know," Angie said. "I don't know what it looks like. I don't know what life looks like with this."

“Well, in a week Lindsey and I need to head back to school,” Stacey said. “We’ve got a place and are going to live together, and Jerry and Lauren will visit when they can.”

“Like, almost every weekend,” Lauren promised.

“There you go,” Stacey said. “Annalise is relocating, and takes care of her sister, so we’re going to need to figure that out; we just haven’t talked about it yet because of everything else that’s been going on. Next year Lauren and Jerry will go to Cardinal, and we’ll all live together. So short term, nothing *really* needs to change for you unless you want it to. Linds and I will have room at our place if you want to move in with us, or you can stay where you’re at. Longer term, we hope you’d come up to the city with us.”

“Fuck,” Angie sighed. “That... actually sounds reasonable.”

“Just think of it like this,” Lindsey said. “In eight months you could wake up every morning snuggled up in bed with Jerry and this entire table of sexy women.”

“Not helping,” Angie said to Lindsey but hesitated. “Much.”

“Angie,” I said. “You don’t *need* to make the decision now. I’d really love to be able to say you’re my girlfriend, but it doesn’t have to be now.”

“That, right there,” Lindsey said, pointing at Angie’s chest as she looked her friend in the eye. “That feeling you just felt. You know what you actually want.”

“Fuck,” Angie said again, grimacing and shaking her head, then looking over at me with tears starting to form in her eyes. “OK. Yeah, I want in. I want you, and this. Goddamn it, I want to be in your harem and be your concubine or whatever.”

Lindsey planted a kiss on Angela’s cheek and I stood from my chair and went around the table to Angela so I could hug her, and then pulled her into a tight kiss as we were both smiling madly.

“I’m so happy,” I told her.

“I can’t believe it, but I am too,” she said.

I held her hand for a long moment, kissed her again, and then took a deep breath and sighed it out. “So, there’s something else,” I said. “Something you should know.”

“Oh, God,” Angela said jokingly. “So this *is* a cult.”

“No,” I shook my head. “Definitely not a cult.”

I went back around to my chair and sat down.

“Well, what is it?” Angela asked. “Is someone here pregnant or something?”

“Fuck, I wish I’d figured out how to say this,” I said.

“Jerry is a sex wizard,” Lauren said bluntly. “He’s got a magic cock and casts spells and has a secret Sanctum on Hawaii and his arch enemy at the moment is Annalise’s father.”

Angela blinked, and then started laughing, but when we didn’t start laughing with her she stopped and looked around at us. Her brow furrowed and she dropped her fork on her plate. “Wait... what?”