

## **Quaranteam – Chapter 42**

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### **Chapter 42**

Andy and Niko headed back into the house after their little tryst, and as always, the house was in serious motion. His return didn't even merit much notice, as all the girls were working on their individual projects, although Nicolette did meet him in the hallway and let him know that Tala had asked him to swing by the poolhouse when he had a minute.

He'd been giving it some serious thought, and had sent Whitney an email asking her to set up some sort of app so that he could talk to all the girls or just a handful of them without a constant barrage of text messages. It wasn't vital now, but whenever the quarantine died, it would be, especially if he wasn't in the same area as some of the women in his family. She told him she had some thoughts on the matter and would do some investigating as to what would work best – WhatsApp, Discord or maybe even some proprietary software solution.

Andy had been so focused on the day-to-day for so long now that it was odd starting to consider what things would look like after the pandemic had ended, or at least morphed into a thing where they could regularly go outside the house again. It hadn't even been a year, but already he felt like they'd acclimated to their new position far too quickly for his own liking. He needed to remind himself, and the others, that while parts of their new reality were going to be with them for a long time, not all of them would be.

Sooner or later, they'd be able to see the world again.

He headed through the manor and into the back yard, the loud clanging and clattering from the poolhouse unmistakable, as he chuckled, shaking his head. He knew that Tala had planned on doing some work to it, but she might have undersold the *amount* of work she'd been intending to do.

The door was open, allowing sawdust to fly out every now and then, and as he approached the doorway, he laughed and shouted “Cease fire! Cease fire! Friendly coming in!” The heavy clattering died down and when he poked his head in, he found that Tala, Jade and Sheridan were all in overalls, mostly covered in dust, and that the interior of the poolhouse had gone through a rather sizable metamorphosis.

When they'd first moved into the house, the poolhouse had seemed like a little getaway spot, with 2 bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen and a bathroom, as well as the pool communal showers attached to it. Now, the main living room had converted into a woodworking studio, with all sorts of tools and spare lumber strewn about the place, although some basic organizational structures seemed to be falling into place.

The heavy saws and sanders had been slowly trickling in since Tala's arrival, and each time a new piece of equipment arrived, she'd done more shifting and adjusting, making sure she had access to all of her tools while giving everything a nice and proper home.

Today's project, it seemed, had been affixing sound dampening pads along the walls, doing everything she could to try and keep the noise from spilling out. The whole space would eventually become Tala's main workroom, but the process of converting it from luxury living room to woodworking shop wasn't going to be done overnight.

“Heya babes,” Tala said to him with a grin, climbing down off the ladder she'd been on when he'd walked into the room. “What do you think? Looking pretty sharp, right?”

“Sharp, as in I could cut myself open and die of tetanus, maybe,” he chuckled. “It looks like a bomb went off at ground zero of a lumber mill.”

“Yeah, well,” Tala sighed, “it's gonna take a bit to get everything into its proper place, but it's getting there, and it's way better than it was yesterday. You should've seen what a nightmare it was then. I think there's only one more delivery with power tools showing up, and once it's here, then I'll be able to ensure everything is where it needs to be, and that it stays there.”

"I figured you'd do your bedroom first and get to all this stuff after that," he said.

"Why?" Sheridan asked. "The only time she's really in her bedroom is when she's sleeping, so she doesn't much care what it looks like. It's got her bed in it and that's all that matters."

"Oh, I'll care eventually," Tala said, wiping sweat off her face with the back of one of her hands. "It's fun having other girls to play with, but I'm going to want to have some one-on-one time with the big man himself at least every now and again. And I figured if I wanted that, I'd want to have a nice little bedroom we can share that experience in. So I'll build real furniture for that room a little bit at a time. And that's why I asked you to swing by, Andy. Is there any furniture you need me to build for the house? I mean, I'm still going to do a writer's desk for you eventually, but that's a much bigger project, and is going to take some serious planning."

"Tala, you don't—"

"Ah ah ah. I know what I do and don't have to do, and I know what I want to do and am going to do, and I thought Sher explained to you what a bad idea it is to try and talk me out of something."

"She did, but I like to check these things for myself, you know?"

"Well, now you know," she said, kissing his cheek. "So, you got any minor woodworking projects I can do around the house, just as a sort of test for my tools? Other than the soundproofing of the room, which we're starting in on now. I know it's hella loud, but by the end of the week, I should be able to be running power saws in here any time day or night and you'll be completely unaware even if you're in the pool, so I need a project after that one."

"Actually," he said. "Why don't you talk to Whitney? I like the idea of there being a big status board near the entryway of the house, but that's going to be some combination of furniture and electronics. The little iPad for the Need board is great, and it's nice that she's got a phone app to go with it, but having like a big screen version of that in the house that anyone can check when they come in seems like it could be very useful, especially if it's got everyone's location. That way, when people are spending time away from the house, we're ready for it."

"Is that likely to happen any time soon?" Jade asked. She'd pulled her blonde hair back into a ponytail that poked out through the hole in a black and orange SF Giants baseball cap.

"Not entirely sure," Andy replied. "But I know both Sarah and Em have been getting a *lot* more calls over the past few days, people trying to hammer down schedules and figure out when they can get enough people to bubble and shoot something, because lord knows, companies are running out of entertainment to try and satiate the masses. They need to start generating new content and they need to start doing it yesterday."

"Not enough bread and circuses means the peasants are revolting," Sheridan said.

"They certainly are," Tala joked.

"All of it means it's possible that one or both of them is going to start shooting a movie at some point in the next few months, and if that happens, I need to know how to schedule things, what with me needing to go to them and tend to their needs on set."

"You should probably just buy a private jet," Sheridan said. "Especially since you've got all that money that Nate Watkins gave you."

"Who the hell would fly it?"

"Niko?" Jade suggested.

"Lexi?" Tala countered.

"Can *either* of them fly a plane?" Andy asked.

"I'm pretty sure *both* of them can, Andy," Sheridan told him. "It sounds like a skill each of them would've picked up somewhere along the line."

"I can't believe I'm casually just talking about buying my own private jet," he sighed. "My life's gotten too weird even for my liking."

"We can start building a list of who's joined the Mile High Club and who hasn't," Tala teased. "I know I'm certainly game for it."

"I bet most of us are," Sheridan giggled before both women looked a little nervously at Jade, who also started giggling.

"I'm not going to be a virgin forever, you guys, jeez," she said with a bright smile. "And that sounds like a thing I'd want to do at some point."

"Then I guess I'll just add that to my to-do list. Let's see. 'Finish 1<sup>st</sup> wave revisions. Take cats to vet. Buy private jet.' There we go," he laughed, rolling his eyes. "I don't even know how one goes about buying a jet. Is there a catalog? Am I supposed to get a guy for it to get me the hook up? Where does one even get a jet guy?"

"These days it's likely to be a jet girl, but I bet either Sarah or Em would know," Jade said.

"I guess I could ask them."

"Hey," Tala said, snapping her fingers, as if she'd just had an idea. "I bet you could ask them."

"Very funny," he said. "Oh, I can think of one other thing we could probably use your woodworking skills for."

"Sure, shoot."

"Can you build us a large, multi-chambered dirty clothes hamper for the master bedroom?" he asked. "I know Nicolette hasn't complained yet about having to sort through and identify everyone's clothes post wash, but if we could make her job just a little bit easier, I think it would probably be welcome. Maybe you can make them interlocking, so they stay in place when they're connected, and you could even put each person's name on the edge of them in relief."

Tala nodded. "Yeah, that actually sounds like the perfect project for me to give the shop a test run with. Not too complicated, but with a little bit of planning, and I can even make it so it's expandable, in case any of the other girls want to stay in the master bedroom for extended stays, they can just *move* their hamper over and attach it to the big one. So who's always sleeping in the master bedroom, at least for the time being?"

"Me, Ash, Niko, Sarah, Emily, Fiona and Moira, although I wouldn't be surprised if Alexis decided she could keep me safer if she was closer."

"I think she sort of trusts Niko for that for the time being right now, hon," Tala said. "I've only talked to her a little bit, but she seems a sweetheart, y'know, for an ex-spy."

"Anyway, you should probably just make an individual hamper for everybody, and then people can move them at will, but those seven are the best place to start."

The Persian woman nodded. "I'll head up there and take some measurements of the space this afternoon and start doing some planning before I start carving tomorrow. They shouldn't take too long to do, actually."

"Well, keep in mind tomorrow evening we're going to be having a poker party over here to watch the President's speech and the 60 Minutes story."

Tala grinned up at him, reaching to pat his cheek with her fingertips. "You thought I somehow *forgot* that tomorrow was the day that the entire world gets to see my O face? You're adorable, Andy."

He felt all the color drain from his face in embarrassment and mortification. "Oh my god, you're right. I'm so sorry. I wasn't even thinking. Do you want me to call off the party?"

The curviest of his partners laughed, rolling her eyes at him. "Good lord, Andy, I told you a *dozen* times I wasn't bothered by it. Do you think I suddenly changed my mind because some of your friends are going to be around to see it when it first airs? I'm way less worried about fucking *Phil* or *Xander* seeing it than I am the call I'm going to get from my *mother* after it airs, but I'll deal with it."

"Is... is your mom going to be pissed?"

"Oh, she'll huff and she'll puff, but she'll get over it in time, especially after the President's speech. I think people are going to be in total shock over just how bad it is out there, so a lot of this is just going to roll off people's backs."

He nodded. "I guess that's true. I just want to make sure you're cool with it."

"I'm cool, baby," she teased. "I'm cold as ice."

The three women suddenly hummed the bass opening from 'Vanilla Ice' in unison before he shot them a dirty look and all three started furiously giggling.

"Anyway, it'll be fine," Tala reiterated. "I'll call her right after the piece airs. I told her yesterday that it was coming, and she was a bit mad then, but I think she's mostly just happy that I have a man in my life now. I didn't detail my little fetish to her, and she didn't ask."

"I'm surprised you didn't want to introduce me to her yet."

"I want her to watch the speech and the news story first, Andy. That way she can get angry about a dozen things all at once and then just have to pick *one* to yell at me over, if she even yells at all. She might just be glad I'm still alive, once she hears about how bad it is out there."

"How are *you* doing, Jade?" Andy asked. "Any word from your father?"

"If there was," the blonde said with a sniff, "I'm never, ever going to know about it. I asked Nicolette to just throw any messages from him into the trash. Same for any mail from him. I had Whitney get me a new cellphone with a new number. I don't want to hear from him ever again. In fact, I hope he saw the footage we sent him and he had a fucking heart attack and died."

Even with Sarah's coaching, Jade didn't naturally swear very often, so Andy was able to spot exactly how angry the cheerleader was, and moved over to give her a hug. "Yeah, well, you may feel differently after he's gone, but whatever you want is fine with me," he told her.

Jade sniffed back a tear, but hugged Andy close nonetheless. "He's a prick, Andy. He's always been a prick."

"But he's still your father," Andy replied, "which complicates things a bunch, I know. But we will make sure we do our best to respect your wishes, whatever they are."

"Thanks." She kissed him on the cheek. "Anyway, you should let us get back to it. We don't have that much left to do, and if we can get it done before dinner, that'd be for the best."

"Sure sure," he said. "Don't work too hard."

"We won't," Tala said.

"And don't forget your appointment with Team Taylor after dinner," Sheridan said. "Once is a mistake, twice is intentional."

"I hadn't forgotten," he told them, "but I'm sure they would've reminded me at dinner."

"And maybe check in on Maya, see if she's woken up yet," Jade said. "It's around the time she's supposed to be getting up."

"From one appointment to another," he chuckled. "You're right, though. Best to pop around and see if she's up. All of you three doing okay? Nobody in the far end of yellow yet?"

Sheridan gave his ass a little fondle. "As long as you hit me up in the next week or so, we're all good here, my dude."

"You like calling him that, don't you?" Tala giggled.

"I *really* do," Sheridan said with a mischievous smile.

"On that note," Andy said, "I'll take my exit, stage left."

He headed out of the pool house, and as soon as he was out of the door, he could hear the sounds of power tools starting up again behind him. Them getting the workshop soundproofed couldn't happen too soon.

He decided to make Maya his next step, mainly because her room was on the ground floor, which meant it was a short little walk over to it and didn't involve him going upstairs. He'd always considered owning stairs in California a sign of middle-to-upper class, but now that he had three stories in his home, he wondered if maybe it should've gone the other way.

Andy found the door to Maya's room open, so he peeked his head in, seeing nobody inside of it, not even her dogs. He suspected he knew where to find her if she wasn't in her room, so he headed back down the hall and towards the stairs, making his way up and over to Sarah and Emily's little studio space. The door was closed, but the "do not open" sign wasn't hanging on the door handle, so Andy felt safe in slowly opening it up.

As he'd suspected, Emily, Maya and Sarah were in the process of getting caught up, the three of them sitting around a small table in the corner, sipping from drinks, telling stories, as Sarah pet a dog sitting on her lap, and the other lay at Maya's feet.

He stepped into the room and closed the door behind him, so that the dogs couldn't get out. "Evening, ladies," he said. "Hopefully I'm not interrupting anything?"

"Nah, c'mere you," Sarah said, motioning for him to move over. He stepped close and bent down so he could kiss each of them in turn, Sarah first, then Em and finally Maya, simply because he wasn't sure what kind of kiss he should give Maya, but she made the decision for him, pressing her lips against his just as hard as Sarah and Em had. "We were just talking about, like, how your cum changed Maya's voice."

"It..." he said, starting, stopping then starting again. "I'm sorry, it whatnow?"

"It's true Andy," Maya said to him, and sure enough, he could hear the sound of her voice was less scratchy and gravelly than it had been before. "I used to be a terrible smoker in my youth, and so I sort of had a smoker's voice. Quit several years back, but my voice still had that frog in it, but I woke up this afternoon and came to see Em, we all noticed how that it was much smoother."

"It's different enough that I was quite startled, Andrew!" Emily said to him with a youthful smile. "But she assures me she feels excellent, so who am I to question?"

"Lexi got a *lot* more fucking changes," Sarah said, "but this sort of strange regeneration didn't happen to most of us."

"Yeah, it's only like 10-20% or so, Niko told me," Andy told them. "So I guess we'd been running under the norm until now and saved them all up for the end."

"So I know you've got loads of women to take care of, Andy," Maya said to him, "but I meant what I said about intending to fuck the shit out of you very soon, so you best make sure we have time sometime over the next few days, or I'll ambush you and take what I want."

"She'll do it, Andrew," Emily warned. "She did so love a practical joke on the set, and she was a fight choreographer before she was directing, so I wouldn't put it past her to put you onto your bottom and then drag you into the nearest bedroom."

"Message received and understood, Maya," Andy laughed. "We'll make a point of it at some point in the next couple of days. That soon enough? Don't need to do it right now?"

"Oh, I *could* do it right now, but I don't want to anger the coed hive," she said with a grin. "I ran into Hannah in the hallway earlier, and those girls have a *plan* cooked up for you, so the last thing I want to do is get in the way of all that."

"Anything I should know in advance?"

"Wait until after dinner," Maya told him. "You're going to want to have at them on a full stomach. Lots of fuel to keep up with them."

"If you even *can*," Sarah teased.

"They did seem quite... eager," Emily said, winking at him.

"Then I'd better make sure I get everything else I need to do today before dinner. So, I have a weird question for you, Em."

"Anything, my love. Simply ask it."

"...do you have a plane guy?"

"A whatnow?"

"I know you and Sarah have been talking about going back to work soon, and while I'm all for that, I need to be able to get to you to make sure you don't go too long without..."

"Without getting fucked," Sarah interjected helpfully.

"Yeah, exactly," Andy said. "So rather than flying commercial, or asking the studio to do it, I figured since I've got all this money that Nathaniel gave me, so maybe I should... y'know... just buy a jet, maybe?"

"Actually Andrew, let us take a walk, shall we?" Emily said, standing up, taking his hand in

hers.

“Don't tell me you have a fucking jet guy and you've been fucking holding out on me, Em,” Sarah said, her tone somewhere between teasing and genuine offense.

“No, I don't, but the person we were talking about earlier? They're likely to, so Andrew and I will walk and talk...” Emily pulled him over to the door, opening it.

“Don't bother fucking arguing with her, Andy,” Sarah said, blowing him a kiss. “You know she always wins out in the end.”

“She's simply cross because I made her cum before she made me cum earlier today,” Emily said, leading him out of the room.

“Liar!” Sarah cackled in between laughs as Emily closed the door behind them.

“Now, Andrew, I know part of this conversation is going to be something you don't want to hear, but I simply must insist you hear me out before you voice any concerns or reservations. Agreed?”

The two of them started walking down the hallway, and Andy started leading her up to the third floor. “I'm already getting nervous hearing that, Em, but you know I trust you.”

“Excellent. When our dear Mister Watkins gave you that large sum of money, he also bequeathed you the services of his money manager, correct?”

“Sure, because I've never had this much money before, so I had no idea what to do with it or how to keep it all working for me when I wasn't using it.”

Emily nodded. “And it was very kind of him to do so, but you my dear betrothed are too trusting for your own good. While your interests may be aligned some of the time, they will not always be so. Because of that, it occurs to me that you should have someone dedicated to looking out for your interests first and foremost.”

Andy led her up to the third floor and over to the secret entrance behind the bookcase. He'd shown his fiancées the room recently, so it didn't come as any surprise to her, but it was still a nice place they could continue the conversation with less chance of interruption. His one rule to all the women he was engaged with was that there would be no sex in the secret room.

He hoped that rule might make it a year before one of them convinced him otherwise.

They pulled the bookcase back in place behind them and walked down the short corridor to the little hidden study, each of them sitting down in one of the chairs. “I'm taking by the direction this conversation is heading that you have someone in mind?” he asked her.

“I do, although I'm not entirely certain how we would go about getting her over here,” Emily said to him. “I take it you know who Aiden Devonshire was?”

“He's only one of the best known British actors ever, Em, so yes I.. wait, did you say 'was?'”

She nodded somberly. “I'm afraid so. He died from DuoHalo about three weeks ago, although that hasn't been released to the press yet. Quite a lot of celebrities have died and haven't gone public, at the urging of the government. To carry on, Aiden was something of a mentor of mine, an old friend who helped me get on my feet and figure out how to take care of myself when I was a young starlet just finding her place in the world. He put my parents in touch with people to help manage my finances and control my public image.”

“That's great,” Andy said. “Then we can just use your money manager to look after mine.”

“If only it were that simple, my love,” she sighed. “My money manager, Elliot, passed away from DuoHalo rather early in the pandemic. So control of my assets passed over to the firm Elliot worked for, which was run by Aiden's money manager, a man named James Stewart...”

“Then we can just—”

“Who's *also* dead.”

“Okay, clearly this is going somewhere other than a trail of dead bodies, Em.”

“So, of James' team, there is a woman named Mali, who is still alive and has recently assumed management duties of my assets. She reached out to me a few days ago to inform me that she would be handling my affairs on the day-to-day for the foreseeable future. I'm thinking perhaps she should be

your money manager as well.”

“Adding my money to yours would be quite the pool of assets to manage.”

“Agreed, Andrew, and we would want someone we would trust implicitly with that, and no one else. So while I know you wanted to consider the House of Rook closed, I think you should make an exception and bring in one more person. I'm suggesting you add Miss Mali Merrick to the family. She would manage the money, and I'll tell you what's what, she would definitely have a plane guy. If you like, she could buy the plane out of my assets and take it over here to meet up with us. She would need to send the pilot home via commercial, naturally, but since your assets and mine are to be merged eventually, I don't see why it would be a problem.”

“You've got that impish smile on your face again, Em,” Andy said, amused trepidation in his voice. “There's something else you aren't telling me, isn't there?”

She giggled furiously as she nodded. It took her a moment to regain her composure before she tried to speak, started giggling again and then tried again. “Well you see, my beloved Andrew, Mali completes your *set*.”

Andy cocked his head to one side, confusion plain on his face. “Either you've lost your mind, or I've completely forgotten what this is in regards to, Em.”

“You dolt!” she laughed, swatting him lightly with one hand. “You don't recall that when Fiona arrived, I told you, you only needed one more to complete the full set of UK darlings. You have me, I'm British, obviously. You have Aisling, who's Irish. You have Asha, who's British *and* Indian. You have Fiona, who's Scottish. All you need is a Welsh woman, and you've caught them all!”

Andy grinned, shaking his head. “I *had* forgotten. And this Mali Merrick—”

“—is Welsh, yes.”

“Have you broached any of this with her yet? You know how adamant I am about not bringing anyone into the house who doesn't want to be.”

“I have, and she's game if you are, although she does have a rather odd request regarding the matter. I might understand why, as unusual as it is, how you could have some reservations.”

“What's her request?”

“She doesn't want to speak to you at all until after she's imprinted.”

That gave Andy pause. “Excuse me?”

“Oh, she'll send you a video explaining exactly how she's willing and eager to do this, but she's afraid in the moment that she's bound to start crying until the hormones and neurochemicals for joy are flooding her brain from the orgasms, and she does not want that to be your first memory of her.”

“Now I have some serious questions, Em, and maybe a few reservations.”

Emily reached over and took his large hand within her small fingers, giving it a very tender squeeze. “Yes, Andrew, I imagined you might, so let me explain it. Mali was engaged to be wed, but her fiance was killed by DuoHalo in May. When the lockdowns hit, he was in Bangladesh, which was hit especially hard by the virus, and so she's stuck somewhere between trying to let him go and not really being able to fully mourn. They were childhood sweethearts and she's still very much in love with the memory of him. But she thinks that with the aide of the serum, she'll be able to move past that, and to imprint those feelings onto you, the way she'll be physically imprinted onto you if she takes the serum. That is her hope, anyway.”

“That sounds like *quite* the risk to be taking, Emily.”

“I know, darling, but I have spent at least an hour a day talking with this woman for the last week or so, and she is a drowning woman in need of a lifeline,” Emily said, bringing his hand to her lips, kissing the back of it. “In need of a hero to save her from her ocean of grief. In need of *you*.”

“It's already *twenty* women in this house, Em...”

“So what's one more then, eh?”

Andy rubbed his face with his other hand, agonizing over the decision. “It's what this Mali wants? You're certain of it?”

“As certain of it as I am my love for you, my dear.”

“You're thinking staff, then? Or another partner who doesn't share?”

“I imagine something akin to your relationship with Alexis, dearly beloved,” Emily said, stroking his fingers reassuringly. “It can start as something professional and if it blossoms into something emotional, none's to mind.”

He chuckled a little bit, shaking his head. “You *knew* I wouldn't be able to say no to you on this, didn't you?”

“Now Andrew,” Emily said with a mysterious smile, “I'm only looking out for your best interests. But yes, I have had Mali investigating what it would take for her to get a couple of pilots to bring her via a newly bought private plane over here to California from England. To be frank, she might even turn it into a refugees plane trip, and bring a handful of women over, netting us a tidy little profit in the end.”

“You *knew* I'd need a plane in the end, didn't you?”

“You're practically *royalty* at this point, my sweet man,” Emily tittered in amusement. “Of *course* I knew it would be something you would need. We're all planning for your lifestyle adjustments since you clearly aren't giving it *any* thought.”

“I'm a little busy trying to make sure my household of beautiful women are all satisfied,” he laughed. “Forgive me for not thinking 'Do I buy a private island with my new found wealth?' or something along those lines.”

“Don't be ridiculous, Andrew,” Emily sniffed. “You don't *have* private island money. You *do* have 'fuck you' money, so that means you need to start thinking like a wealthy man with a family to care for instead of a writer struggling to make his next rent check.”

“Yeah, okay, I've been short-sighted, but at least I quit my day job and decided to take up writing full time.”

“Marvelous, darling, you're very smart. So I take it this is approval to move forward with Operation: Wales?”

Andy narrowed his eyes at her, which made her giggle all over again. “You gave it a codename?”

“I'm simply doing the one thing you've always been the worst at, Andrew – taking care of you.”

He paused then shrugged. It was a solution that made sense, even if it was pushing him past what he thought his limits were. “Alright then. Reach out to her. Have her get the jet, find the pilots and start heading over here on it. If she can sell seats to other people coming to the area, that's fine too. But I will want to have that video from her explaining this to me *before* she arrives, so I know this is all on the up and up, and that it's what she wants.”

“Absolutely, my love. I would expect no less from you.”

“And we're going to need some sort of signal, some form of non-verbal communication to *confirm* when she gets here that she still wants to go through with it, especially if I'm not going to talk to her beforehand.”

“Something can be worked out, Andrew, I promise you.”

“Then okay, yeah, go ahead and do it,” he sighed. “Once she's here, I can have control of all the family assets transferred over to her control and away from Watkins' money man.”

“It's for the best, Andrew,” she said, standing up, pulling him to his feet and kissing him.

“You're far too trusting, especially of people who aren't guaranteed to have your best interests in heart.”

“And you are, Em?” he teased.

“You're the keeper of my cum and my salvation, my soon-to-be husband,” she giggled. “You're damn straight I'm looking out for you above all else...”