

Chapter 16

The day of the party felt like it came much faster than it should've. While everyone had a few days to prepare, they all felt like they were struggling to get their costumes together. Most hysterically, all the girls had made some sort of tacit agreement not to tell Andy what they were dressing up as for the Halloween party.

They were all a little surprised he wasn't dressing up as the Druid Gunslinger himself, but they seemed okay with it. He told them he'd done the gear next year, but he'd literally worn the costume last year, and despite all the changes they'd been through over the past several months, he didn't want to do it two years in a row. While none of the girls may have seen him in it, he knew that both Eric and Phil would've given him an endless amount of shit for it.

He loved vintage sci-fi costumes, so for this year, he'd decided to be Logan from Logan's Run, the 1976 film he'd adored growing up. It was a relatively simple costume, a black turtleneck with white trim and a large white stripe over the chest, as well as a blinking red palm flower crystal. When he'd done the costume as a teenager, he'd had to use a bike light, which took over so much of his hand, but now he could achieve the same effect with a simple LED light attached to a battery. It was much more convenient.

A few hours before the party was to start, Andy was banned from entering his own bedroom as the girls had set up a sort of base camp there, working on all their costumes away from his prying eyes. The staff had decided to dress up as Clue characters, so Nicolette was back in her Yvette costume, Jenny R. was dressed as the cook (from the movie, not the board game) and Katie was dressed as Mrs. White. They had been a little surprised that they were invited to the party once the food was laid out, but Andy had been adamant that he wanted them to feel like members of the family as much as staff. He was glad to see they accepted that without too much of a fuss, although Jenny was insistent that she and Nicolette would be tending to the food all night, even while they were mingling.

Surprising no one, none of the girls who weren't staff were ready by the time the first guests showed up. Andy wasn't shocked that it was Eric who arrived first, along with his whole group. Eric was dressed as Han Solo, with Lily as Princess Leia, Jenny C. as Luke Skywalker, Sarah as Chewbacca, and two other girls who'd recently joined his family - Lara, a tall, statuesque blonde, and Nikki, a tiny little plump brunette - were dressed as C3-P0 and R2-D2 accordingly.

Phil and his family arrived next. They were all dressed up as characters from the video game Street Fighter, with Phil as Ryu, Audrey as Chun Li, Linda as Cammy, Tamika as Poison and a new girl named Yuko, who was dressed as Sakura.

Andy, much like both Phil and Eric, had never been big on large social gatherings, but this felt entirely different. Perhaps they'd been so starved for company, or perhaps they'd been trying to make sense of the new normal for so long, it was nice to have a touch of the old normal, even if it was only a shadow of how it used to be.

Dressed all in costume, the boys sat down to play poker.

After Phil showed up, Andy's girls descended down the staircase and made a grand entry for themselves. Aisling had dressed up as Amy Adams' portrayal of Lois Lane from the Superman movies, in a white open shirt with a black vest, her hair done up in a smart ponytail, a black lanyard hanging around her neck that said "Daily Planet." Lauren had dressed up as the Black Canary, from the Green Arrow comic books, a leather jacket she'd stolen from his closet, a black leotard and ripped black fishnets that Andy couldn't deny made her pop even more.

The biggest surprise, however, was Niko. It took him a few seconds to realize what she was dressed as, and as soon as he did, his jaw nearly dropped to the floor. She was dressed in a white lab coat, with her hair up in a bun, held in place with chopsticks. Beneath it, she wore a deep purple shirt. It

all looked vaguely familiar, but then she turned her head and it all clicked as soon as he saw that coloration done to her hair. While most of her hair was still jet black, on the right side, there was a blue stripe, followed by a violet stripe, and his heart stopped a beat. She was dressed as Doctor Erika Shirow, the coroner who often worked with the Druid Gunslinger in his novels. Around her neck hung a pendant of a celtic cross, exactly as he'd described it in the most recent novel.

Shirow had been a regular recurring character, but she was easily what fans would've called "a deep cut." When he'd first introduced her in the second book, he suspected she was a character he would come back to, but hadn't planned her to have much impact on the overarching storyline he had in mind. Now, some nine books into the series, she'd actually appeared in more of them than any other character other than Dale Sexton, the titular Druid Gunslinger. Most of the time, she usually only appeared in a chapter or two, but now, seeing Niko dressed as her, he wondered if he'd been subconsciously building a relationship between Dale and Erika over the course of the novels. He made a mental note to ask Niko about it later.

The girls wandered into the room and took their time showing off their costumes for everyone, but as soon as they did, Niko moved over to slide down into Andy's lap, sliding an arm around him. "You like?" she asked him, a mischievous smile on her lips.

"No, I absolutely hate it," he laughed, sticking his tongue out at her. "You look stunning. You all look stunning."

"Lauren worried she was too tall to pull off the Black Canary, but I told her that in those fishnets, you wouldn't give a fuck."

"You would absolutely be right."

Niko gestured for him to tip up his hole cards so she could look at them, which he did, and then tipped them back down. "Looks like you're doing well."

"Ah, we're mostly playing for fun," Eric said.

Niko winked over in his direction. "Sure. That's why your chip stack is so utterly small."

"Absolutely," Lily said, moving to stand behind Eric. "And it certainly isn't because my man has no poker face whatsoever."

Audrey moved to stand behind Phil. "Phil's usually pretty good at poker, though," she said, kissing his cheek. "Although I heard Andy's always been better."

Andy shrugged. "I'm not bad. I mean, I wouldn't drop ten K of my own money to enter the World Series of Poker, but I usually come out at least a little bit ahead at poker nights."

"Go easy on them then, I guess, Andy. How high are the stakes?" Niko asked, clearly wiggling her ass in his lap, trying to distract him off his game. "Are we rich yet?"

Andy cocked his head to one side, mocking a frown upon his face. "Have you missed the mansion we now live in?"

"Sure, but that's not *money* money," she teased. "What're you playing for?"

Eric laughed. "Big, big money." He looked left, looked right, then leaned forward, putting his hand over one side of his mouth, stage whispering to her. "Twenty dollars is the buy in." He widened his eyes and nodded in her direction, like it was his life savings they were talking about.

Niko rolled her eyes. "Forget what I said about going easy on them. Take them for everything they're worth."

"Oh, and the loser has to buy dinner for the next game night," Phil said. "Or, at least, they used to have to, but that was before we all got our own private staff."

"I can't remember the last time Andy bought dinner," Eric grumbled.

"I don't know that he ever has," Phil sighed. "I think it's all the rest of us just passing the buck around."

The doorbell rang, and Niko slid off his lap. "Who else are we expecting?"

Phil rolled his eyes upward in thought. "Ari and his family are coming. Jenna's hooked up with some guy named Gary, so they said they'd stop by. Mel told me he couldn't make it this time, but would

try and catch us for the next get together."

"I'll go see who it is."

Niko headed to the door and Andy could hear from outside the door as soon as she opened it a chorus of children shouting "TRICK OR TREAT!" They'd just resolved the hand, so all the guys got up and headed to the door to see five children, all dressed up in Minecraft costumes, holding out buckets, into which Niko graciously dropped a couple of candies each. There was a woman standing behind the children, back at the foot of the walkway up to the house, waving at them. It wasn't anyone that any of them recognized, but Andy was glad to see the children weren't out by themselves.

For the next hour or so, every ring of the doorbell would bring either another gaggle of children, or another of the group's mutual friends, until the house felt like a booming party. The parade of trick or treating children eventually slowed, and it was almost ten pm when the doorbell rang again. Andy went to answer the door, holding the pot of candies, and as soon as he opened the door, he tensed up a little, even as he heard the shout of "TRICK OR TREAT!"

There were only two children standing there, a girl dressed as Hermione from Harry Potter, and a slightly older boy, dressed as Draco Malfoy. But the children weren't the problem. Behind them stood Arthur Robert Covington the Fourth, dressed as Napoleon. Andy had to mentally tell himself not to curl his hand into a fist.

"Ah, Andrew!" Covington said. "So this is where you live. I did wonder which of the open houses they'd assigned you to."

Andy dropped candies into the outstretched bags of the two children. They shouldn't be punished for what an ass their father was. "Yes. Well. Here we are." He couldn't wait to get this horrific man as far from his home as possible. Covington practically oozed oil everywhere he went.

"Children, go meet up with your mother. Daddy needs to talk to his friend here for a moment."

By this point, Niko had made her way to the door, just in time to see the children skipping down the walkway to their mother, who was dressed in Liza Minelli's outfit from Cabaret. "Andy, it's not polite to keep your guests waiting," she said, sliding an arm around his waist, trying to help him extricate himself from this situation.

"This won't take but a moment, miss," Covington said to her. "I'm meant to understand from one of my women that you're something of a card player. That's of interest to me, because I hold a card game every so often, when we're expecting new partners to arrive."

Andy was about to interrupt him, but Niko pinched him just a little, and he glanced in her direction. The look on her face told him to remain quiet, so he turned his attention back to Covington.

"I'm sort of 'in the know,' you might say, so I know that on Monday, most of us are going to get new women arriving. The way the card game works is that none of us men imprint our newest women on that day, but instead use them as stakes in our little card game on that evening. Each woman is staked in at 50k, and at the end of the night, the person with the most money in their pot gets to spend their winnings to buy as many of the women from the pool as they can afford. The person who comes in second gets to do the same, then the third, the fourth and then the fifth, or last place, gets whatever's left over. Or, rather, whoever, I suppose," Covington smiled wolfishly. "It adds a little sport to all of it, and makes the game really something worth playing for."

Andy desperately wanted to say something, but Niko was squeezing on his hip, urging him to keep his comments short. "And why are you telling me all this?"

"Well," Covington said with a condescending smile. "Usually we have a set group of participants, but one of our regulars had to drop out this week, as one of his incoming women is a woman of some clout, who wouldn't stand for being traded as such. Normally we don't care what women think, but this woman has, let us say, enough political clout to make disrupting her placement more trouble than it is worth. So we find ourselves with an opening for this week and this week only, and since I happen to know that you, like all the other participants in the game, will be having two women delivered on Monday, I thought I would invite you to come play in our little game. You simply

tell the women who arrive on Monday that you think there may have been some error in who they've been delivered to, and after Monday night, it'll all work itself out."

"Every player still gets a woman at the end of the night?" Niko asked, much to Andy's surprise.

"That entirely depends on how each player does," Covington sniffed. "If someone is completely wiped out, they are at the mercy of the other players. Now, while usually there is some woman that the winners don't have an interest in, there have been occasions in which the pot has been split by two or three winners, and a couple of men have gone home entirely empty handed. But surely you aren't scared of such a thing, are you Andrew?" The man was clearly trying to goad him into it.

"He'll do it," Niko quickly said before Andy even knew what was happening. "I'm guessing you heard Andy was a good card player from Rachel, so just have her give me your address on Monday at work, and I'll pass it on to Andy. What time does the game start?"

"Tally ho," Covington said with a smile. "While I'm generally not eager to see a woman taking initiative, in this case I will make an exception. The game begins at 7pm and we are usually done before ten, although some nights have gone as long as midnight. Remember, no imprinting of your new women on Monday, otherwise you're only harming them and yourself. Pip pip. See you then, old sport!"

Niko closed the door, and Andy realized he had barely spoken at all to the man, with Niko doing all of the talking. "C'mere," Niko said to him, pulling him from the hallway towards his study, both of them stepping into the room, closing the door behind them, Niko even going so far as to lock it.

The study was where Andy came to focus purely on his writing, a room mostly filled with bookcases, but also had a couch, a desk and a very high end gaming chair to sit in while he wrote. Most of the time, Andy had been happy to work in one of the living rooms with Aisling on the other end of the couch, but there had been days where he'd just wanted to focus on writing and had holed up inside of here to focus.

"Niko, what the actual *fuck*?" Andy asked, as she pushed him to sit down on the couch, before sitting down with him, facing him. "What the fuck was all that about?"

"Andy, stop being modest for a minute. How good a poker player are you?"

Andy's eyes widened and he raised his hands, spreading them palms up. "Uh, pretty good, I guess, but I don't like the idea of playing with people as fucking collateral! What is going on?"

"Look, I know who he's getting delivered on Monday. My job at the Air Force is provide security for the people working on the vaccination and inoculation projects, and there's no way I'm letting him get these particular women, so you have to take him to the fucking cleaners."

"Niko..."

"Andy," Niko said, her face scrunching up, almost as if she was ready to cry. "That fucking prick is going to get the doctor who took care of me when I was first injected, Dr. Charlotte Varma. She's a good woman who lost her husband in March, as one of the first casualties of this fucking disease. She's smart, capable and deserves better than that fucking asshole."

"But Niko..."

"Covington knows people around here, and his little game is being overlooked by everyone in authority. The fucking bastard's practically got tacit approval because the fucking Mayor is one of the people who comes to his poker night."

"Jesus."

"That's not even the worst of it."

Andy narrowed his eyes. "Tell me."

"It's not just Dr. Varma that Covington's getting. It's also Dr. Varma's eighteen year old daughter Asha." Andy was about to speak, when Niko suddenly clutched his arm frantically. "I know! I know what you're going to say!"

"Niko, that's half my fucking age! That's too young!"

"I don't care, Andy," Niko said, her strong grip clinging to his forearm. "I am not letting that

prick get his claws into the woman who saved my life, or her fucking daughter, so if she's got to be bound to somebody, she's going to be bound to you, because you are a good man, and you aren't going to do the kinds of sick and twisted shit that Covington would."

Andy scowled. "Dare I even ask?"

Niko frowned, looking down. "He likes to ensure he gets mothers and daughters, or sisters, and then have them go at each other while he watches. And that's the least disgusting thing I can tell you I've heard about him."

Andy inhaled a deep breath and then let out a long sigh. "This is really important to you, isn't it?"

"I swear to you, I wouldn't ask otherwise, Andy. Dr. Varma's a good woman. A *good* woman, who's still mourning the loss of her husband, of Asha's father." She leaned her head down and kissed his hand. "If you want me to beg, I will, but you can't let that asshole get his fucking claws on my friend and her daughter. Please, Andy. Don't let him."

Andy brought his hand up and rubbed his forehead. "This is a lot of fucking pressure to put on a goddamn game of poker, Niko."

"I know, Andy, I know," she said, her cheeks starting to line with tears. "And I should've told you I knew this might happen. When I found out that Dr. Varma was going to be sent to Covington, I went to work."

"What does *that* mean?"

"I convinced one of the girls I work with that her man was going to get a prominent political figure for a new partner."

"She isn't?"

"She is, but this little cabal of theirs wouldn't have known that in advance if I hadn't told them. So she told her man, and he dropped out of the game. As soon as that happened, Rachel, one of Covington's partners who also works at the lab on the base, began asking around if anyone was paired up with a man who played poker."

"And you volunteered me."

"You've always seemed so good when we played strip poker, so I hoped that would be enough!" she said, a frayed desperation in her voice. "And there was another girl whose man played poker, so it was like a fifty-fifty chance he was going to ask you to fill in. I didn't want to say anything in case it didn't happen. Please don't be mad at me. I swear to you, Andy, I'm trying to save my friend here, and my motives are pure."

"So you know who's already showing up for me on Monday?"

"I do," Niko said. "But you're good enough at poker that you'll be able to keep them too. Rachel says they're mostly shitty card players, except for Covington, who's pretty good. But you're more than pretty good, right?" Andy didn't answer, so Niko asked again. "Right?"

"When it's a couple hundred bucks on the line, sure, but we're talking about *people* here, Niko!"

"Look, all I care about is you running Covington into the ground. If you can get Dr. Varma and her daughter into our house, all the better, but you have to make sure he doesn't get them." Niko frowned again. "I've talked to Rachel a bit about her life with him, and it's not good, Andy, but she's locked in, and Dr. Varma... Charlotte... she's not locked into that, and neither is her daughter Asha, and all I'm asking is that you try."

The two of them sat in silence for a moment, Niko trying to stop herself from crying and Andy trying to see a way through this maze of horrible.

"You're mad at me, aren't you?" she finally asked him.

He sighed and leaned back on the couch, pulling her to him, wrapping his arms around her, settling her body against his. "I'm not mad at you, Niko. I wish you'd told me about this in advance, but you're right. If you've got a friend who apparently did this much for you, you can't let her go into

Covington's fucked up family without a fight. I'm just worried I'm going to let you down."

Niko turned and tilted his head down, kissing him hard. "Andy Rook, you are the strongest fucking human I've ever met. You just trying is worth a thousand people doing, and if you come back and tell me you couldn't get it done, then I won't be mad and I won't bring it up again, because then it just wasn't possible. All I wanted was for you to try."

Andy chuckled a little. "Am I going to like the women showing up here on Monday?"

"They're both okay, I guess. One of them's a blonde woman from Kansas named Sheridan and the other's a brunette named Teri. I think you'd like Sheridan, but I don't know that you'd care one way or another about Teri. I mean, they're both gorgeous, but Teri seemed a bit too ditzy to be your type." Niko giggled a little. "I think you'd probably enjoy playing with Sheridan, though. She's *flexible* and I don't say that lightly."

"Oh?" Andy said, arching an eyebrow. "And how would you know this?"

"She's a dance instructor who used to be a gymnast in Cirque Du Soleil down in Vegas for a while," Niko said. "When she was bored waiting for her injection, she was showing off how she could put her ankles behind her head, or bend completely around the other way to stand on her own head. I mean, what guy wouldn't want a girl that bendy?"

"I mean, that does sound like fun," Andy said with a smile. "But if you don't think Teri's my type, why are they pairing her up with me?"

"Oh she's wealthy enough that they let her pick her own man, and for whatever reason, she picked you. I dunno why. I tried asking, but she didn't answer me. Maybe she'll tell you when she shows up." She squeezed his arm. "Thank you, Andy. I'm glad you're not mad. We should probably get back to the party, though."

"Yeah, okay. Do me a favor, though, and go check on Taylor, would you? I'm glad we aren't showing her off naked in a collar in front of everyone, but I'm sure it sucks for her to be locked in a room upstairs while she hears all this party going on."

"You're going to have to imprint her tomorrow, Andy," Niko said with a little giggle. "She's starting to get a little feral, and wherever she is in the house smells like wet pussy."

"I suspect Lauren'll agree with you, but we still have to run it by her."

"Oh, I'm sure she's ready too. Besides, she wants you to go at Taylor *hard*."

"I hope I'm up to it," Andy sighed. "You know I'm not generally a violent man, Niko."

"She doesn't want you violent, Andy," she said as she slid out of her arms and moved to her feet. "She just wants you at your most aggressive. You haven't heard her say it, but Lauren's been telling the rest of us how we were all imprinted so softly, so she intends to make sure you *claim* Taylor, to just dominate her so much that she's in awe of you. Taylor's apparently always had a submissive streak in her, but Lauren wants you to establish total alpha dominance over her, so that she gets bonded to you something fierce."

Andy moved to stand up as well, smoothing out his costume. "And you think I'm capable of doing that? Of 'establishing alpha dominance' over her?"

Niko leaned up and kissed him fiercely. "Anything you set your mind to, Andy Rook, you can do. So if you want to, I think you're utterly going to make her your little *bitch*. And you know what? I think she's gonna love it when you do."

Andy shrugged with a coy smirk. "Then who am I to disagree?"

"Tomorrow, though, you mark my words, otherwise she's going to be climbing the walls."

"I think that's how Lauren wants her, Niko."

"Sure, but knowing you, you're going to come home Monday night with ten new girls, and you're going to spend all week imprinting each of them."

"There is no way on God's green earth I'm bringing home all of them, Niko. Hell, the idea of bringing home four at once is terrifying enough."

"Well, keep your mind open, babe. If you see something else you like, don't be scared to play

for it.” Niko smirked. “And like I said, you’ll see Teri and if you don’t like her, it’s fine to let someone else have her.”

“You say that like you think I’m going to see someone else I want.”

Niko shrugged with a sly smile. “I’m not gonna decide for you, but I’d like to think I’ve learned a lot about what you do and don’t like now, and I think you may someone else in that pool you wanna take home.”

“You gonna tell me any more than that?”

“Where’s the fun in that?”

(Anyone want to send feedback or encouragement? I’d love to hear it – corruptingpower@aol.com)

Chapter 17

The morning after any good party is generally a challenge to get up and out of bed, but thankfully, they hadn’t gone too late into the evening, and so, everyone had gotten to bed at a reasonable hour. And the wonderful smell of a good, late brunch was the clincher to get everyone out of the bed.

Jenny had prepared an excellent morning feast for them, but timed it so that it was just before noon when she had it ready, drawing everyone downstairs, although most of the girls were in pajamas still, and Andy stuck to sweats himself.

Over a combination of huevos rancheros and breakfast burritos, Niko and Andy explained to the rest of the girls about Andy’s upcoming day at poker. Their reactions were much like Andy’s initial impressions. Shock at first, followed by concern for the women who were supposed to be showing up on Andy’s doorstep tomorrow.

“I mean,” Andy said, in between bites of his burrito, “it’s never come up before, but I technically do have the right to refuse any woman who shows up on my doorstep. Like, for example, if had been too much of a hassle for Lauren, I could’ve just sent Taylor away.”

“Which reminds me,” Lauren said, bringing a mimosa to her lips, “you need to imprint her today, especially if you’re going to be coming home tomorrow night with a whole stable of new women.”

“I think you girls have a lot more faith in my poker skills than I do,” Andy sighed.

“And I think you’re just being modest to set expectations,” Niko said. “I watched you confidently take apart those poor boys last night.”

“I’ve known those guys for over a decade, Niko. They’ve got tells and I’ve had time to learn them, but you’re talking about cold reading a room worth of men, most of whom I’ve never met.”

“If Rachel’s to be believed, most of them are crap, Andy, so the only person you’ve really got to worry about is Covington himself.”

“You mean, I’ve only got to worry about the one guy I have to beat. Sure, no problem.”

“Do your best, baby,” Niko said to him, squeezing his hand. “That’s all I’m asking.”

That hung in the air for a couple of minutes before Lauren started giggling, and Andy turned to look at her, raising an eyebrow. “What’s all that about?”

“I was just thinking about you saying you had the right to refuse a woman delivered to you, and was trying to imagine you refusing Niko when she showed up.”

“You know, I still don’t remember showing up at all?” Niko said. “I’m serious. The first thing I remember is waking up in the morning sucking your cock. I mean, I remember picking your picture out, and I sort of remember the start of the drive over to the old condo, but showing up on your doorstep? Me fucking myself on top of him in the goddamn dining room? I know you told me I did all that, but I don’t remember any of it.”

“You were pretty out of it,” Aisling said. “But it was kinda hot, watching you just pin him down and fucking use him. He wanted to take you upstairs first, but you were too wound up to let him do

that, so he had to carry you naked upstairs after he'd filled you up with your first load.”

“I feel a little robbed that I don't get to remember that first super intense orgasm, though.”

“If you really want to get something equivalent,” Lauren said, “you just need to fast from his cum for a couple of weeks. Right around the point you're starting to break, you'll get that high again, but the pain of waiting that long isn't worth if you ask me.”

“I agree,” Aisling said, “but it's probably worth trying at least once, just so you can know.”

Niko shook her head. “I remember you telling me about how it felt waiting that long, Lauren, and I don't think I have any need to inflict that much need on myself.”

“You wait any longer to imprint Taylor,” Aisling said, “and she's going to be there herself. She's already having trouble keeping her head clear enough to follow the rules.”

Niko nodded over at Lauren. “I get that you want to punish her, but she needs to get imprinted, otherwise she's not even going to remember the punishment.”

Lauren giggled a little. “I know, I know. Let's sic Andy on her after we finish brunch.”

“I like how much my opinion is being consulted on this,” Andy grumbled.

“Oh you know you're itching to have a go at her,” Lauren smirked, wagging a fork in his direction. “Just remember, one of the three holes is off limits until she's passed the month, and frankly, I don't want you firing that sex bomb of yours down her throat for her first time either.”

“You've made it pretty clear what you want out of this, Lauren,” Andy said. “I won't forget.”

After they finished brunch, the foursome headed upstairs. Taylor had been given brunch in a bowl while they'd been eating, and she had finished all of it. When they entered the room, she looked up, but didn't move over, as she was trying to take all of her cues from them and not initiate anything on her own.

“Alright Taylor,” Lauren said, “it's time. Andy's going to imprint you now, so I hope you've internalized all the lessons you've witnessed over the last several days.”

“Yes Mistress,” Taylor said. “May I go and make a few small preparations? Not for myself, but for the Master.”

Lauren seemed to consider this for a moment, then nodded. “Five minutes in the bathroom. We'll be out here waiting.”

Taylor moved to head into the bathroom, closing the door behind her.

“Wonder what she's doing in there,” Aisling said, as she moved to sit in one of the big plush chairs scattered around the room.

Niko grinned impishly, as she moved to recline on the couch against the wall. “Oh, she told me she's been trying to plan as best as she can to make both Andy and Lauren happy.”

“I'm not sure I even want to know what that means,” Andy said, moving to sit down on the edge of the massive bed.

“I'm not sure I'd let her tell you, even if she wanted to,” Lauren said.

“Oh, you want to try and tell me what to do, Lauren,” Niko said, a playful smile on her lips, “and we can see which one of us paid more attention in hand-to-hand combat classes.”

“That sounds like fighting words,” Lauren giggled, miming rolling up her sleeves.

Andy narrowed his eyes at them. “Don't make me bend you both over my knee and paddle your asses red.”

“Promises promises,” Lauren said, blowing him a kiss.

Just then, Taylor opened the door and walked in from the bathroom before moving to get down on her knees in front of Andy. She had put on dark, heavy mascara and pulled her platinum blonde hair back into a solid ponytail, held with a scrunchy that looked like it could handle a bit of force. She'd also put on thigh high white stockings that looked like extra long sport socks with red rings around her thighs. It made her look sportier, and also a little bit younger.

“Your slut is ready for you to use her, Master, if you are ready.”

Andy slid from the bed and crouched down, brushing a hand along her face. “This is your last

chance to back out, Taylor.”

Taylor leaned in and whispered into his ear. “I want this, Andy. I want to be part of your family. But my safeword is 'yeti,' if you're really worried.” She'd said it quietly enough that he was certain none of the other girls had heard any of it.

“I like the mascara,” Lauren said, reaching to brush a fingertip along Taylor's cheek. “It's going to run nicely when he's skullfucking your face.”

“Yes Mistress. I thought you might enjoy seeing that, proof that he's making me cry.”

“Tears of joy, I hope.”

Taylor nodded. “Joy, yes. But also from being unable to breathe. I want Master to really use his slut, to make her gag and choke and gasp for air.”

“Good,” Lauren said. “I want you to get him so wound up that he can't think straight, Taylor. I want to see him actively fucking *use* you, until you're a quivering, brainless heap of well-used flesh, lying there in a goddamn puddle on the floor. You think you can handle that?”

“For you, Mistress? I can handle anything.” Her chin was lifted proudly, displaying that leather collar she'd been forced to wear since her arrival. “Please, Master, may your worthless slut finally taste your cock?”

Lauren put her hand on Andy's shoulder, leaning in to whisper into her mouth. “Remember, I don't want you cumming in her mouth. Just in her ass, okay?”

There was a tiny amount of trepidation to her voice, as if she wanted to be sure she wasn't overstepping her boundaries, so Andy simply nodded. He felt hands on his waist, and it was clear Taylor had taken the nod to be to her and not to Lauren, but Andy didn't feel the need to correct her.

Taylor pulled his sweatpants and boxers down to his ankles, lifting one of his feet for him and then the other, to help him step out of them, before she finally looked at his thick dick before her bright blue eyes. “Your little whore has been thinking about this nonstop since she got here, Master. About how she watches your girls when their eyes roll back in their heads, when their legs twitch and spasm when you fill them up. And even though she knows it's unbecoming of her,” she said, looking down as one of her hands stroked his thick cock, “she's been getting more and more jealous of them, of those intense feelings you evoke in them. She knows she needs to be patient and wait her turn, but sometimes, even thinking about it gets her pussy all wet, Master. May she at long last have a taste and begin her process of officially becoming yours? Please, Master? This worthless slut aspires to be better, to be more, to be... *yours*.”

They'd been particularly careful not to let her taste any precum of his because even so much as a droplet would prime the imprinting process. It wouldn't fully start until she got her first full load of his jism, but the amount in precum was enough to get the process ready to burst. Taylor had gotten particularly close to the girls when they were playing with Andy, usually at Lauren's insistence, but in her eagerness to rub Taylor's face in it, she'd come dangerously near starting the process early.

Andy was about to say that she could when Lauren reached her hand along the back of Taylor's head, grabbing the ponytail, shoving Taylor's face down onto his cock until he could feel the head of it pressing against the back of her throat, forcing its way in, even as her eyes looked up at him with adoration in them, her body literally vibrating at it, as the precum oozed from his mushroom tip into her mouth. Her eyes were fluttering, almost like they were threatening to roll back into her skull, and while she was doing her best to maintain control of herself, he could feel a bit of drool dripping down onto his balls.

After what felt like an eternity of keeping his cock buried inside of her mouth, Lauren finally pulled Taylor back, and she gasped hungrily for air, slobbering even as her eyes were starting to water, her chest rising and falling quickly.

“Are you—”

Before Andy could even continue the sentence, Taylor grabbed onto his hips with both hands and pulled her face back onto his dick until her nose was buried in the thatch of brown hairs at the base

of his cock.

“Don't just leave her on, Andy,” Lauren hissed at him. “Give the little whore what she wants. Fuck that little cheating face of hers until she's a sloppy mess.”

Andy's hands grabbed onto the side of Taylor's head and pulled her face back, but just when the head of his cock was at the ring of her lips and she was inhaling another lungful of air, he shoved his dick back into her face, pushing it back against her throat once more, evoking a gurgling cough from her, as those eyes started to water hard, a single black tear running down her right cheek.

He pulled her back back and off his cock, letting her drink in another swallow of air, a wide smile on her messy lips, precum and spit dangling from them, as her tongue lashed out to try and lap it up before Andy shoved her face down once more.

Taylor was doing her best to lean into Andy, but Lauren was mostly controlling the depth she could reach, using her ponytail as a leash, although Lauren seemed to be letting Andy do most of the driving for the moment, partially because Andy had been told not to cum in Taylor's mouth, and it was starting to take some effort to keep himself cooled off.

She had a talented tongue, and there was something primal and carnal about seeing his precum smeared all over the blonde's chin, drooling on herself when she had half a moment without Andy's dick in her throat.

“Whose whore are you?” Lauren said, reaching forward to slap Taylor across the face, making that mascara run even more.

“Yours, Mistress.”

“Wrong answer!” Lauren shouted, slapping Taylor's other cheek, hard enough to make Andy a little nervous. “Try again. Whose whore are you?”

Taylor swallowed a breath of air, looking up with those heavily watered icy blue eyes of hers, realizing her mistake immediately. “His whore, Mistress. The Master's whore.”

“That's right, you cunt,” Lauren sneered. “I'm your Mistress, but this man fucking *owns* you, if you want to live under this roof. You will deny him nothing. You will do whatever he asks of you, and you will do it gladly.”

“Yes Mistress. Sorry Mistress.”

“Don't apologize to me, you dumb bimbo! Apologize to him.”

“Your worthless slut is sorry, Master. She belongs to you, and only you, and will never forget that again.”

“You know what I think?” Lauren said, her face a wicked angry snarl. “I think you ought to spit into that bitch's mouth, so she knows who fucking owns her.”

Taylor visibly flinched, but leaned her head back, opening her mouth wide.

“That's it, Andy,” Lauren goaded. “Get a big mouthful of spit and give it to that vapid cunt.”

Spitting had never much turned Andy on, and if he was honest, he found it excessive and unneeded, but all of this was about giving Lauren some closure, so he pursed his lips together and started to summon a big mouthful of spit.

Just as he was about to spit into Taylor's mouth, she turned her head suddenly and said, “Yeti! God, I'm sorry, yeti!”

Andy turned his head and spit onto the floor, as his mind raced, trying to figure out a way to disarm the situation he knew he was about to be in. The imprinting process was already primed, so it was too late to pass Taylor off to someone else, or to send her away, but he suspected the explosion of temper that was about to erupt from Lauren was going to make all their lives living hell for a time. He turned to look at her as he started to speak, “Now look Lauren, there's limits... to...”

The look on Lauren's face wasn't one of anger. It was one of ... amusement? He frowned and she started to giggle, and pretty soon, all the girls in the room were giggling, including Taylor at his feet. “Sorry, Andy,” Lauren finally said, through fits of laughter.

“I told you he'd stop if she said to,” Aisling said. “No matter how wronged you felt, Lauren, he

wasn't gonna lose control.”

“Damn,” Lauren said, “and here I figured I could get him worked up enough to push past it. Guess I owe you twenty.”

“Excuse me, were... were you gambling over whether or not I'd take a woman against her will?” Now Andy felt like he was the one starting to get angry.

“It was just a game, love,” Lauren said. Andy stepped away from Taylor and over to Lauren and picked her up, no easy feat considering her height compared to his, moving over to the bed, putting her down and bending her over it before yanking down her pajama bottoms. “What are you going to do, spank me?”

Andy welled up his rage into his right hand and brought it down onto Lauren's ass with the hardest spank he could muster.

“Ow! Jesus, Andy, that rightly stung!” Wham! His hand clapped down again, just as hard, and he heard her groan, a weird blend of pain and excitement, her whole body shaking. “Strewth, that hurts!” WHAM! His hand spanked down once more, the cheek of her ass starting to redden quickly under the power of his slaps. “Fuck Andy!” *WHAM!* “I'm sorry!” *WHAM!* “Bugger, Master, I'm fucking sorry, awlright?” At that, Andy held his hand in the air, not slapping again, but brought his hand down softly to slowly press his fingernails against the edge of the reddened flesh, and then dragged them firmly across that handprint he'd left there, making Lauren quiver, lost somewhere between lust and fear. “You're right you're right, okay, it was a shitty thing to do, and I'm sorry, I'm very fucking sorry. I shouldn't have made her do it.”

Andy looked back at Taylor. “And you. I ought to just leave you like this.”

Taylor's face reddened as much as Lauren's ass. “I'm sorry, Master. She told me to do it, and I didn't want to upset her. I do have an actual safeword, but it isn't yeti. I told Lauren what it was, though, and how I didn't think she would need to use it.”

“And if you're punishing Lauren, Daddy, you probably need to punish all of us,” Aisling sighed. “I mean, I took her bet.”

“Speak for yourself, Red,” Niko said. “I told you I thought it was a bad idea.”

“Well, now we know, I guess,” Aisling said. “You okay, Lauren?”

Lauren lifted her head up, and there was a strange look on her face. After a moment, it registered to Andy that she was more turned on that he'd ever seen her before in his life, and that included the moment when she'd been in a complete fuck daze after her sex fasting. “That was the hottest thing that's ever happened to me,” she moaned, struggling to not drool on herself. “I've been trying to get you to lay into me for months, Andy, and I don't think it's much of a punishment.” She grinned, all crazy eyed and wild. “I'm a bad girl.”

“Well then, you know how I'm going to punish you, Lauren?” Andy sighed. “I'm gonna put you away wet. You can go without a dose until the end of the week now that you're all wound up.”

“Oh god, that's cruel, you delicious bastard,” she purred. “I fucking love it. But that's okay, I've earned this. And now that *you're* all wound up, it's time you take it out on Taylor.”

Andy looked from Lauren over to Taylor, who nodded enthusiastically. “This is what I want, Andy. I want my first time to be hard, rough, fucking brutal. I don't want to be treated like 'one of the girls,' because I haven't earned that, not yet.” She started crawling over on all fours towards him, doing her best to keep her head raised, so she could see her face while she talked. “After the month, we can do the soft stuff. We can cuddle and lay together gently in bed and I can fall asleep in your arms, or in Lauren's. But I need to pay for my misdeeds.”

Niko and Aisling both sat up a little bit, although Andy could see that Niko had her hand down the front of her pajama bottoms, clearly rubbing her own pussy.

“This time, I'm not one of your girls, not a partner or a girlfriend or a wife or whatever you're calling them, because I'm not there yet.” Lauren was looking over her shoulder at Taylor, not moving from her spot bend over the edge of the bed. “You're already doing me a favor by imprinting me, when

you don't know if you should yet. But I love Lauren. I love her so much it hurts to know how badly I fucked everything up. So until I can make that right, I'm a worthless fuckhole, a filthy bitch you should batter and plow and fuck within an inch of her life. I want you to drill me so hard that I can't sit down for a week.”

Taylor turned around and wagged her ass in his direction, leaning her shoulders down to make sure it was upturned, so he could get a good look at her asshole, as well as her pussy that was drenched with fuck cream.

“It's yours, Master. *I'm* yours. Your fuckdoll, your bitch, your worthless whore to pump full of spunk and leave, sore and drenched. I know you aren't going to have my cunt until after my month's punishment, but just look at that tight little asshole I have just for you.”

“Just for you *now*,” Lauren corrected.

“That's true, Master. You won't be my first, but you will absolutely be my last. I will be a good slut for you, loyal in every possible way. You own all of me, from my toes to my head, and you may do whatever you want with any of it.”

“She talks a big game, doesn't she?” Niko said with a smile.

“Whatever you want, Master, I will do. If you'd wanted to parade me naked in front of all your guests last night, I would've gladly done it. I'm not ashamed of how I screwed up before; I'm proud you're letting me make it right. You've had every chance this last week to treat me horribly, and you've never done it. So now I'm asking you, no, I'm *begging* you. Punish me. Fuck me. Claim me. Mark your territory. Make me your property. Own me. Use me, harder than you have any of your girls, because I need to learn to be better, to be worth better. But you have to accept me first.” Taylor placed her face and shoulders down on the floor, and reached behind her to grab the well toned cheeks of her ass, pulling them apart. “I'm all yours, sir, but you need to imprint me. Fucking take me already.”

“You'll do anything I say, Taylor? Anything?”

“Speak and it will be done, Master.”

Andy finally felt like he was actually in control for the first time today. “Stand up.”

“Sir?”

“Don't make me say it twice,” he growled, mostly for effect, but he could've sworn he heard Aisling moan wantonly in response to it.

“Yes sir,” she said, placing her hands on the ground, moving onto all fours before standing up. “Sorry sir.” She kept her hands folded together in front of her, her eyes lowered to the floor.

“Here's what's going to happen.” Andy saw Lauren was starting to try and shift, so he slapped her ass once more, and her hips shoved forward into the bed once more, groaning, making it clear she now understood she wasn't to move without his say so. “Words are great and all, and I'm glad to hear you've learned how I'm turned on by dirty talk, but I'm going to give you a harder challenge. You need to convince me that you belong to me with a kiss, just one kiss.”

Taylor started to move towards him, but he raised his hand and she immediately stopped in her place. “Is there more, sir?”

“There is. After you convince me with a kiss, you're going to convince Lauren as well, in the same way. But you're going to put all of that sadness, all of that embarrassment, all of that shame, all of that is going to go into your kiss with her, to convince her that you understand how badly you hurt her, and how much you want to make it up to her.”

“Now Andy—” Lauren started to say, but as soon as he turned to look at her, the expression on his face cowed her into silence.

“After that, I'm going to fulfill my promise to Lauren, and I am going to fuck your ass so hard, it'll be sore for a week. I am going to sodomize you so hard, you'll think you've gone to prison, and you're going to have to come to terms with the fact that as soon as I cum in your ass, you are going to feel your mind being blown into a billion fragments, and every single fucking one of them will have my name stamped onto it.” Taylor was shivering now, but Andy was almost certain it was with pure

excitement. “You are going to wake up tomorrow and feel like a completely new woman. Ash?”

“Every single sense you have is going to be on overload tomorrow,” Aisling said to Taylor. “It’ll be like the volume on your life is turned up to 11. Smells, sights, sounds, tastes, and touches, they’ll all be in full overdrive, which means your ass is going to hurt like you didn’t even believe is possible. I’m talking the kind of pain that feels like it goes down to your very soul.”

“And you won’t be able to take any drugs for it to mute the pain,” Niko said. “No aspirin, no ibuprofen, not even a stiff drink. That pain’ll linger for a full day, and there’s not a goddamn thing anyone can do to make it go away before it’s ready.”

“By Tuesday, it’ll be sore, but it won’t feel like it’s threatening to overwhelm your body. But for all of tomorrow, you are going to fucking hurt in a way that you can’t even begin to imagine. And this is your last chance to walk away from it.”

Andy knew he was actually lying at this point. Sure, he had to imprint Taylor, but he didn’t have to listen to Lauren and go at her as roughly as she wanted. If he didn’t, though, there would always be a rift between the two women, and that was something he didn’t want either of them to suffer through, so he was doing his best to navigate down this narrow street the two women had built for him together.

“So what’s your decision?” he said to her.

Taylor looked up, a steely resolve to her face, one he’d seen mirrored in Lauren’s face more than once before. She stepped forward and wrapped her arms around him, pulling him down so that she could press her lips against his, and in the kiss that followed, he could feel all of those conflicting emotions battling inside of her. It was the first time they’d kissed, but it was almost like it was a new first kiss for him, like he was a young man again in his parents’ basement, kissing some girl in the dark while a scary movie played on the tv.

She held the kiss for a long moment, the heat of the kiss turning up in the middle before backing down a little, so at the end he felt like she was trying to convey her shame at having cheated on Lauren. “Was... Is that good enough, sir?”

Andy smiled a little. “And now the other half.”

Taylor mouthed the words “thank you” to him, out of sight of all the others, before she turned to the bed. Lauren was starting to try and turn around again, but Andy took the palm of his hand and pushed it hard on the small of her back, keeping her pinned there, and Taylor immediately understood what he was doing. She crawled up onto the bed, her pose mimicking Lauren’s, bent over the edge of the bed, although to get in line with Lauren, she had to be much further up the bed.

She looked painfully nervous, but reached and turned Lauren’s face to look at her. Lauren’s eyes were still pinched in anger at Taylor, up until their lips met, and Taylor kissed Lauren with everything she’d wanted to say to her for months now, holding onto her, even as Lauren tried to remain impassive and stonefaced at first, but melted shortly to the intensity of desperation that Taylor was giving to her.

As the kiss continued, Andy started to position the players the way he wanted to, pushing Taylor as he pulled on Lauren, making Lauren roll onto her back on the bed, and bringing Taylor to straddle her, the two a tangled mess of lips and tongues, Lauren’s hand against the back of Taylor’s head now, keeping her face mashed against her own. Aisling could see he was maneuvering them, and hopped up, grabbing a couple of pillows, sliding them beneath Lauren’s head, propping her up a bit, so that when Andy pulled Taylor down some to get her in position, she could still continue making out with her.

Once he had her in place, Andy sawed his cock back and forth across Taylor’s feverishly dripping snatch, feeling her ooze cream onto his thick shaft, even as she was trying to shift her hips, making it clear she still wanted to follow Lauren’s rules, even now, her mind a dizzying chaos of fucknoise and lust. She reached one of her hands behind her to pull on her asscheek, forcing that pink pucker to expose itself even further.

Andy lined the head of his cock up against her asshole, but then paused for a moment.

That pause made Taylor break from the kiss long enough to plead with him once more. “Please, oh god please do it, Master. I’ve always been yours, your wanton fucking whore, I just didn’t know it.

Show me. Teach me. Fuck my ass and claim what's always been yours. Fucking take your bitch. Claim her. *Own me!*

That was good enough for him. He pushed his hips forward, feeling her asshole give a little more easily than his other girls had on their first time with him, and he suspected it wasn't Taylor's first time taking a man's cock in her ass. He felt no particular need to be exploring virgin territory, so it didn't bother him.

As soon as he was most of the way inside of her ass, he could feel Taylor tense up, both of her hands clutching to Lauren's face, moaning into the other woman's mouth in a loud, muffled shriek, as her body clenched up, and suddenly Andy could feel liquid splashing back off Lauren's thighs up against his balls, as Taylor began to squirt all over the Aussie.

He was tempted to ease off a bit, but Lauren had made it quite clear that the one thing he absolutely positively *wasn't* to do was to go easy on her, so he pushed forward until he was as deep as he could get, then pulled back only to punch forward again with a rough slam.

Lauren broke from the kiss this time so that Andy could get an earful of Taylor's whorish moans, her body covered in goosebumps. "I think I'm fucking blind!" Taylor whimpered. "I've never cum so fucking hard in my fucking life oh my fucking god what the fuuuuuuck!"

The Australian slapped Taylor across the face again, certainly less hard than before. "What do you say, you useless fuckhole?"

"Oh god," Taylor said, as Andy drew back. "Thank you, Master! Fuck me! Fuck your needy bitch in her tight young ass until it's fucking carved in the shape of your cock! You're so fucking thick, it hurts, but your bitch loves how it hurts, so fucking rail her! Plow this bitch, **your** bitch, until she's cumming her brains out her fucking ears!"

Lauren kissed her again, as Andy started to really rail her, shoving his cock hilt deep each and every time, making his balls slap against Lauren's sloppy twat that was still dripping girljizz onto his nuts. But Andy decided if they wanted him to get rough, he would oblige them.

His hand grabbed onto Taylor's ponytail and yanked her head back hard, making her spine curve back, a strangled howl of pleasure shredding the air. He couldn't see it, but he was certain each time he drilled into Taylor, her tits were making Lauren's jiggle with them. "What are you?" he shouted at Taylor.

"Ohgod," she whimpered, "I'm yours, Master. Your bitch, your whore, your slut, your worthless fuckhole to dump cum into and leave a sodden mess on the fucking floor if you want. I'm whatever you fucking tell me I am, because that's what I fucking what to be, sir." Her words were mostly squealed in between brutally hard shoves of his dick into her asshole, which continued to spasm and clench around his shaft. "Please, Daddy, let me be worthy of your cum. Your bad little bitch needs it, more than she's needed anything in her wasted life. Let her ass receive you. Oh god, your bitch wants your cum so bad it's fucking eating her away from inside! Please, Master, please, give your bitch your cum. Claim what's yours. You own this ass, this cunt, this mouth, these tits..."

"I require more," Andy said, as he picked up the pace. He wasn't sure how many times Taylor had cum, but he was fairly certain it had been at least three or four.

"Name it, Master, and it's yours."

"I want to own that mind and that heart. Prove they belong to me. Confess."

"Fuck," Taylor whined, her mascara having smeared all across her face, turning her a hideous mess, before she kissed Lauren once more, hard and fierce, before pulling her face back, looking down into the Aussie's eyes. "I love you, Lauren."

Lauren's eyes instantly welled up and she kissed Taylor again before pushing her back, a look of satisfaction on her face, as she kept Taylor looking at her, saying only a single word. "And?"

"And..." Taylor said, trying to trail off, a wild spike of nervousness running through her veins, before she muscled up the courage to speak again. "And I love you, Andy. Mind, body and soul, you own it all. I fucking love you, you bastard. Now please, let me, for the love of fucking god, have my

fucking cum!”

On that last word, one which Taylor was nearly shouting, Andy slotted his cock in nice and deep and finally let loose, a monster of an orgasm blasting a hot sticky load of spunk into her ass, and it was as though Taylor had just touched the face of God, a rapturous moan erupting from her until she forcibly locked lips with Lauren, the sound not stopping, only muffling some, as Taylor's sweat stained body quivered like it was having its own personal earthquake before slumping, almost deathly still, atop Lauren's form, the Aussie wrapping her arms around Taylor, stroking her hair, as the pint-sized creature began to burble the word “imprinting” over and over again.

Andy's cock had softened and slipped from her ass, as he pulled away from them, pushing them up onto the bed, grabbing a sheet, slowly pulling it up and over the two of them.

“I don't have to stay here, Andy,” Lauren started to say, before he wagged a finger at her.

“You're exactly where you need to be right now, Lauren. Keep our newest family member safe, while the process runs its course.”

Lauren smiled at him, as if she was seeing him in a new light for the first time. “Yes Master.”

Chapter 18

The next morning, Andy woke up before anyone else. Taylor had been allowed to remain on the bed, in Lauren's arms, all night, and the two were still intertwined when Andy awoke. He suspected Niko would be up shortly, Lauren not long after that, although she might sleep a bit longer what with Taylor pressed up against her. Aisling wouldn't be up for hours.

Andy had gotten decent at extracting himself from the bed, but this morning, it didn't take almost any effort at all. He grabbed some sweatpants and a t-shirt, pulled them on and then moved out of the bedroom and onto the balcony, looking out onto his driveway, just as the morning sprinklers turned on, down below him. He sighed, leaning against the railing, shaking his head.

“You're still worried,” Niko said as she moved out onto the balcony with him. “Worrying's not going to change anything.” She leaned her head against his shoulder. “Anything I can do to lighten the load?”

“Nah,” Andy said. “By this time tomorrow, it'll all be done one way or another. So I'm trying not to think about it.”

They stood together quietly for a moment, before she laughed. “Not working, is it?”

“Nah,” he said, joining in the laugh with her. “But I'll make it work.”

Niko decided to take a couple of personal days, and called in to the base, telling them she needed a few days to deal with some private matters. She didn't know when the dropoff was going to be arriving, but she figured that Andy might need some help, and wanted to be around to help him through any chaos.

A few hours later, Taylor awoke and was truly in agony, her ass hurting like she'd ripped it open, so Lauren also decided to take the day off and tend to her. She wasn't actually wounded in any serious way, but as predicted, the high sensitivity of her nerves post imprinting process had all the sensations cranked up to a hundred. Andy could even see a little hint of regret in Lauren's expression before she steeled herself back up, to not let Taylor see even a moment of weakness.

Aisling offered to help Lauren, but Lauren insisted that Aisling just go about her normal day, so the redhead had gone down into one of the living rooms to work for the day, although she told Andy that she'd come help once the women arrived.

All the girls seemed to think Andy was walking on pins and needles, but at this point, Andy was less worried about the women arriving and more worried about the upcoming card game. He spent most of the morning watching poker videos with the hole cards covered, practicing trying to read people's expressions. He hoped it would keep his mind off things, and it mostly worked.

It was just after two o'clock in the afternoon when the military truck rolled up his driveway.

“Here they come,” he said, watching from the balcony as they started to help the two women from the

back of the truck. “Oh *fuck*. Shit. Shit shit shit shitshit*shit!*”

“What’s the problem?” Niko asked him. She’d come to join him on the balcony when the truck had been buzzed in at the gate.

The first woman to get out of the back was the blonde Nico had described to him earlier, Sheridan, a lithe woman dressed in yoga pants and a sports bra. She stretched as she got out, folding one of her arms behind her blonde mane of hair, bending like he’d never seen before. She looked to be in her mid thirties, and certainly she was a very attractive woman. But she wasn’t the problem.

No, it was the woman who got out right after her that had sent him into a tizzy.

“Shit, I thought you said the other one’s name was Teri.”

“It is,” Niko said. “At least that’s what she told everyone. Why?”

“Back when I dated her, she was going by Erin,” he sighed.

Sure enough, the second woman looked much like she had when Andy had dated her nearly a decade ago, with a handful of notable changes. She looked older, certainly, but she’d also dyed her hair a dark chestnut brown, hiding those golden locks of hers. She also had a large tattoo on her right shoulder, which he could see through the sleeveless dress she was wearing. It was a stylized bird of paradise, and it appeared that the wings curved back under the dress along her skin. She was a little curvy, but a bit less curvy than she’d been when they’d been together.

“You dated her?” Niko blanched visibly. “I’m sorry, Andy, if I’d have known...”

“No, I know you didn’t know, Niko. But let’s just say I won’t feel bad at all about passing her on to one of the other men.” They walked into the bedroom and headed out into the hallway, starting to head downstairs. “I hadn’t been out here long when Erin and I started dating, and we were together for a little over two years, while I was just getting started out here, working in corporate communications for eBay while I was writing the first few Druid Gunslinger novels. She hated them so much, constantly told me I was wasting my time, and that I should just focus on climbing the corporate ladder at eBay.”

“You’re fucking kidding.”

“I wish,” Andy said, as they walked down the stairwell. “After that she started telling me she didn’t like the way my friends treated her, which is to say they wouldn’t do everything she said without question. I finally got to the point where I was so sick of her bitching at me about how I wasn’t living up to her expectations that I broke up with her a week before Valentine’s Day. Packed up all her shit for her and threw her out of the apartment.”

“That’s uncharacteristically cold of you, Andy.”

“Oh yeah?” he said, stopping walking. “She had it coming. The place was entirely in my name, and I’d spent the better part of half a year trying to convince her to put her name down as a co-renter on the lease, and she wouldn’t do it. I moved out of that apartment at the end of next month and didn’t leave a forwarding address, just so the bitch couldn’t find me, because she kept harassing me. I didn’t just move apartments – I moved cities. Hell, I moved whole regions of the goddamn Bay. Back when I was dating her, I was living up in El Cerrito, so I moved fifty miles south and hoped I was fucking done with her.”

“What do you mean by harassing?”

The doorbell rang, and it made Andy wince.

“She showed up drunk at least a dozen times. Broke into my car a few times. Broke into the old apartment once. Tried threatening my friends to find out from them where I moved to. After that failed, she tried tailing me home from work for a while, until after about a year or so, she finally left me alone.”

“What a hot mess.”

“That’s an understatement,” he said as they headed down the stairs. “Yeah, let me tell you, Erin Teresa Donegal and I are over and done with, and there is no way in hell I am letting that deranged terror into this family.”

“Ah Andy, love! There you are!” Erin said as they reached the bottom of the stairs. “I see you've moved up in the world since the last time we talked. I'm so excited to be joining this little family you've been given.”

“Don't unpack, Erin,” Andy said. “You aren't staying.”

“The hell I'm not!” she said, her voice level raising to an uncomfortable volume. “I was given the option of what man I wanted as a partner, and I chose you, so it's a done deal. No more running away from your problems anymore.”

“I don't **have** to accept anyone sent to me, Erin, and I'm certainly not going to bring someone into my family who hates my friends and trashed my car.”

“Oh my god, are you **still** upset about that? It happened in the past. When are you going to let it go?”

“Considering you never paid me back for the car window or the car stereo you destroyed, I wouldn't hold your breath any time soon.”

“Uh, are you sending me back too?” Sheridan asked, a confused look on her face, as if she realized she was caught in the midst of a deep historical squabble. “We haven't even met.”

At this point, Andy remembered what he'd been told to do in the instructions from Covington, and went into the rehearsed speech. “Look, there's a meeting in a few hours, and I can go and see what's going on. Maybe there was some kind of mixup about who was sent to who, so you can stay here for the night, but please don't unpack, at least until tomorrow when we get all this figured out. I should be back before midnight with some kind of clarity over all of this.”

While he was talking to the two women, Aisling had been using his cellphone to photograph the two for the sake of the poker game. Covington had made it clear that all the players needed to know what the “prizes” were, and so each woman was to be photographed in advance.

“There's no mistake, Andrew,” Erin said. “I'm exactly where I want to be.”

“Erin, I'm not the same guy you dated a decade ago,” he said, as Aisling handed him his phone back. “You would not be happy here, and I certainly don't think the rest of my family would take to you very kindly.”

“No kidding,” Aisling said as she scowled at the woman, shaking her head. “How could you not like his writing?”

Erin sniffed in contempt at the Irish redhead. “They're juvenile, childlike stories, and nobody's ever going to want to read them.”

“Funny how I've sold half a million books across the series, Erin.”

“Children have disposable income, Andrew, and while I'm sure your little stories are fleeting distractions for them, nobody remembers them after they're done with them. They don't affect anyone. They're not literature. They don't **mean** anything.”

“Jesus,” Niko growled, “I'm glad he's not letting you in, otherwise I'd probably have to beat your ass until you were begging me to stop.”

“I would like to see you try, young lady,” Erin sneered back. She was about a decade older than Niko, but Andy would've bet on his partner over his ex. “I've been taking self-defense classes since I was a child.”

Aisling smirked and shrugged. “Niko's in the Air Force. My money's on her.”

Erin shook her head. “I have so much work to do here, Andrew, in teaching these girls respect and—”

“**Shut up!** For fuck's sake, will you shut up and listen for one minute in your goddamn life, you vacuous socialite? This is my house! These are **my** partners, and they belong here, which is more than I can say for you!”

“Andrew! How dare you—”

“Stop talking! Oh my god, do you **ever** shut up, or are you so enthralled with the sound of your own voice that the words have lost all fucking meaning? You never wanted me, you wanted what

you thought you could make me *into*, but whatever docile, kowtowing toady that is, that's not me, and it's never going to be me! I'm done getting pushed around by you. So don't get fucking comfortable!" At that, Andy stormed off, leaving Aisling and Niko to apologize to Sheridan and/or deal with Erin.

Andy headed downstairs and into his office, closing the door behind him, moving to settle down at his desk, as his two cats, both of whom had been in his office, moved to claim his lap, demonstrating their affection, trying to soothe the temper of their angered master. As it usually did, the cats cleared his head and cooled him off.

He wanted to not think about it, so for the next few hours, he just focused on his writing, getting a few chapters into the next Druid Gunslinger novel, that he was currently calling "The Dryad Always Sings Twice," although he wasn't in love with the title.

Some time later, there was a knock at his door, and he sighed. "It's unlocked," he said, hoping it wouldn't be Erin.

Niko moved to enter the room, closing the door behind her as she moved in. "You weren't kidding about that girl being a piece of work," she said. "How'd you two even hook up in the first place?"

"I mean, she's attractive, and she took an interest in me at a time when I didn't have a whole lot of self-confidence. And she wasn't entirely like this back then. The longer we were together, the more her intense desire to have complete and total control in our relationship came out."

"Yeah, but pretty girls make graves," Niko said to him, moving to wrap her arms around him from behind.

"None of you three have killed me yet. Maybe I've just gotten lucky."

"Or maybe you've gotten more refined in your taste since your mishap." She kissed him tenderly. "Anyway, I thought I'd let you stew a bit, but it's getting time for you to head over to Covington's for the poker game. Are you ready?"

He chuckled a little. "Not really, but there's no time like the present." He saved his file and shut down his computer. "Is she still being a pain in the ass?"

"Nah, Ash basically quarantined them in the pool house out back after Erin demanded to see where the master bedroom was, so she could get unpacked."

"Like you said, quite a piece of work." He helped the cats off of his lap and moved to stand up before giving Niko another kiss. "Thanks for keeping her away from me. You can imagine the hard memories seeing her brought up."

"No kidding. I mean, the fucking gumption on that bitch." She pet Muninn for a second before Andy opened the door, and she moved to walk with him. "Anyway, I'm coming with you."

"Are you sure you want to? There's a chance I won't come back with your friend."

She nodded, as they headed down the hall, heading towards the garage. "If you don't, I want to be with you so you know that I'm not mad at you." Niko pushed one of the buttons and the garage door in front of the Tesla roadster. "Hop in, I'll drive."

The drive over to Covington's mansion was only about ten minutes, and at least a couple of those minutes were spent waiting at the gate for Covington's security team to let them in. There was a full checkpoint, with a couple of women in military fatigues, each of whom had a M16 at the ready.

Covington's mansion was far more decadent than Andy's, and as they drove up the driveway, Andy suspected that Covington might even be the founder of the enclave that preceded New Eden, when it was just a bunch of rich fat cats living in a gated community of their own devising.

The house itself was some weird hybrid of European colonial tradition and hyper post modern industrialism, with a statue of Covington himself in the center of the circular driveway in front of the home. The statue portrayed him as a pioneer, with a child on one shoulder, and a dozen women laying around him, each reaching up to him like he was their savior.

"Oh. My. God." Niko muttered. "This is *extra* extra."

“Even if I have to cheat,” Andy mumbled, “I am going to run this asshole into the ground.”

Niko immediately turned and shook her head at him. “Don't cheat. Don't. He's caught cheaters before, and they get thrown out and lose everything.”

“Relax,” Andy said, “I don't even know how I could cheat here, even if I wanted to, which I don't. We'll play a nice, fair game of poker. Any tips from your friend?”

“The only thing she could tell me is that he has a hard time getting untilted if things start going against him.”

Andy nodded. “That's good to know. Let's go meet the competition.”

The two exited the car and headed up the stairs, where a blonde in a French maid's outfit opened the door for them. It was similar to the outfit Nicolette chose to wear, except here the blonde's tits were completely exposed, and the skirt was significantly shorter. Andy was certain the girl wasn't allowed to wear panties either. “You are here for the game?” the woman asked him, her voice accented in heavy French tones.

“I am. Andrew Rook.”

The woman nodded. “Staff and colleagues need to remain away from the card room, so I will escort your woman to join the rest of the chauffeurs.” She snapped her finger and another woman, this one in a butler's outfit, except that she wore no shirt beneath the black overcoat, which left most of her breasts exposed. “Amber will take you to meet up with the other players.”

Andy could feel Niko tense up next to him, and took her hand in his. “I'll see you in a bit, okay?”

Niko sighed, exhaling the breath, then nodded. “I'm just sad I won't get a chance to see your face when you see all the other stakes in play tonight,” a sly smile on her face. “That's a shame, but let me tell ya, I think you're gonna play your absolute best when you see what's up for grabs.” She winked as she started to stroll away with the butler.

“This way, sir?” the butler said to him and led him down a series of stairs. It felt a little like walking into a lair. The hallways were lined with expensive art, but there was no rhyme or reason to it, no sense of what was important or what had personal meaning. It all felt, well, dumped. Like someone was showing off what they'd acquired, but didn't really care for. In fact, the whole home felt like that. Like the owner didn't enjoy any of what he'd acquired if he wasn't rubbing it in everybody's faces. It made Andy hate him even more.

Eventually, the butler brought him to a lounge room with a massive LCD wall filling one entire side of the lounge. But Andy didn't look at it for more than a second, because it was time to size up the competition.

“Ah, Andrew!” Covington said. “There you are. I was starting to wonder when you were going to show up. I was afraid that you had chickened out.”

Andy scrunched his eyes. “You don't know me very well, Mr. Covington—”

“Please, Andrew, call me Artie!” he laughed.

“Arthur then,” Andy started. “You don't know me very well, Arthur, but one thing you should learn early on about me is that I don't spook easily, and I certainly don't back away from a challenge if there's a reason to try and win.”

“Well, there's definitely prizes worth winning in tonight's pool. Here, Airdrop me the pictures of your stakes and we'll look over all the possible winnings together.”

Andy paused for a moment, then pulled up his phone, sending the images over to Covington's phone. A few seconds later, the images of Sheridan and Erin joined the others on the wall, like trophies on a wall. The very presentation of it all made him sick, but he needed to look at the faces, to establish some sort of foundation to the stakes in play.

He immediately saw why Niko had been teasing him. The wall of faces was full of beautiful women, twelve in total, and both Doctor Charlotte Varma and her daughter Asha Varma were up there, although they didn't look at all how he'd imagined them. Charlotte looked European, and Asha's

features were an interesting blend of European and Indian. Asha thankfully looked a little older than the 18 Andy knew she was. Both women were stunning. But they weren't the ones who caught his attention at the onset.

There were two faces on the board that he recognized immediately.

One of them was Emily Stevens, a British actress who'd co-starred in a series of films as a teenager before becoming an LA celebrity in a bunch of well-received indie films over her twenties. She still had that posh English accent, which Andy had to admit did a hell of a number on him, a blonde upper class British girl who was known to be clever and charming in interviews. Last he had heard, she was dating some rich soccer player. Andy suspected he was another casualty of the virus that had killed so many other Americans. She was a staunch feminist and Andy tried desperately not to imagine how Covington would treat her if he won.

The other face was the real star of the show, though. Sarah Washington. 31 years old. 6'2". From New Jersey. Started out as a teenage actress on Broadway before getting a break in an ensemble movie that Andy loved and barely anyone else had seen, about a writer who suddenly realizes what he writes in his stories is coming true. She was a quirky towering redheaded actress who'd broken into the mainstream with a trio of ballet comedies before branching out. In the last several years, she'd done action films, heavy dramas and a score more comedies, some fantastic, a couple utterly terrible. She was the darling of the talk show scene, a wonderfully flirty and feisty girl next door with a flair for profanity. There was even a YouTube video entitled "Sarah Washington Swears For Ten Minutes Straight." She loved to complain about how clumsy she was, and yet, also did some of her own truly elegant stunt work in her action films. There was one fight scene in "The Cooler's Daughter" that he had watched hundreds of times, marveling as she flipped, ducked and dodged, while throwing punches and shooting an oncoming assault of faceless goons. Sarah had a couple million Twitter followers, at least as many Instagram followers, and yet, still wasn't one of the best known actresses in the world.

Andy's crush for the girl ran deep and fierce, and had for a long time. In fact, she'd held the number one slot on his Hall Pass list for the better part of a decade.

And she was now in play.

Niko hadn't been kidding when she'd said that he'd have all the reasons he could imagine to want to do well. He couldn't bear to imagine what Covington would do to all of these women, but he realized he needed to size up the rest of the competition, and thankfully, Arthur was in the process of introducing everyone.

"This is James Haunton, the mayor of New Eden," Covington said, pointing to a large rotund man with thinning grey hair and a walrus mustache that Andrew was sure entire bowls of soup had gotten lost in. The man had soft hands and wore expensive silks, with a large bulbous nose. Andrew immediately knew he would be the first one down to the felt.

"Sir Nathaniel Watkins, the founder and head of Inner Light Investments." Watkins' face wasn't unfamiliar to Andy, seeing as Watkins was one of the most well-known investors in the Silicon Valley, with Inner Light having money in most of the semi-successful tech startups over the last dozen or so years. Watkins was lean and WASPy, dressed in a geeky button up blue shirt and khaki pants, which went a good distance to hide his wealth. He also had a big bushy brown beard that looked more unkempt than it should for a man with as much money as he had. He mostly just looked like any other start-up burnout. Inner Light didn't have a terrible reputation, so if Andy had to let anyone walk away with a decent chunk of the money, he decided it might be Watkins, not that the man might give him a choice. Watkins had made his money judging people's intents, so Andy marked him away as one of the people to keep an eye on the most. He, other than Covington, was likely to be Andy's biggest challenger.

"Gregor Vikovic, owner of the Quilt Real Estate Group." Vikovic was easily the biggest man in the room, looking more like a football linebacker in an expensive suit than a card player. He was Russian, in his mid fifties, with a great big silver bushy beard, tightly braided and pulled together.

While he looked like he could tear Andy in half given a chance, he didn't seem to have much in the way of subtlety, so Andy figured he wouldn't be much to worry about.

“And this is Jake Jacobson, from the Jacobson clan that owns the AllStore chain.” One of Andy's friends growing up had a phrase that Andy had never shaken loose - 'Never trust anyone named Jake.' Jacobson was dressed in a full suit and tie, but the suit was imported silk and probably cost more than Andy had made all of last year. Jet black hair with a pencil thin mustache, the man felt more reptilian than human, with beady eyes and a perpetual sneer on his face. The AllStore chain was notorious for underpaying its workers, avoiding unionization, denying health benefits to its employees and putting them through nearly unbearable working conditions. When one of their clerks had been trampled to death during a Black Friday sale a few years ago, AllStore had gone to court to avoid paying out a settlement, saying the employee had endangered himself by stopping to help pull up a customer who had fallen, saving her life at the cost of his own. Andy wanted to take him for all he was worth.

“Gentlemen, this is Andrew Rook, one of the newest additions to New Eden. He's a writer of some silly little fantasy series,” Covington finished.

“I write the Druid Gunslinger books under the name Blake Conrad,” Andy said, as the men started to gather up their things. “They've done fairly well, and Working Title Productions has the option to make them into films.”

“I've got some stake in Working Title,” Watkins said, an easy going smile on his face. “Maybe I can help give them a push through development hell. Who's your contact point over there?”

“Now now, gentlemen,” Covington said, “there will be plenty of time for chit chat over the poker table. Let's head next door to the card room while I remind you all of how this works, mostly so our newcomer doesn't feel left out.”

As they stepped into the room next door, a lavishly decorated card room awaited them, with a bar off to one side. A poker table sat in the middle of the room, six spaces around it, with a topless Hispanic woman sitting behind it, holding a deck of cards in her hands.

“Who's this?” Andy asked.

“This is our dealer, Veronica,” Covington said. “So none of us have to sully our hands constantly shuffling and dealing cards.”

Andy shook his head. “Absolutely not. We all take turns dealing individually or I'm out.”

“Out, my dear boy? Why would you do something so foolish?”

Andy smirked, having considered this possibility before hand. Covington had caught other people cheating, but apparently no one had ever accused *him* of cheating, despite him often finishing in first or second. “You know who has their own dealers? Casinos. You know why? Because the house never loses. You might trust her, but that's certainly no reason for the rest of us to do so.” The woman had a Shufflemaster next to her, and Andy pointed to it. “That handles all the hard work of shuffling. Dealing cards is easy, and we all take a turn at it. Every five hands, we rotate and someone else takes the dealer's chair. That way we know that nobody's cheating.”

Covington started to fret, but Vikovic chimed in before the man could get a sentence out. “Da. Dealer is one of your girls, and you always seem to catch good break when you need it. I agree with new fish. We will all deal this night, see if your luck changes.” Vikovic didn't seem like someone Covington would want to argue with.

Andrew didn't know for a fact that the Veronica had cheated for Covington before, but it didn't hurt to throw people a little off their game right at the start, and Covington's winning record had people a little suspicious of him, so the man was going to do everything he could to ablate the doubt.

“Fine,” Covington sighed. “I suppose we can all take turns dealing then. Veronica, would you mind simply tending the bar for the evening?”

“Yes Master,” she said, slowly moving to get up from the poker table.

“All right gentlemen. Each of you has one hundred thousand in chips in front of you. Whites are

worth a hundred, blues are worth five hundred, reds are worth a thousand and greens are worth ten thousand each. The game is No Limit Texas Hold'em."

"Hopefully you know this game, yes?" Vikovic asked Andrew as they all moved to take a seat at the table, Covington opting to start in the dealer's position first.

"I've played it a few times, don't you worry," Andy told him.

Covington continued with the rules. "The position you go out in determines in what order you get to pick from the pool, unless you choose to rebuy in, which you can do once. If you're eliminated and don't rebuy in, you are guaranteed to take home at least one woman."

"Free word of advice, new fish," Jacobson said. "Don't rebuy in. Learn to lose gracefully."

Andy smirked at the man. "Hopefully you can take your own advice."

"Spunky," Jacobson teased, an oily smile on his face. "I like it when they fight back."

"First place takes five women from the pool, second take three, third takes two, fourth and fifth each take one," Covington said, dumping the deck into the Shufflemaster, pushing the button to let the machine randomize the cards. "If you choose to rebuy in, you will be restaked an additional 50k in chips, but lose *that*, and you take home nothing. Any picks you would have had will go the first place winner. So if you go out in third and want to rebuy in, you'll get an additional 50k to play with, but you are giving up both of your picks to first place if you lose. Selection is obviously done in terms of priority, so the first place winner selects all of his women first, and so forth down along the line."

"Most of us know not to rebuy in, young man," Vikovic told him, "but there are those among us who simply cannot resist one last taste at the apple."

"I'll have you know, I've come back from my restake games over half the time," Jacobson couldn't resist tossing in.

"What do you guys normally do for a payout when everyone's only got one woman to stake with?" Andy asked.

"Everyone gets one, but obviously first place normally gets first pick of six primo broads," Haunton said. "But there's always at least one person who rebuys in, so I don't think we've ever had first place go home with less than two. Tonight's a big ass pot, though, so everyone's got their game faces on."

"And nobody's ever gone home with a woman they've regretted taking?"

The five men all laughed, and Covington shot him a condescending smile. "If we do, we certainly don't let them talk any more once we get them home. I keep telling you, Andrew, you really must come around to our way of thinking."

"And I keep telling you, Arthur, that'll happen when hell freezes over."

"Alright already!" Haunton growled. "Enough with the jibber jabber! Shuffle up and deal!"

The game had begun.

(Anyone want to send feedback or encouragement? I'd love to hear it – corruptingpower@aol.com)

Chapter 19

The decision was made that whoever was dealing would sit out for those five hands and simply focus on the dealing. They also drew cards for seating order, lowest card dealing first, highest card starting with the big blind and the second highest being the small blind. Andy drew low card, which didn't bother him at all. It would be a chance to watch the others without having to divide his attention between his cards and his opponents.

"So I can't help but notice that you said even the last place person takes home a woman," Andy said as he took his seat in the dealer's chair, "but your count doesn't have someone for sixth place. So which is it?"

While he started to deal cards out to the players, Covington sighed, nodding. "I know, Andrew, I

know. There is, in fact, a thirteenth girl in the pool, but I don't think anyone would want to take her over the other lovely women we have presented.” He grabbed his phone from his pocket, tapping it to load up a picture. “She arrived on my doorstep last week, but when I told her what was expected of being part of my house, she refused. So I locked her up and she's been stewing, but even in her sexual frenzy, she's still refusing me, so I will give her as a prize to the person who comes in last.”

“Any woman in the pool should be in the pool, if you ask me,” Andy said, dealing the last card.

The man passed his phone over to Andy, a photograph of her on the screen. “If you insist, Andrew, then I suppose that will be fine. She is an athlete of some kind, and was supposed to be going to the Olympic Games, so she is quite fit, but she is extremely willful and stubborn, so she may be more trouble than she's worth.”

Once the cards were out, Andrew picked up the man's phone and looked down at the picture, recognizing her immediately. “Yeah, that's Piper Brown,” Andy said. “She's a member of the woman's volleyball team. Hell, I think she won a gold medal in the last Olympics.” He passed the phone over to Watkins, who looked and then passed the phone down the line, so everyone could get a look at her. A muscular, toned brunette with a stern look in the photograph, it was a marked change of how she often seemed in interviews, where she seemed warm and inviting. She looked like she wanted to beat the shit out of whoever was taking the picture, and the room she was in seemed spartan at best, barely more than a closet. “She definitely goes into the pool if you don't want her.”

“Agreed,” Watkins said. “I'd likely take her over several of the other women on offer.”

“Even with her being a pain in the ass?” Covington asked.

“Not all of us have such draconian house rules as you, Artie.”

Covington shrugged, then glanced at his hole cards. “Then into the pool she goes, I suppose. Check.”

The thing about televised poker is that many viewers don't realize is that the show is almost always a collection of highlights over a longer event, and that about sixty percent of poker hands have little-to-no action, other than the two players who have blinds in the pool debating which of them has the less crappy hand.

Over the first five hands, only about a few thousand in chips changed hands, and Andy's first read felt like it was going to stand. Covington and Watkins were good card players, Vikovic played loose, Jacobson played tight and Haunton was an “any two'll do” kind of player, who was going to throw money into the pot on pretty much any hand with his tells written large across his face.

After the fifth hand, Andy moved from the dealer's seat to his own chair and Covington moved to sit down at the dealer's seat. His first hand out, Andy drew Jack Ten suited in hearts, so he decided to stick around in the hand, since he was already the big blind. “Raise, one thousand.”

It was a bet designed to scare off anyone who didn't have a decent hand, but to Andy's amusement, all four other players decided they wanted to see a flop, so everyone called him. He was a little surprised to see Jacobson staying in, but he suspected the table might just be collectively testing the new guy.

With the pot right, Covington deal out the three cards of the flop, nine of spades, seven of hearts and the queen of hearts. That gave Andy both an open ended straight draw and a flush draw, although he didn't have either the king or ace of hearts, so that made him a little nervous, but he decided he wanted to take the measure of his opponents, so he pushed another two thousand into the pot. Haunton and Jacobson both stayed in, but Watkins and Vikovic both folded, leaving three people in the game.

The next card, the turn, did absolutely nothing to the board, a 2 of clubs. Technically, Andy was holding nothing, but he felt like his odds were decent to make something out of it at the river, and he wanted to come out guns blazing. So he decided to trap, and checked. Jacobson also checked, but Haunton thought he smelled weakness, so he added another thousand to the pot, a string bet designed to just pull a little more money out of what he thought was opponents in a weak position. Andy suspected the man was holding top pair, or maybe three queens if he was lucky, but he thought that Haunton

would've thrown a lot more into the pot if he'd flopped trips, so Andy called, and Jacobson decided to fold, leaving just the two of them in the pot.

The final card, the river, flopped and Andy felt the smile he was stifling behind his eyes. The King of Diamonds. He'd made his straight, and there wasn't a flush on the board. The worst he could do was split the pot. And Andy knew exactly what Haunton was going to do, so Andy simply checked.

Haunton figured he had Andy on the ropes, so he pushed five thousand into the pot, and Andy smirked a little bit, and raised another five thousand in return. Haunton flinched visibly, but at this point, decided he was pot committed and clearly wanted to know whether or not Andy was bluffing, so after a minute or so of deliberation, he called.

"Straight, king high," Andy said, flipping over the cards.

Haunton flipped over the cards, even though he didn't have to, revealing that he'd stayed in with two pair, queens and kings. "Damn, you got me, new fish."

The stack of chips was pushed over in Andy's direction, and Andy nodded. He'd just taken nearly twenty percent of Haunton's stack on the first hand. It might have been too strong an opening, but sometimes you just had to play the cards as they laid.

For the next hour or so, players took turns mostly slowly redistributing the chips, although towards the end of the hour, Haunton made a very bad odds call, and went all in on two pair against Covington, who had limped into the pot and flopped trip deuces. Because Haunton had figured his two pair was rock solid, he groaned when Covington turned up his cards and took Haunton out of the game.

Without so much as missed a beat, Haunton immediately said "Rebuy."

A note was made and another stack of chips was brought forth and put in front of him. "Last place tonight's like not even playing at all, so might as well give it another go. Besides, I want to at least finish third one of these nights." He was next in line for small blind, so counted out the amount needed.

"I wouldn't bank on that, the way you're playing," Andy said to him. "You need to learn how to evaluate your hand better, and stop making such loose wagers."

"Shh," Covington said to him. "Nobody likes being told how to play better, Andrew."

"Speak for yourself, Artie," Watkins said. "The minute you stop moving forward, you might as well be dead. Any tips for me, Andy?" he asked with a glimmer in his eye.

"Yeah," Andy said, counting out his big blind. "Quit playing with your food so much. It's unbecoming. You had the mayor dead to rights two hands ago and everyone at the table knew it, and you still spent at least a minute's worth of all our time making a show out of it before you called him"

Watkins, who was taking a turn at dealer, chuckled. "I see your point, although I do need to take my fun here and there when I can."

"Fun has no place in business or poker," Vikovic said, glancing at his hole cards before matching the big blind. "I'm in."

Covington and Jacobson stayed in, and Haunton, sensing an opportunity, raised on small blind, the value of the pot, a move Andy didn't think the mayor was capable of. All the players were sitting on decent hands, but at least half of them were hoping to go fishing, wanting to see a flop for a chance to pick up a decent sized pot. Now that the pot had grown, however, it was time to see who was going to stick around when the price went up.

Andy glanced at his hole cards for the first time. When he was the big blind, he never bothered looking at his cards until the action came to him, mostly so that there was no possible way to give anything away to his opponents. He peeked at the two cards and found pocket cowboys waiting for him, two kings. So Andy matched the bet and said "Call."

Vikovic matched the bet, to no one's surprise, as did Covington, but Jacobson folded, clearly having a questionable hand that only got more questionable with this much money in the pot. Andy put him on a low set of suited connectors, maybe a 7-8 or so. Watkins, as the dealer, was out of the hand. One of the other reasons Andy had suggested that they each take turns as dealer was that it would cut

into bad streaks, giving players who were on tilt a moment to deescalate their frustrations and get their head back in the game.

The flop hit, and Andy was a little annoyed by it. Three of hearts, eight of diamonds, jack of spades. The fact that it was a rainbow flop meant that anyone hoping to get a flush was seeing their odds rapidly dwindling, needing the next two cards to be of the same suit (and to be holding two of that suit) to hit. It also wasn't great for a straight, although Andy could see Haunton or Vikovic staying in with a nine-ten suited, which would leave them sitting on an open ended straight draw. There was also the chance that one of the other men was sitting on fishhooks (a pair of jacks) and had just flopped a set, but neither Vikovic or Haunton seemed visibly excited enough to have done that. Covington was still a pain in the ass to read.

Haunton decided to play it cool. "Check."

Andy saw no reason to turn up the heat, so he followed. "Check."

"Raise 2k," Vikovic said.

"Call," said Covington.

"Call," said Haunton.

"Call," said Andy. It was a value bet, adding to the pot, but certainly not causing him to get scared, as Andy felt like he was still sitting on top hand.

All of the chips were pushed into the center, and then Watkins flipped over the turn card. "King of Hearts."

Andy did his best to keep his expression as neutral as possible, although on the inside, he was doing cartwheels. He'd just hit a set, and now he felt like he was definitely the best hand on the board. He wasn't first to act, though.

"Check," Haunton said.

"Check," Andy repeated. He could've bet here, but the best thing to do was to let someone else make the first stab at the pot. He suspected either Vikovic or Covington would try and push a large bet in, fronting as if they were sitting on a pair of kings, or maybe a king and a jack. Best to let them make the first move and then come in to take it from them.

"Raise 20k," Vikovic said. There it was. Someone clearly trying to buy the pot, hoping he could bluff strength into players who were displaying weakness.

"Fold," Covington said, tossing his cards to the dealer.

That brought the action to Haunton, who had literally just rebought his way into the game a few minutes ago. The mayor thought for a long moment before he pushed the entire stack forward. "All in."

Andy sighed for a moment, and looked again at the board, making sure he had a solid read on it. If he called Haunton and lost, the mayor would more than double up if just one player called him and lost. Vikovic had made a big push, but Andy was almost certain he couldn't *wait* to fold, just to get away from this disaster of a hand before it got worse for him. Which meant Andy would be taking in about 80k if he took down the hand.

The more he thought about it, the more certain he was that Haunton had been playing cool when he'd flopped trip jacks, and in doing so, had bought Andy enough daylight to see the king to make his own set for next to nothing.

It felt like a long wait, but eventually Andy spoke. "Call."

"Too rich for me," Vikovic said, mucking his cards even as Andy was speaking. "I fold."

"Shouldn't have tried to buy the pot," the mayor said, laughing as he turned over his cards. It wasn't a pair of jacks, but a jack and a king, giving him two pair. "Two pair. Nervous yet, new fish?"

Andy smirked. "A little, but not that much," he said, flipping over his pair of kings.

Haunton immediately got up from the table, tossing his hands into the air. "C'mon, you gotta be kidding me! Come on, jack! Come on, jack!"

"Odds aren't good for you, Mr. Mayor," Covington said.

"Enough discussion!" Vikovic said. "Give us a river."

Andy was a deadlock. Haunton was wrong. If a jack came up, he would still win the pot, as it would simply give both men a full house, and Andy's would still be better. Haunton was drawing dead, and he simply didn't see that. When the last card was flipped, it was the six of diamonds, not changing the board at all anyway.

"**FUCK!**" the mayor shouted, before getting up from the table. "I should've bet on the flop."

"It wouldn't have mattered," Andy said as he pulled the mound of chips his direction. "I was still holding top pair at that point. I would've called you."

"Take a few minutes and go get a drink, James," Covington said to the mayor. "As for the rest of you, we have ourselves a new chip leader. And thankfully, his streak will be interrupted now by a turn at the dealer's seat."

Andy grinned. "Sure, give me just a minute to get my chips sorted and stacked." All said and done, Andy was clearly well ahead, sitting on a little over 225k of the 650k chips in play. Covington was in second, with 145k, Watkins in third at 120k, Jacobson at 90k and Vikovic at the bottom with 70k.

Over the next five hands, Covington did very well for himself, knocking out Vikovic, who rebought in, bringing the chip pool up to 700k, moving himself within spitting distance of Andy's pool. And just after Vikovic bought back in, it was time to change dealers again, and Andy moved out of the dealer's seat, and Covington moved to take it.

"I thought you said not to buy back, Vikovic," Andy said, moving back to his stack of chips.

"It's what you call a value bet, yes?" Vikovic said. "In fifth place, I would simply have one woman. I can get one woman. And last pick is of no desire to anyone. So if I go home empty handed tonight? Is okay. I take my stab at glory."

Two hands later, Andy made a big bluff and got caught with his hand in the cookie jar, costing him 40k, but he immediately turned it around, and the following hand busted Jacobson out. Jacobson declined to rebuy, happy to go home with someone rather than empty handed.

On Covington's last hand as dealer, Vikovic decided to make a last stand, and Watkins called him on it, knocking Vikovic out in fourth.

"With only three of us left in the game, might I make a suggestion?" Covington said. "At this point, I think we should simply rotate between the three eliminated players as dealers, while the three of us remain in the game at all times. Is that acceptable to everyone?"

"Sure," Watkin said, "the more action the better."

The mayor sighed, bringing his glass of scotch over to the dealer's chair, sitting down. "Yeah, okay. No offense, Rook, but I hope Artie busts you hard."

Andy shrugged. "Can't make friends with everyone." He was thirsty, but he would be damned if he was going to make the girl behind the bar do an ounce of work on his behalf. "So c'mon, let's get some cards out."

Around ten thirty, Andy was starting to get nervous. He'd dropped down to third place after a couple of unlucky river cards in a row. Then Watkins went all in on Andy. Andy clearly couldn't cover the spread, but Andy called, and Covington decided to get out of the way instead of making a side pot. Thankfully, when the cards were turned over, Andy held the better hand, and the river finally flowed his direction. That doubled him up and put him back in the game.

Watkins confidence was shaken, and over the next hour, he never really recovered, playing a bit too reckless and loose. Once Andy and Covington smelled weakness, the two honed in, taking turns chipping away at him until finally Watkins went all in, and just before midnight, Andy took him down.

"You want to rebuy?" Covington asked him.

Watkins laughed, shaking his head. "Taking three from the pool is more than enough for me. You two titans have fun duking it out."

"You ready for this, Andrew?"

"Don't you worry, Arthur," Andy said. "Let's see who hits felt first."

With only two players, they were always going to be trading turns between little blind and big blind. As soon as Covington looked at his hole cards, he immediately called "All in."

Andy smirked a little, not having even looked at his own cards yet. He'd suspected Covington would've tried something like this, just constantly firing at the blinds, trying to chip them away, using his big stack to bully Andy's weaker stack. He glanced at his cards, then nodded. "Okay. Call."

Covington blanched. He turned over his cards, revealing Jack-eight, not even suited. He'd expected Andy to just back off and let him chip away a set of blinds, and was *not* happy that Andy hadn't done so, growing even more frustrated when Andy flipped over a pair of nines. "How do you start with a pocket pair?"

"Maybe it's a hint you shouldn't go so aggressive right out the gate," Andy replied as Watkins dealt out the flop. As soon as the cards were upturned, Andy could practically feel the anger boiling out of Covington. Andy had flopped the nuts, a six and the other two nines. At that point, it was a formality of just dealing out the last two cards, as Andy was guaranteed the winning hand with four of a kind.

Right out of the gate, Andy had doubled up.

As the next hand was being dealt out, Covington hadn't even seen his cards and immediately said "All in." He was fully on tilt, and wanted to try and reclaim his confidence. He didn't even look at his two hole cards, simply staring Andy down, practically daring him to get into the hand.

Andy knew the stakes were a great deal higher on this hand, and so he took the time to look at his hole cards, a slight laugh escaping his lips. He couldn't try and read his opponent so he had to decide if his hand was good enough for the risk. And the two cards he had were affectionately known as Big Slick, Ace-King suited, this time in spades. It wasn't a pair, but playing against two random cards, his odds were good.

"Sure, let's dance. Call."

"You don't respect me, do you, Andrew?"

Andy grinned, giving a little shrug. "You didn't even look at your cards, Arthur. How am I supposed to respect that? If you aren't going to respect your opponent, why should he respect you in turn? And you're just firing into the pot, hoping that you can buy a few blinds to chip away at my stack. But you have no idea what's under there. And I've got Big Slick." He flipped over his cards. "How about you?"

Covington was turning almost scarlet red with anger, and turned over his cards, revealing just a six of spades and a three of hearts. "This is ridiculous."

"Artie," Vikovic said, "you didn't even look at your *cards.* What are you thinking?"

"I'm thinking this shitstain has been a pain in my ass all night long and I wanted to bury him."

"And that's the problem, Arthur," Watkins said, putting out three cards for the flop. "You aren't thinking about the cards and you're thinking about your opponent."

The first card on the flop was the six of hearts, giving Covington a pair and a moment's hope, but the second card immediately dashed that, revealing the Ace of Hearts. The third card, a ten of clubs, didn't affect the board at all.

With the turn came the three of spades, putting Covington back in the lead for a moment, with two pair, until the last card came out, the King of Hearts, pairing Andy up to two pair as well.

Covington practically snarled as he counted out the chips, pushing them over, his stack now a quarter the size of Andy's. "You've got more luck than a goddamn leprechaun, Rook."

Watkins stood up, and Jacobson sat down to take a turn at dealer, washing the cards through the Shufflemaster again. Typically the break as the dealer changed was enough to let a player cool off, but Covington was still off-balance as they started up again. When the next set of two cards were dealt, Andy was back on the small blinds, and so was the first to act. He'd glanced at his cards and said, "Call."

Covington was gunshy now, and simply said "Check," as he was desperate to see a flop and get more information. The flop came down Ace of Hearts, seven of spades, three of clubs. Immediately,

Covington said “All in.”

Andy stopped and did the math in his head. “Yeah, okay. Call.”

“Two pair,” Covington said, flipping over the Ace of Spades and the three of hearts with an angry gusto. “Take that, you lowbrow piece of shit! Time for me to get my money back.”

Andy shook his head with a wry smile. “Not so fast, Arthur.” Andy turned over his hole cards, the seven of hearts and the seven of clubs. “I like my odds here.”

“Another goddamn pocket pair! This is ridiculous!”

“I probably would've folded if you'd bet at the blinds, but you let me see a flop for cheap, so midlevel pocket pair seemed okay.”

Jacobson turned over the turn card, and Covington immediately let out an undignified cheer, as the three of diamonds. “Yes! Full house! Suck it! Give me my money!”

“He still has a few outs, Artie,” the mayor warned.

Andy was actually leading, but Jacobson just couldn't see it. He was sitting on a full house, sevens over threes, and Jacobson was sitting on threes over aces, which was the lower hand. Players tended to get wound up, so they often refused to think about everything, but Watkins had that knowing smile, so Andy knew he had spotted Jacobson's error as well. Jacobson needed either another three or another ace to pull victory from the jaws of defeat.

“No! I refuse to believe I'm going to get blown out by some random river card!”

“So show us river already,” Vikovic said.

And Jacobson placed down the last card with a thump that resounded throughout the room like a clap of thunder. The seven of diamonds.

That meant that Covington had a full house, threes over aces, but Andy's four of a kind had blown it out of the water.

“The absolute luck on you,” Covington growled.

Andy had gone from 110k to 220k to 440k, making him the chip leader now. He could, if he wanted, use Covington's own tactics against him. But Andy liked to play smart. On the other hand, Covington was so tilted now, he could probably be goaded into a sloppy play. And if Andy could get Covington to go all in again, he'd be down to the felt and this stupid game would be over.

Maybe, just maybe, it was worth the risk.

It seemed like the time to goad the millionaire a little more, just to see if Andy could completely tilt him.

“Maybe we should see how strong my luck's running right now then, huh?” Andy said as new hole cards slid in front of him. “Tell you want, Artie.” He figured this singular use of the man's nickname would give him even more of a severe nudge. Andy had been calling him Arthur all night long, but now, the nickname Artie sounded condescending as fuck. “I'll look at one, *just one*, of my two hole cards here, and if it's higher than a eight, I'll go all-in without even looking at the other card. How about that?”

“You do whatever you want, boy, and I'll show you how a real man plays cards.” Covington was blind with rage, and there was a carelessness flaring up behind his eyes, as Andy lifted up one of the hole cards to peek under at it.

“Okay,” Andy said. “All-in.”

“You're bluffing!” Covington said, slamming his fist on the table hard enough to knock the stacks of chips loose. “Call!”

“Now Artie,” Andy said, smug grin on his face, “are you sure that—”

“*I SAID CALL GODDAMN IT!*”

Andy flipped over the one card he'd looked at, the Ace of Hearts, but left the other card face down, as Covington flipped over his cards. The man had looked at them this time, and was sitting on a pair of sixes.

“Aren't you going to turn over your other card?”

Andy shrugged, that sly smile on his face. "In a minute. Let's see the flop."

The flop came down six-seven-ace, giving Covington a set, while Andy was sitting on a pair of aces. The turn was next, a deuce, no help to anyone, and the river, well, the river was the two of hearts. Looking at the board, Andy's odds weren't great, but he wasn't out either. The seven and the six on the board were both hearts, which meant Andy needed his other hole card to be another heart.

"It's Schrödinger's hole card now," Andy said, tapping his fingers lightly along the felt. "Maybe I've got a winning card, and you're out, or maybe you've got me dead to rights and have doubled up back into the lead. What you've gotta ask yourself is... do you feel lucky? Well, do you, punk?" The grin on his face was broad, as he gave the man his best Clint Eastwood impression.

Vikovic was the one who finally made the move. He leaned across the table and grabbed the last card, the one Andy had never even touched, and flipped it over. There in all her glory...

...was the Queen of Hearts.

Andy had made his flush.

"Son of bitch," Vikovic said, letting out a low appreciative whistle. "You want to rebuy, Artie?"

"Fuck that! This guy is on a streak. I'm out. Game's over!"

"Are you sure, Artie?" Andy said.

"The! Game! Is! Over!" Covington fumed. The older man stood up, inhaling a long breath before letting it out slowly, trying to regain his composure. "Alright, let's sort out the winnings. Andrew, you have seven picks from the pool and get to pick first, as is your right as the winner."

"Alright, let's see," Andy said, as all the men moved back into the parlor with the videowall they'd been in before. He'd hoped just to win with no rebuys from anyone, as it would've made his decisions simple, but seven, seven was a lot of women for any one man to handle.

The thirteen faces sprung to life on the big wall, as Andy looked over them carefully. "Alright, I suppose I'd better just pick then. Charlotte Varma, Asha Varma, Piper Brown, Emily Stevens..."

"Damn," Jacobson grumbled.

"Oh hush. If he hadn't taken her, I certainly would've," Covington said to him.

"Sarah Washington, Sheridan Smith and..." Andy looked over the wall of faces, trying to decide who else he would pull from this den of vipers, and yet, he just couldn't bring himself to care about rescuing his ex Erin. It was a sea of beautiful faces, but none of them evoked any stronger reaction than another, so he was forced to read the small text beneath each of them, sorting out people he wouldn't want to spend long periods of time with. He was a little tempted to give his seventh pick to Covington, but couldn't bear to let anyone decent be bound to the loathsome toad.

There were a couple of Republicans he nixed immediately. Andy was a lifelong Democrat, and anyone who'd still identify as a Republican after the last three years of madness wasn't anyone he wanted to let into his home and family. A few others struck him as from far too wealthy of families, the sorts of people who would do much better with Covington and his ilk. But there was one, Deborah Barnes, a blonde veterinarian from Los Gatos, originally from Kansas, and she seemed warm and caring in the notes about her. "... and Deborah Barnes, I guess."

"Erin Donegal was originally one of yours," Covington said. "Don't you want to take her back?"

Andy shook his head. "I would've sent her back to the base if it weren't for this little game of yours. If you want her, you can have her. She doesn't like my writing, and anyone who doesn't like my writing isn't welcome in my house."

"If you don't want her, I won't take her either," Covington sniffed. "I'll take Janice Flowers, Eloise Childs and Teresa Kenzington."

"I'll take her then," Watkins said. "Donegal and Nina Choi."

That left Jacobson with Ariel Smith, since Vikovic and Haunton had both rebought in, and left with nothing. Andy sighed. "So how do we relocate them?"

"A car will arrive tomorrow to pick everyone up and drive them to their new locations, although you're welcome to take the Varmas and Miss Brown with you tonight, since they're here, and you are as

well. Tomorrow afternoon, everyone will have what's coming to them. You may need to tend to Miss Brown's needs before you leave, however, Andrew," Covington said. "She's in quite the state. I'll have the other two meet you upstairs by your car when you're done with Miss Brown."

"Can you send my partner, Niko, down to meet me? I'm strong, but carrying an unconscious Olympic athlete up some stairs by myself is probably more than I'm capable of."

"Of course. Let me go get her. Veronica, would you take Mr. Rook over to Miss Brown's room please?"

The servant brought Andy out of the parlor and took him to wait outside of a room where the door was clearly locked. She unlocked the door, but didn't open it. "You may wish to wait for your partner, Master Rook. The woman in there... she's not well," she said to him, a look of concern on her face. "Ah, here's your woman now."

Andy turned around and Covington was escorting Niko down to meet him. "Here you go, Miss Red Wolf. You two should be strong enough to carry Miss Brown out when you're done with her. You know the way back?"

"I do," Niko said to him. "Thanks."

Both Covington and Veronica walked up the stairs, leaving Andy and Niko alone together outside of the door, neither quite bringing themselves to open it yet.

"So you won?" she finally said to him.

"First place. Seven women. It's going to be a trial."

"Maybe you could donate one of them to Eric or Phil if it scares you that much," she said with a laugh. "So are Charlotte and her daughter behind this door?"

"No no, they'll be upstairs waiting for us at the car after we're done here. There were actually thirteen girls in the pool, not twelve. This is the thirteenth. Her name's Piper Brown."

"Wait, that cute volleyball player with the little pregame warm-up dance who went viral a few years back? *That* Piper Brown?"

"The very same."

"Well let's go get her. Why's she down here?" Niko started to reach for the door, but Andy put his hand on it.

"She's been here for over a week, so she's pretty heavily in the throes of need right now," Andy said, not letting her open the door yet. "Covington said she'd be in quite the state, so I'd need to imprint her here, and you'll have to help me carry her upstairs afterwards."

Niko's face fell. "Jesus, what a fucking asshole," she sighed. "A whole week of waiting for imprinting after she's been vaccinated? She must be out of her fucking mind with need by now. Okay, we'll let's get to it, stud."

Andy shot her a disappointed look before he lifted his hand and opened the door. The room was poorly lit, a handful of lights on their lowest setting, as Andy and Niko stepped into the room, closing the door behind them.

On the far side of the room, sitting in chair, looking almost catatonic, was Piper. She was naked, sitting in an armchair, her brunette hair draped over her tits, a vacant look on her face. She was muscular, in far better shape than Andy or Niko. It almost looked like she was drooling on herself from across the room.

"God, is she dead?" Niko whispered to him as they started to walk over to her.

"Ms. Brown?" Andy said. "Piper? I'm Andy Rook. I'm here to take you away from here."

Suddenly, Piper's head whipped and her blue eyes focused on Andy with a terrifying intensity. Before Andy could even react, she lunged out of the chair and raced over towards him. Niko tried to step forward to slow her down, but Piper shoved her out of the way sharply. As soon as she was at Andy, she pushed him back to the wall with an irresistible strength, forcing his back against the surface before she dropped down to her knees.

"It's okay, Piper," Andy said to her, but the woman seemed completely oblivious to his words.

She practically ripped his pants open and immediately brought her mouth around his cock. Andy wasn't hard, but Piper's tongue was demanding, even as Niko moved back to her feet and walked over to him

"God, was I that bad?" Niko said, her hand reaching down to stroke Piper's hair reassuringly.

"You were at least verbal," Andy said, as he felt Piper's mouth humming on his cock, making it swell. "I feel a little bad, taking advantage of her like this."

Niko shook her head, leaning in to kiss Andy. "This girl's got a need and you need to fill it, Andy. Just let her have it, and we can go. Besides..." Niko giggled, nuzzling against his neck. "It's kinda hot, the way she's just feasting on you, cavewoman style."

"Yeah, well, it's hard to keep an erection with the stink of this room. I think they kept her trapped in here all week."

"But she's good at sucking cock, isn't she?"

"She's certainly voracious."

"Don't hold back, then," Niko said, taking one of his hands in hers, trying to reassure him. "No need to be all gallant for this time. You can save that for the first time she'll actually remember."

It didn't take long, and sure enough, a minute or two later, Andy was firing a blast of cum down her throat, which was when the strangest thing happened.

Piper **didn't** suddenly slump over.

No, instead, after she swallowed his hot sperm, she tugged him away from the wall and pushed him down to the floor, not so much as a droplet of spunk escaping her lips.

"What the hell?" Andy exclaimed in shock. "Why isn't she imprinting?"

"Fuck, I hope she's not stuck like this because he waited too long!" Niko said, trying not to panic. "Maybe you didn't have a big enough load?"

"When the fuck has that ever mattered before?"

Piper's wild eyes still darted left and right, but as soon as she had pushed Andy onto the floor on his back, she crawled over him, her hand tugging on his cock once more, as she straddled him.

"I think she definitely wants more, Andy," Niko laughed. "Hit her again."

"I dunno if I can give an encore this soon, Niko!" Andy whispered.

Piper cut him off, shoving her lips against his in what had to be the most primal kiss he'd ever encountered, almost like she was claiming him instead of the reverse, her tongue forcing its way into his mouth, her athletic body keeping him in place.

Niko moved behind Piper and snaked one hand around the Olympian's waist, moving to rub her fingertips against the brunette's pussy, a small triangle of pubes above it, as Niko started stroking the girl's clit. "I don't think she's going to give you a choice, Andy." Niko smirked, her other hand reaching to tweak one of Piper's stiff nipples, finding the bud as hard as a rock, eliciting a groan from the athlete, who was dragging the head of Andy's cock across her snatch.

Within a moment, he was stiff enough for her to slam her weight down onto him, forcing his dick deep into her cunt, finding it drenched and achingly warm. Andy didn't so much do anything as provide a dildo for the woman to ride upon, her hips bouncing in his lap, her lips attached to his, refusing to let go, even while she fucked him.

After a few minutes, Andy felt a familiar tingling in his balls, and as Piper squirmed and wriggled down on him, he fired a load of cum against the back of her twat. This time, it seemed, it was enough to take, and the toned woman spasmed in one sharp and violent quake before slumping deathly atop of him, murmuring "imprinting" over and over again, so quietly Andy could barely even hear it. He more felt her lips moving than heard her, as her face was buried in the nape of his neck, his body pinned underneath her.

"A little help, please?" Andy said, and Niko only laughed that much harder.

(Anyone want to send feedback or encouragement? I'd love to hear it – corruptingpower@aol.com)

Chapter 20

After Niko helped Andy get Piper off of him, they scrounged around the room before they simply gave up and put Andy's jacket on her. There wasn't any clothing in the room, not even a bedsheet. Just a bucket in the corner, filled with excrement. She wasn't difficult for them to carry, although neither of them had much experience carrying an unconscious person before.

Once they got her up to the car, Andy regretted that they had brought the roadster. The vehicle did have four seats, but the back seat was very cramped, and they were going to have to lay Piper over people's laps, because he refused to put her in the trunk, even if she was unconscious.

Waiting at the car was Dr. Charlotte Varma and her daughter Asha. "Thank you for saving us from this, Niko," Charlotte said to her, the woman's accent definitely French. She was dressed in a long flowing summer dress, with a jacket thrown on over it, billowy fabric over her womanly figure, her long blonde hair swept back behind her ears, hanging down to the middle of her back. She looked less like a doctor and more like a hippie, but she had a warm smile that put him at ease. "And you, Mr. Rook."

"Please," he said, "call me Andy." He unlocked the car, then popped the trunk to load Charlotte's suitcase into it, followed by Asha's and Piper's, which one of Covington's servants had clearly brought up while Andy was tending to the athlete's needs. "Let's get out of here, and we can talk on the way over to the house."

As Asha got in the backseat, she bumped fists with Niko. "Thanks, Neeks," Asha said, her accent definitely British, despite her exotic looking features. Her long wavy black hair was drawn back into a ponytail that barely hung past the nape of her neck, the tie high on her head, her skin several shades darker than her mother's. She wore black knee high leather boots, black pantyhose, a black leather skirt that was playfully short and a purple silk shirt that was still tight enough on her that he could see the outline of her lacy bra through the material. It was also cut high enough to show some midriff, including a little silver musical note belly piercing. "Good looking out."

They laid Piper atop of their lap before Niko got into the front passenger's seat and Andy got into the driver's seat. Before, the driveway had been a showroom of deluxe and expensive cars, but now everyone else had already gone home.

The house's external lights were still on, but it was clear that Covington had already gone to bed, so it was with no fanfare that Andy slowly drove the electric car off the property, heading back towards his place. It was approaching one AM and as Andy felt the cool breeze blowing across his shaved head, he definitely regretted bringing the Roadster.

"So this is your old man, Neeks?" Asha asked. "And he's gonna be my old man too? A'ight, I can get wit' tha'." Asha's accent was mostly British, but Andy could hear hints of her mother's French accent, as well as what he imagined was probably hints of her late father's Indian accent. Niko had told him that the Varmas had only moved to the US a year ago from London, and that Charlotte's late husband had died in one of the first fatalities to the virus.

"You'll like Andy, Asha," Niko said to her. "He's the best man I've ever met."

"He's also sitting right here," Andy said with a soft laugh.

"I wanted to talk to you about this, Niko," Charlotte said. "I am very thankful that you did rescue us, but I think it is rather unbecoming for a woman to share her lover with her daughter, don't you?"

Andy let out a soft sigh of relief, speaking before Niko did. "Absolutely. If you would rather, Dr. Varma, I could talk to one of my friends and see if they might be a better home for your daughter, so you might avoid that situation."

"Oh. Ah. Oh. Yes, I think you've misunderstood me, Mr. Rook," Charlotte said, a hint of embarrassment on her face. "I think my daughter should definitely stay in *your* company, but *I'm*

not attracted to white men. Not to be ungrateful, but I was hoping maybe I could be paired up with your friend Mr. Pak. He's always seemed like a very nice man. Very strong and muscular." She giggled a little, a sound almost uncharacteristic of a woman in her early forties. "And gossip is that he is quite well endowed."

"I can't speak to that part, but I'm sure Phil wouldn't mind," Niko said. "Andy or I can give him a call in the morning and arrange it."

"I might have to owe Phil a favor or something," Andy said, "but that's okay. He can just put it on my tab. I probably owe him only a couple hundred at this point."

"Wait," Asha said, just picking up on Andy's misunderstanding, "what's wrong wit' me that you don't want me?"

It was Andy's turn to blush. "That isn't what I meant to say."

Niko smirked, reaching back to pat Asha on one of her thighs. "He's afraid either he's too old for you, or you're too young for him. I love Andy to death, but he's a little insecure from time to time."

Asha reached one of her hands forward, curving her arm around the seat to smooth her fingertips along Andy's chest through his shirt. "I'm old enough to know better, but too young to give a fuck, luv," she purred. "In fact, if my mum wasn't in this car, I'd give you a bit of the ol' road head so I didn't have to wait until I got home."

"Don't let my presence stop you, Asha," Charlotte said, a warm smile on her lips. "I feel that need in my belly quite fiercely so I imagine it is rather remarkable in yours, seeing as it affects younger women more quickly. If you want to go after Andrew right now, I don't see why not. This community is extremely open about its sexuality."

Asha's eyes widened a little, her deep tan skin darkening with red, as if she wasn't sure which she was more embarrassed by, being called out by her mother or backing down in front of her mother. After a moment, though, it was clear the hunger inside of her won out, as she moved Piper's unconscious form to sit up, then laid her back down on the seat behind her, as she started to worm her way between the seats, as Andy slowed the card down, bringing it to a stop at a local streetlight that had turned red.

"You have to kiss him first, Asha," Niko said to her. "Otherwise he's not gonna let ya."

"I haven't said I'm going to let her anyway," Andy said, defensively.

Niko reached over and patted his thigh, a playful smirk on her lips. "Oh, you are, Andy. I know you too well. And I know Asha. She's a voracious little slut when she wants to be. And she's gotten jealous from all the stories I've been telling her when she's been around to visit her mom."

Before he could reply, Asha turned his head and pressed her lips against his hungrily. She tasted of cinnamon and spice, as her tongue insisted on visiting the inside of his mouth before they parted the kiss. "I'm not sure you want to do this *now*, Asha," Andy said. "I just fucked poor Piper back there a little bit ago, and she hasn't bathed in a week. My cock probably smells of dirty pussy."

Asha smirked at him, sliding her hand down to unbutton his jeans. "Then your newest teenage fucktoy had better clean i' off for you, sir," she purred, kissing at his neck. "Eyes on the road, and don't go too fast now."

Andy thought she was kidding, but as the light turned green, she stopped and nodded for him to go, even as she was drawing the zipper down. As soon as he started the Tesla in motion again, Asha's lean fingers reached into his pants, pulling out his cock, stroking it slowly.

"See, if I do this now, then you can't reconsider," she said, her fingers moving along his shaft. "You can't get in your own head about it, you can't be worried if I may be too young, too wild, too out of control, too feral. So I will get i' out of your head by *giving* you the best damn head of your life. It'll be fine." She slipped her head down and wrapped her lips around the tip of his cock, letting her tongue slather over it slowly, as a sultry, wanton moan poured from her throat over his dick.

"No turning back now, hon," Niko purred at him. "She's gotten a taste of you. She's gonna latch down like a leech until you give her what she's owed." Her hand brushed along Asha's ponytail,

pushing her head down a bit more. "She's a Rookie, through and through."

"Oh god," Andy groaned, shaking his head. "You've got a nickname for yourselves. Next thing you'll be unionizing."

"We already have, dear," Niko giggled. "We're Local Amalgamated Cocksuckers, Chapter 69."

Andy rolled his eyes, turning the car at a stop sign, heading into the section of New Eden that housed his mansion. It was growing increasingly hard to focus, as Asha bobbed her head in his lap, pushing and pulling her face along his dick, her tongue lashing over every inch of it as she hummed, her fingernails sinking into his inner thighs.

"Who is it she reminds me, Charlotte?" Niko asked, looking back over her shoulder.

"A lot of people say she looks like a younger version of one of the people who was on Great British Bake-Off."

Niko nodded. "That's who it was. How's it going, Andy? Need me to take the wheel?"

"You, ah... you might have to," he said. "I don't know how long I can keep my head clear."

Asha popped her head off his cock and turned her brown eyes up to look at him. "Then don't, daddy," she moaned at him. "Let me have what I want. Let me have that cum in my belly. Claim me. I wanna feel the best orgasm of my life."

She looked back down and pushed her mouth onto his dick once more, forcing it as deep as she could into her throat, humming on it, and finally he just couldn't resist, and fired a load of cum into her mouth. Her whole body thrashed, but as she pulled her head up and off his cock, she swallowed that load, laying her head down against his thighs, his softening cock laying across her nose, as the girl began to murmur "imprinting" quietly for a few moments before falling still.

Niko helped him ease the car to a stop long enough for him slide Asha back into the back seat once more, two slumped girls braced against one another as Charlotte tried to keep them from falling over too much. Then Andy tucked his cock away, tugged up his jeans and started the vehicle moving forward once more.

"I appreciate you being understanding about this, Andy," Charlotte said to him. "I didn't know how to tell Niko that you weren't my type without risking the chances that you wouldn't try and extract us from Mr. Covington's household."

"Not gonna lie," Niko said. "I don't enjoy being lied to, Charlotte. But I still would've tried to get you out even if you'd told me in advance."

"And I am sorry about that, Niko, but I simply couldn't risk it. You've met Covington. You can only imagine what kinds of depravity he would've subjected myself and my daughter to." Charlotte shivered, the thoughts searing her brain for a moment. "It's extremely unpleasant even to think about it."

The car reached the gate, and Niko pushed the button to open make it open. Unlike many of the other homes in New Eden, Andy couldn't stand the thought of having security on the premises. Even the idea of an automatic gate wasn't pleasant, but it had come with the home, and he'd wanted to avoid kicking up a fuss until he was better settled.

As he brought the car up the driveway, he saw Aisling was sitting on the front porch in her pajamas, a blanket pulled around her, keeping her warm from the cool November air. Andy brought the car to stop by the front door, as Niko hopped out and moved over to Ash, giving her a hug.

"Did the good guys win?" Aisling asked.

Niko nodded, holding Ash in the hug for a long moment before pulling away. "Andy got them out safely. Charlotte's not going to stay with us, though."

"Oh no!" Aisling said. "Why not?"

"She's not into me," Andy said as he hopped out of the car, leaving the door open so Charlotte could slide out, leaving the two unconscious girls in the back seat for the moment. "Had to happen sooner or later," he chuckled, "and frankly, I'm surprised it took this long."

"Her loss then," Aisling giggled, moving over to the car, peering in the back seat at the slumped

forms of Piper and Asha. “Looks like you got two hot young things to add anyway.” She cocked her head to one side, looking at Piper for a second. “Why do I know her?”

“Imagine her doing a little wiggle dance before she goes to play volleyball.”

Ash narrowed her eyes for a second, then those blues widened suddenly as she gasped, bringing her fingertips to her lips. “Shut up! What is even happening!”

Andy popped the trunk and pulled out Charlotte's suitcase, then Asha's, carrying them into the house before coming back out. “I'm gonna need a hand hauling them into the house, though.”

Ash nodded. “Where are we going to put them? In the master bedroom?”

Andy shook his head. “We've got plenty of extra bedrooms upstairs, and Piper was nearly catatonic before I imprinted her, so the last thing I want is her waking up surrounded by tons of unfamiliar people. We'll let her have a bedroom to herself, although I think you should probably give her a shower quick before you put her into a bed.”

Niko nodded, helping Aisling pick Piper up. “Good idea. She really is pretty ripe right now. C'mon Ash, let's go hose her down.” The two women lugged Piper into the house, leaving Andy with Charlotte and Asha.

“If you can give me a hand, you and your daughter can crash for the night in one of the spare bedrooms and in the morning, I'll give Phil a call, and we'll get him over for you to join his family.”

Charlotte leaned in and kissed his cheek. “Thank you, Andy. You and Niko will be good for Asha. Don't judge her too harshly. She's still young and that means she can tend to be reckless. She'll love you with all her heart, but she's going to have moments of sadness about her father, so please be understanding about her mood swings.”

“I'll do my best,” he told her, as the two moved to scoop up Asha. She was light enough and small that Andy was able to carry her on his own.

“That's all anyone can ask.”

After getting Charlotte and Asha squared away in one bedroom, Andy headed in to check on Aisling and Niko, who were sliding Piper into a bed in one of the bedrooms no one was using. When they'd moved into the mansion, Andy had told all the girls that if they wanted to claim one of the bedrooms as their own, they should do so. Ash had insisted she never wanted to sleep anywhere Andy wasn't, and Niko and Lauren had agreed, although Niko had converted one of the bedrooms into an office space that all three of the girls shared. But that still left several bedrooms that were decorated, and Andy checked four of them before he found them, as they pulled the sheets up over Piper's unconscious body.

“Everything go okay?” he asked them, as they headed towards the door.

“Sure, no problem, but she definitely needed to be hosed off,” Niko said. “I'll bring her bag up here so she can get dressed in the morning.”

“Thanks,” Andy said, leaning down to give her a soft kiss. “I'm glad I didn't let you down.”

“You couldn't have, even if you'd lost,” she said, heading towards the stairs.

“So how many more people are we expecting, and did you find a way to get that bitchy ex of yours out of our family?” Aisling said to him, as they both stepped out of the bedroom, closing the door behind them.

“Someone'll be coming by to pick up Erin tomorrow,” Andy said, “and in addition to Sheridan staying here, there'll be another three getting dropped off tomorrow.”

“Oh good,” she said, as they headed down the stairs together. “I like Sheridan. She's feisty, but in a good way. She was showing me how to stretch out and be more limber. Are you going to imprint her tonight?”

Andy shook his head. “God no. Piper was in such a state when we found her that my first load didn't start her imprinting process. It just didn't take first time, so we had to go again.”

Aisling stopped walking. “Wait, what? You mean it didn't take?”

“I mean I came in her mouth and she pushed me onto the floor and crawled on top of me and

fucked me like I hadn't even given her a drop. After I pumped a load into her pussy, though, she slumped on top of me and it seemed to take that time.”

“Well, we can't let the girls go too long before getting imprinted then, if it's going to come to that,” she said, starting to walk again. “Covington's a real prick, isn't he?”

“More than you can even imagine.” Andy rubbed his eyes. “I have to go tell Erin she's leaving in the morning, don't I?”

“It's late, Andy. You can wait until morning, ya git. Hopefully both she and Sheridan are already asleep in the pool house. Lauren's already completely passed out in bed. She's got to go in tomorrow to work with the team. Apparently they're going to try and hold a football game in a month, which means she needs to be sure the players are all in tip top shape.”

They walked down and into the kitchen, where Niko had poured them each a glass of ice water. It was too late for soda or booze, but Niko knew he wanted something to calm his nerves. They also found a note from the staff. “Hope you're not keeping that bitch Erin. She doesn't deserve you. Love, Nicolette, Katie & Jenny.” The three of them had a good laugh over that as they enjoyed their water. Andy made sure to pocket the note. Half an hour later, they were crawling into bed next to Lauren.

When Andy awoke the next morning, Lauren had already left for the day and Niko was up exercising, leaving just Aisling snuggled in against him, Taylor asleep at the foot of the bed. He did his best to try and slip out of bed without waking either of them up, but just as he was laying Ash's arm back down, she stirred. “Oh no, Mr. Rook. No getting up without me.”

“I didn't want to wake you, Ash,” Andy said. “I need to shit, shave and shower, then call Phil to see about him taking in Charlotte. I don't think he'll complain too much. I seem to remember him having a thing for French women.”

“You've also got to tell you ex to bugger off, and tell Sheridan she's welcome to stay, see about getting her imprinted.”

Andy groaned, standing in the doorway to the bathroom. “I swear to you, never once in my life before this year did I think there was such a thing as too much sex. You wanna shower with me?”

She grumbled. “No.” She raised a hand, a single finger pointing upwards. “Yes?” She put her hand down and started to force herself off the bed like she was doing a push-up, then suddenly fell back onto the bed. “No.” Just as Andy was about to turn, she rolled off the bed and onto the floor with a loud thump, then stood up, groggily. “Yes. Let's shower.”

Twenty minutes later, Andy left Aisling drying her hair, having gotten dressed in a large Doctor Who shirt and a pair of very baggy, almost Madchester style jeans. He headed downstairs and out into the back, where he found Niko and Sheridan on the patio by the pool, both in sports bras and leggings, doing yoga together, although Sheridan was far more bendy than Niko was.

“Tell her to stop showing off, Andy!” Niko whined at him, although the smile on her face made it clear she was kidding.

“Sorry about all the chaos yesterday, Sheridan,” Andy said to her as he moved over to stand in front of her. “So, you're welcome to stay here if you want to join the family.”

She smiled at him, balancing on one foot, her other leg perpendicular pointing out, doing some weird combination of the splits and standing like a flamingo. “Of course I want to stay. I chose you, and Niko couldn't shut up about what a great guy you are, so I'm totes all in. You wanna do it now or wait until later?” She had an easy, relaxed grace to her, a sort of Midwestern friendliness mixed with a California hippie laid back vibe. “You've got quite the dance card ahead of you, so I'm good if you need a few days, although Neeks says I'll start to feel a gnarly need chewing at me soon enough.”

Andy looked over at Niko and mouthed “Neeks?” to her, only to see Niko shrug and smile. Then he turned back to Sheridan. “Well, it looks like you've got a pretty clear head right now, so why don't we wait and see how all the others who show up today are, make sure nobody's in a fuck frenzy with their brain unscrewed.”

Sheridan raised one of her blonde eyebrows, her frizzy curly hair mostly bound together in a

bun atop of her head. "That's a real thing?"

Niko couldn't help but giggle. "He got tackled last night. Pinned down to the ground and forced to just take it until he gave it up."

The blonde smirked. "Sick. Sounds hella fun. Can I at least move out of the beach house now? That other chick's on my last damn nerve."

"Don't worry, she'll be heading out before the day's over. You're welcome to move your things into the master bedroom or take one of the empty bedrooms as your own," he said. "The girls converted one into their studio, and I made one into my own little office, but that leaves ten others to choose from, although I did put Piper in one, so maybe nine."

"Seven, actually," Niko said to him as she finally stopped stretching and moved over to get closer to the two of them. "Piper and Charlotte are in one, and Lauren decided it wasn't fair of her to always be waking you up every morning, so she and Taylor are going to take one of the other bedrooms on nights you don't want them in bed."

"God that sounds cold," Andy grumbled. "I hope they don't think that..."

Niko shook her head. "Get out of your own head about it, Andy. They know you're only human and you've only got so much cum to go around, so nobody's mad, nobody's jealous. They're just thinking practically. Besides, I got the impression that after Taylor's punishment is over, Lauren's gonna run her pretty ragged for a while, if you know what I mean. Some lady lovin' to get caught up on."

"Who's Taylor?" Sheridan asked, finally lowering her leg, standing back on two feet.

"Another one of my partners," Andy said, "but she used to be Lauren's ex, and apparently she cheated on Lauren, which led to them breaking up. All of that happened before the pandemic. But Taylor wanted to get back with Lauren, so she pushed to get assigned to my household once she got vaccinated. Lauren agreed, but decided as punishment, she was going to make Taylor the house bitch for a month."

Sheridan cocked her head as she started to towel off. "What's *that* mean?"

"It means she's walking around the house naked except for a collar on her hands and knees for the month, eating her food out of a bowl, sleeping at the foot of beds."

The blonde giggled a little. "Remind me not to piss Lauren off then." She tossed the towel around her neck. "Yeah, I'll take my own bedroom then, but I'm definitely going to want to sleep in the middle of the fuck pile every now and again. That sounds hella fun. Ash and Neeks are both dope, so I can't wait to sleep with endless arms and legs just folded over me."

"Any time you want," Andy said with a nod. He stepped in close, leaned down and gave her a soft kiss, tender and welcoming. "You've got until you're imprinted if you want to change your mind, but after that, you're stuck with me."

Sheridan wiggled a finger in his direction. "No no, *you're* stuck with *me*, but Neeks can tell you, I'm hella worth the hassle."

"Why do you think you're a hassle?"

"Oh, because I love surprise sex," she said, rolling up her yoga mat with a playful grin. "One minute, you're gonna be focused on watching television, or writing your next novel, or eating dinner, and then suddenly... BAM! You're gonna be hilt deep in my cunt, and you won't even see it coming. That's when I'm really having fun." She tossed a wink his way and then moved over to grab her suitcase, heading into the main house.

"You want me to come with you to deal with the harpy?" Niko said, toweling herself off. "I imagine she's going to be quite the shrieker."

"Only one way to find out."

The two headed into the pool house to find Erin sitting on a couch, watching television, although the look on her face seemed to imply that she wasn't paying much attention to it, more using it as a distraction to keep her mind busy. As they walked over towards the couch, she turned off the television and sighed. "Am I really so awful, Andrew?"

“Look, Erin,” Andy said. “You don't want me. You never wanted me. You had this ideal life planned in your head before you met me, and every time I did something that didn't fit into your predetermined plan for me, you got angry and yelled at me. And you were *always* yelling at me.”

“Because you could be doing so much better for yourself, Andrew, don't you see that?”

“Erin. Look. Look. I'm happy with my life the way it is. I've gotten very lucky in all of this, getting partnered up with amazing, extraordinary women who love me for me, for who I am and how I behave, not how they think I should behave. Sometimes I'm in charge and sometimes they are, but not once have they ever told me to quit writing. Not once have they ever told me that I shouldn't do what I want with my life. Not once have they ever lied to me and expected me to just mystically know they were lying and to call them on it.”

“Andrew, listen...”

“No, Erin, you listen. You want something else. You want *someone* else. In less than a day here, you've managed to piss off Aisling, Lauren and Niko, as well as the staff, all of whom I like a whole hell of a lot better than you.”

“They're just the hired help, Andy. Their opinions don't matter.”

He snapped his fingers, pointing at it. “That, right there, that's it in a nutshell. You think you're better than everybody else, and I can't fucking stand that. I come from blue collar roots too, Erin, and when I found out this home came with a staff, I was so upset about it, because I didn't want anyone having to scrape and grovel on my behalf. I don't need any fucking toadies in my life, whereas you want everyone to toady up to you. The staff likes being submissive to me, and I'm *still* trying to wrap my head around that, but that doesn't mean I'm going to treat them like they're subhuman. So I went out of my way to make sure they're completely happy here, that they're getting what they want out of this and not what they don't. You, on the other hand. Since you've gotten here, have you given one thought to anyone's happiness except your own?”

“Other people's happiness isn't my concern, Andrew.”

“See, that's exactly why nobody likes you, bitch,” Niko said to her. “You can't even put Andy's happiness over yours! You just assumed that he was going to do whatever you told him to.”

“Niko,” he said with a soft smile, “I got this.” He turned his attention back to Erin. “You are not going to be a part of this family. You are not welcome in this house until you've gotten yourself partnered up with someone else, which shouldn't be a problem, because someone's going to be picking you up today, and you're going to be partnered with them.”

“You are *not* just shoving me aside like some cheap floozy, Andrew, because you can't handle a strong woman!”

Andy laughed. “Oh, I can handle a strong woman. I've got a whole houseful of them. What I can't handle is someone who puts their own happiness over the happiness of the household. That isn't going to fly here. And besides, you're going to be much happier with this other guy.”

“I will have what I *want*, Andrew, and I want *you*.”

“No, Erin. You don't. You want wealth. You want power. You want status. That's why I know you're going to be much happier with the other guy.” This was probably how Andrew should've started the conversation off, but he'd wanted Erin to stew a bit in her self-pity before giving her the carrot. “You're going to be partnered up with Nathaniel Watkins.”

At that, her ears perked up, and her facial expression changed in a moment. “Sir Nathaniel Watkins? The billionaire tech investor?”

“The one and the same. I saw him last night, and we arranged to make an exchange of sorts, and you will be joining his household, and someone whom he'd been paired up with will be joining mine instead. He should be here sometime today to make the exchange.”

Erin looked down at her hands, considering her expensively manicured nails, before looking up at him. “I really don't make you happy, Andrew? Did I ever?” For a moment, she actually looked fragile, as if the thought of leaving him genuinely hurt her. Andy suspected it was more her being

bothered at failed at something, at her inability to just demand that things go her way and then them falling into place. Erin had never been good at taking no from anyone or anything.

“Erin, you and I want completely different things in life. Neither of us knew that about each other when we first hooked up, but the longer we were together, the more miserable I became. I was happy. At first. Briefly. But that was fleeting, as we both dropped our masks and stopped pretending we were people other than who we really were.” He sighed, reaching over, patting his hand atop of hers. “And you genuinely didn't like my writing. That's a dealbreaker. That was always going to be a dealbreaker.”

She sniffed a little, trying to stifle back a tear. “I'm sorry, Andrew, I just don't like fantasy.”

“And that's fine, Erin. It really is. But it's why we were never going to work. C'mon, get your things together, and we can go wait out front of Mr. Watkins to arrive.”

“I suppose there are worse things in life than being married to someone on the Forbes Top 100 Wealthiest Individuals list,” she said, as she slid her hands out from under his and started to gather up her things.

Fifteen minutes later, the three of them had been joined by Aisling on the front porch, where they waited for the cars to show up. The first vehicle to arrive was an oversized yellow H3 Humvee, driving up the driveway like a tank. Andy didn't know what anyone drove, so he wasn't sure exactly who it was until the vehicle got close enough for him to read the plates. BIGVIK. Ah, Vikovic had arrived first, but he still didn't know who the man was ferrying to his house. Other than Charlotte and her daughter, Andy didn't know who had been originally assigned to whom.

The vehicle stopped in front of the house, and Andy rose from the little couch he'd been sitting in with Niko and Ash, as the driver's side door opened, and Gregor Vikovic stepped out. “This was hardest loss of my life, Rook,” he said, “but I suppose this may have worked out for best. She would've been so unhappy if she'd found out you were here and not with her. Apparently she's a fan of yours.” Vikovic walked around the vehicle and opened the passenger door, and Sarah Washington practically bolted out of the car at him.

She was even more lovely in person, almost half a foot taller than he was, her red locks partially braided and wrapped around her head, the rest hanging over her shoulders. She had a girl next door vibe to her, although he'd always imagined her height must have driven more skittish guys away. She had a loose button up green blouse on, as well as a flowing billowy jade skirt, deep blue eyes intently focused on him, as she charged at him, wrapping her arms around Andy, sliding one hand along the back of his head and she pressed her lips against his in a warm, affectionate kiss.

It was quite difficult than how any of the other girls had kissed him on their first time. With each of them, he'd felt lust, hunger, a sort of uncontrollable wanton need burning in the kiss, but here, this was... he couldn't place his finger on it, but it was almost like his first kiss back in high school, that moment when he'd wanted to confess to Samantha Davis his eternal love for her. That was it, he realized. This wasn't a kiss of lust. This was one of love. The realization surprised the hell out of him.

“Oh my god, you're totally, really you,” she said as she broke the kiss.

“Of *course* it's her,” Erin groaned, rolling her green eyes.

“I am... absolutely me,” Andy said, intending to say more, but Sarah kissed him again, her body pressed against his, her arms holding him close, like she was afraid he might slip out of her grasp if she gave him even an inch. When the kiss finally broke, she leaned down to bury her face in his neck, holding onto him for dear life, even as he could feel she was crying. “Are you okay?”

“I am never going to be more fucking okay than I am right here, right now,” she said, sniffing a little bit. “Can you just hold me for a bit? So I know this is real and not some sort of fucked up fever dream from the vaccine?”

“Sure?” Andy said.

Vikovic had unloaded four large suitcases from the back of the hummer, setting them on the porch, before he reached forward and peeled one of Andy's hands off Sarah's back, so he could shake it.

"I will not repeat this, Andrew, but it felt damn good watching someone kick Covington in the teeth for once. Dasvidanya, comrade."

With that Gregor got back into the humvee, starting to head back down the driveway as a stretch limo began to drive up it.

It was at least a minute before Andy got the nerve up to speak again. "You want to tell me what's going on?" he said to Sarah.

She giggled girlishly, shaking her head a bit, her face not leaving its spot, buried in his neck. "Nope. Not fucking yet. Too fucking happy."

"Well, you're happy, so that's a good start at least," Andy said.

"Are you gonna tell her?" Niko asked.

"Hush up, Niko," he scolded with a grin.

The limo pulled up to rest in front of the house, and the limo driver hopped out, moving around the vehicle, heading towards the back. Andy sort of suspected who this way, but as soon the back door opened, his suspicions were confirmed and Sir Nathaniel Watkins stepped out of the back.

"Hey, Andy," Watkins said. "I'm here to honor our deal."

"Yummy," Erin said quietly, although not so quiet that Andy couldn't hear her, even with Sarah still pressed up against his body.

"Omigod, Sares?!" the voice of Emily Stevens said as she hopped out of the limo, rushing over towards them.

That was the point when Sarah let go of him, turning around, catching Emily's tiny British form in her arms, lifting her up, spinning her around. "Omigod, Ems!" she said, suddenly hugging her tightly. "I'm totally dead, aren't I? Life is never this fucking good to me. It always goes to shit somehow. Are you really real, bitch?"

Emily giggled, infectious and warm, her voice posh within an inch of its life. "I am absolutely here for all of it, Sares!" She gasped, and then began to giggle even more. "No way!" There was something about a posh English accent and the way it sounded saying a long O sound that sent delicious chills up Andy's spine.

She'd just turned thirty less than a few months ago, but still had a very vibrant youthful exuberance to her. He knew there were angry, jealous men all across the world hating him right now who had grown up watching Emily Stevens grow up on film. She had begun starring in movies just barely in her teens where she'd played the book-smart love interest of the protagonist of a series of sci-fi bounty hunting school movies called "The Dagger Academy." After those, she'd gone on to try a number of various arthouse roles, trying to shake being forever associated with the role of Dahlia Hairtrigger, but she hadn't had the best of luck.

"Are you serious, Sares?" she said, while the large redhead continued to bearhug her. "We're together forever? And we're really going to get paired up with your Mister Big?"

"Mister Big?" Andy said, his eyebrows raising high.

"Oh, hasn't she told you yet?" Emily giggled, that laugh forcing him to smile, no matter how much he felt off guard. "You're at the top of her List."

"List?"

Sarah put Emily down and turned to look at him, her face having gone nearly as red as her hair. "Gosh, fuck me, how do I even say this?" she said, looking down at her feet suddenly, as if trying to look at him while talking was making it even more complicated. "Em, can you tell him? I'm fucking scared now, that it's gonna freak him out or some shit."

Emily's deep blue eyes twinkled. She was wearing a big blue DKNY t-shirt over a pair of capri pants, a bright diamond bracelet on one wrist, a silver teardrop pendant hanging down from her neck. Her skin was pale like alabaster, her blonde hair hanging just past her shoulders in wavy blonde curls, her lips bright red with freshly put on lipstick. "I'll tell him, but we're fine, Sares, we're fine we're fine we're fine we're *fine*. Trust me on this! Em knows best." Emily squeezed Sarah's hand in her own,

walking back over to Andy, almost leading Sarah along behind her, like she was a naughty child with her hand caught in the cookie jar. “Most people have a hall pass list, you know,” she said, her voice again doing that thing with the O sound that sent goosebumps along his skin. “It's supposed to be a list of people you can fuck at any time, and your partner just gives it a wave.” She had a coy smile on her face, as she brought Sarah back within reach of Andy. “Well, you are the top person on Sarah's list, Andy Rook, or should I say, Mr. Blake Conrad?”

“You're... you're a fan of my writing?” Andy said, almost unable to bring himself to force the words from his mouth. “*MY* writing? The Druid Gunslinger books?”

“Tell him about OmegaCon, Sares,” Emily said, nudging the much taller girl in the ribs. Emily was nearly a foot shorter than Sarah, and while both were fit, Emily was slender like a ballerina, while Sarah almost seemed more like an Amazon warrior. There were rumors that Sarah had been in consideration for the Wonder Woman role, but that her tendency to swear and be adorably awkward at press junkets had kept her out of the role. “If you won't tell him, I will,” she teased.

“Oh fuckbeans, you totally would, wouldn't you, bitch?” Sarah hissed, closing her eyes, wringing her hands together. “So I was totally at your fucking panel at OmegaCon last year, in September.”

“I highly doubt that,” Andy said. “I can't imagine an actress like you wouldn't have turned every head in the room the minute she walked in. I would've definitely remembered.”

“I was...” she mumbled before Emily prodded her again, a wide impish grin on Emily's adorable English face. “I was in costume, okay? Ems and I wanted to be able to just walk around the convention like normal people, so we were cosplaying so nobody would recognize us. I was in a Chewbacca costume, and I got up in the Q&A line and asked you if you ever imagined actors when you were writing your fiction.”

“No!” Andy said, gasping suddenly.

“See, I told you he'd fucking hate me, Ems?” Sarah said, looking like she was about to cry. “And you said you totally imagined actors for every fucking character you'd ever written, like casting them and everything or whatever. And then you said...”

“I said I'd always sort of seen Christian Kane playing the Gunslinger himself.”

She nodded. “Do you remember what else you said?”

Andy tilted his head, struggling to remember whatever else he might have said, but he'd done half a dozen conventions last year, and many of the Q&A sessions blended together. “I don't. Oh god, I'm so sorry, what did I say?”

“You said that you'd imagined Olivia Munn playing Doctor Erika Shirow and... and Sarah Washington, I mean, *me*, playing Layla Heartseye, the Elven barbarian queen,” Sarah said.

“We spent three days at the convention in costume, but had to leave early right after your panel finished,” Emily said, “because she took me back to our hotel room after that and masturbated for nearly an entire hour, thinking about you saying that. She still has the video of you answering her question on her phone. I was recording your answer for her. I was dressed as Greedo, by the by.” Emily pulled Sarah in even closer. “She's been trying to get her agent and your agent to set up a meeting for a year now, so she could talk to you about the book rights, and if she could play Layla Heartseye, but I've always thought she was really just doing it so she could get into your pants.”

“One of us definitely needs to fire our agent then,” he muttered. “No way in hell I'd have turned down that meeting.”

“Wait, are you two... together?” Aisling said, pointing at the two actresses.

“We are,” Emily said, beaming proudly, “but we both enjoy more than a bit of cock as well, so we're known to dally outside of each other.”

“I thought you were with that director,” Andy said to Sarah. “Dennis Jacobson.”

“That was totally over fucking years ago,” Sarah said, still unable to lift her head up, her eyes fixated on Andy's feet.

“And I thought you were with that soccer player,” Andy said to Emily. “Georgie Stewart.”

Emily waved her hand in the air at him, her smile unwavering in its million watt intensity. “That was done with long ago. I did go on a couple of dates with Jeff DeHavelin last year, but it turns out, he is utterly prudish, and that I simply cannot abide by. He doesn't even go down on partners! How do people like that even live today? But now we're going to be with you for the rest of our lives, so that doesn't matter!” She clapped her hands together excitedly, as the limo driver set the last of Emily's four suitcases on the porch. “I, for one, couldn't be more excited! How about you, Mr. Rook? Or may I call you Andy?”

Aisling was struggling not to erupt into a fit of giggles, but it was getting harder and harder for her to contain it all in, as she was mostly just shaking, threatening to burst out before she finally forced the words out of his mouth. “Tell her, Andy!” The words were a struggle, the laughter seeping into all of them. “You've gotta fucking tell her.”

Andy sighed, realizing there wasn't anything that could embarrass him at this point. “Sarah,” he said, smoothing his fingertip along her chin, forcing her to tilt her head up and look at him. “You're number one on *my* list.”

“No fucking way. You're fucking making fun of me, aren't you?” Sarah, her blue eyes welled up with tears, as if she'd thought Andy was actually going to send her away.

He leaned in and kissed her, trying to put as much emotion into it as she had when she'd kissed him earlier. “Number. One. With a bullet. Sarah. Washington.”

“He's not kidding,” Erin groaned. “Ever since he saw you twelve years ago in that movie where you were a quirky airline co-pilot. I'm his ex-girlfriend. Believe me, I know. He watched that movie like a dozen times in the theater.”

“You saw 'Airway Mishaps'?” she whispered, wrapping her arms around him again, but still extremely shy. “That's super fucked up. Nobody fucking saw that movie.”

“You got nominated for an Oscar for it, Sares,” Emily said, smoothing one of her hands along Sarah's back.. “That means tens, maybe even *hundreds* of people saw it.” Niko giggled a little at Emily's teasing. “And I'm sure he's too old to be a fan of the Dagger Academy movies, so I'll just have to make him fall for me the old fashioned way.”

Niko cleared her throat, devilish amusement on her face, and Andy glared over his shoulder at her. Oh, how he wanted to bend her over his knee right now and paddle her ass red.

“Omigod, I'm on your list too?” Emily said, giggling all over, blushing herself this time. “I had no idea! I assumed you were far too old to grow up with the Dagger Academy films.”

“He fell for you in 'The Last Graverobber,' where you played that heiress,” Aisling said. “Although he did eventually watch the Dagger Academy movies after that. He'd never seen them before last Christmas, although we rewatched them together a few months ago. He said it was still a little strange seeing you so young in the first one. So while he didn't grow up on them, he's familiar with your work. You're number three on his list.”

“Who's number two?” Emily said, putting her hands on her hips in mock annoyance.

“Alice Karteaux,” Andy said. “I mean, after 'Winding Bullets,' anyone who isn't aroused by her isn't anyone I want to know.”

“Oh, that's totally fine,” Sarah said, her hands starting to slide along Andy's back. “She's on Emily's list as well, so the slut can't say shit about you wanting to bang her.”

“Well, you're not on *my* list, Andy,” Emily said, “but that doesn't mean I'm not going to fuck your brains out, all the while having my best girl by my side. So let's get to it.”

“What, now?” Andy said.

“I'm not sure she's going to let go of you until you do, babe,” Emily said, taking one of his hands in hers. “She's read every book you've written a dozen bloody times. She even found that silly porn story you wrote on the internet under a pen name earlier this year.”

“You read that? You *found* that?”

Sarah nodded, finally getting her tears under control. "I recognized the sentence structure."

"My... sentence structure?"

"It's a very distinct sentence structure," she giggled. "Plus, like, there's a fuckton of swearing, and you have that in all your writing."

"Not *that* much," he laughed.

"Oh shut the fuck up already," Sarah said, smiling against his neck. "Take the win."

"Okay, look, why don't you two go upstairs and get settled in the master bedroom, and I'll be up in just a little bit, and we can see about getting you two imprinted, since you both seem to want that," Andy said. "I apparently need to talk to Mr. Watkins briefly, so head up and I'll be along in just a few."

"Okay," Emily said, trying to pull Sarah from her grasp on Andy. "C'mon, Sares, let's go upstairs."

"Can I kiss him one more time before we go?"

"It's going to be just a few minutes, babes."

"Please?"

Emily rolled her eyes, smiling. "Fine. One more kiss."

Sarah locked lips with him once more, and Andy could feel her nipples hard as rocks pressed against his collarbone through the blouse. Eventually she pulled back and away from him, although her arms were the last thing to release him. "Don't keep us waiting long, okay?" she said to him. "You owe us at least two good fuckings. One good fucking for me, and one good fucking for her. Because we are not getting out of that bed until we get fuh-uh-uh-uh-ucked. Got it?"

Emily started pushing her into the house, rolling her light blue eyes. "He's got it, Sares, now let's goooooo." She was about to head into the house, then turned back, darted over to Andy, threw her arm around his neck and kissed him fiercely, grinding her hips against him before she pulled back, giving him a saucy little wink, slapping his ass on the way back. "I couldn't bear the thought that you might've thought that I didn't want this just as much as she does. Don't dilly dally or we'll start without you." She gave him a playful little wave and then skipped into the house.

Andy turned to glance over at Aisling and Niko, who were gossiping between themselves.

"They're gonna be so much fun, aren't they?" Ash said to Niko.

"I didn't talk that much to Sarah, but I've spent quite a bit of time chatting with Emily, and she is a hoot," Niko said. "I kinda love her."

"Oh, I'm sure you'll get your chance."

Andy turned to see Watkins standing at the bottom of the stairs, so he walked down to meet him, even as he saw Watkins' limo driver loading Erin's bag into the limo. Erin had apparently gotten into the limo at some point while he'd been talking with Emily and Sarah. "Careful with that one," Andy said, his voice quiet enough that the conversation was just between the two of them. "I'm not saying she's a gold digger but..."

"But she ain't messin' with no broke," Watkins said, laughing a little bit. "I hear you. I think she'll be alright, though. She'll have her own little staff to boss around. Maybe having her own private fiefdom will tamp down her more destructive urges."

"For your sake I hope so."

"So, we have one more matter to discuss I'm afraid, Andrew." Watkins sighed, shaking his head a little. "I'm afraid I can't bring you Deborah Barnes, and for that I'm truly sorry. My son, it seems, imprinted her while I was at the poker game. I can't tell you how furious I am with him."

"Hey, it's okay, Nathaniel," Andy said, almost a touch relieved. "This is already a lot of women to keep track of, so I'm not angry about having one less."

Watkins shook his head. "Except that I can't let my son go unpunished for this kind of transgression. If the damn kid doesn't learn that he can't go around doing whatever he wants, that's exactly what he's going to do, so what I'm going to do is have him bring the next woman assigned to him over here and have him give her to you."

“Nathaniel,” Andy tried to interrupt, “that’s really not—”

“It absolutely is, Andrew. He’s nearly eighteen, and if he doesn’t learn now, then when?” It was clear Watkins was violently unhappy with his son over all of this. “His refusal to follow agreements doesn’t just reflect on him; it, more importantly, reflects upon me, and once the other men in this community find out, if I haven’t come down hard on the boy, they’re going to think I’m soft. I cannot abide that.”

“How would they even know?”

“Because! Because, Andrew!” Watkins said, throwing his hands up into the air. “Because he likes to strut around town like he earned my wealth, not me! All it would take it for one of our little poker friends to see Deborah with him and they’ll know something is amiss and the gossip will start. I’m going to get ahead of this, and will tell our fellow players all about it before they find out inadvertently. Later this week, my son is going to be delivered a girl he has been lusted after for nearly a year now, and then he’s going to have to immediately march her over here and present her to you, as means of apology.”

Andy sighed, trying to figure out what to say next and failing a few times before finally deciding to stop resisting. It was clear Watkins mind was made up. “Is the lady going to be okay with this? I’m sure she’d much rather have a teenage boy instead of, well, me.”

“She’ll probably be relieved, if I’m honest, Andrew,” Watkins said, lowering his voice a bit. “She was Benny’s AP Trigonometry tutor last year, and has been helping him with remote tutoring this year for AP Calculus. She was supposed to be a freshman at Stanford this year, but what with the campus closed down, they haven’t started classes up, so she’ll be going next year when they reopen. I think my son may have hit on her a few times, but she’d declined his advances, so you taking her in is in her best interests, as well as yours and mine. I suppose the people on the base thought they were doing me a favor by assigning her to my son, knowing his lusts for her. They weren’t, and hopefully this will discourage them from helping my son any in an attempt to broker favor with me. My son will have something both for you and for her with him as well when they show up Friday, on the 6th.”

“Okay, well, if she doesn’t want to be with him, we can see if she wants to be with me instead.”

“She will, Andrew,” Watkins said, a hint of amusement in his voice. “She likes older men. She hit on me once during *The Before Times*, but back then I believed I was a one woman kind of man, and I didn’t want to hurt my son’s feelings. She is... quite beautiful, and obviously very smart. She likes intelligent, strong willed, dependable men. She might be initially fooled, as I was, by the appearance of meekness you can give off on first impression, but I’ll tell her in the car ride over that you’re not a man to be underestimated. Covington’s made that mistake. I have as well. I won’t let my son do the same.” He tilted his head to one side. “I suppose it would be too much of me to ask for you to make him ... watch as you imprinted her?”

“God yes! Nathan! Jesus, how can you even suggest such a thing?”

Watkins sniffed, clearly disappointed. “Fine, fine. Then I insist you open and read the envelopes that Benny, that’s my son’s name, will be bringing with him when he shows up on Friday. Make sure he stands there as you tell him exactly what’s in them.”

“What **is** in them?”

“A little bit more punishment for him, and a little more compensation for you,” he said. “I won’t let you refuse me this, so you’ll just have to abide by it, but once you accept the envelopes and Hannah, that’s the girl’s name, once you accept all of that, I will consider the boy’s debt paid in full. I’m sure he’s going to bitch and moan about it, but the little brat is lucky I didn’t just throw him out on his ear, out of both the family and New Eden. But he is my only son. Maybe I’ve simply been too lenient in the past, and it is time for him to get the stick instead of the carrot.”

“Family’s a bitch,” Andy said.

“Indeed it can be.”

“Nate, I want to leave!” Erin said, poking her head out of the back of the limo. “Can we go

now?"

"I've made a horrible mistake bringing her into my house, haven't I?" Watkins said, giving Andy a pained smile.

"Give her her own wing of your mansion and some staff to boss around, like you said you were going to, and you'll probably be fine," Andy said, shaking the man's hand. "Just don't let her think she's in charge of the rest of your wives. Give her an inch and she'll take every mile she can."

"You're too good for this place, Andrew," Watkins said, returning the shake. "May this nest of vipers never break your noble spirit."

"You say that," Andy laughed, "but I've got to go upstairs and fuck two people off People Magazine's Top 100 Most Beautiful People list at the same time after we're done here, so if this is a nest of vipers, I gotta tell you, they spared *no* expense on the gilding."

Watkins laughed with him, heading towards the limo. "I'll see you on Friday, then. I'll bring Benny and Hannah over myself, just to make sure he doesn't try and screw this up too."

"They never would've worked together anyway," Andy said, as Watkins stopped at the limo and looked back. "Benny and Hannah? People would've been making horrible Japanese steakhouse jokes at their expense non-stop their entire lives."

"God, you're right," Watkin said, a wide smile on his face. "I can't believe I didn't even think of it before now." He started to get into the back of the limo, sitting down next to Erin, shaking his head. "Benihana's. Fuck *me*." And then he closed the door and the limo drove off.

That left Andy with Niko and Aisling, who had been watching the whole time.

"I live the weirdest life on the planet," Andy said to them, walking back up the stairs. It looked like each of the girls had taken one suitcase with them, but left three more each on the patio. "Guess I'd better haul these in."

He started to move towards the suitcases, but Aisling had stood up already and stepped in between him and them. "Nah, we got it, Starfucker," she said, pushing him by the chest. "You've gotta go lock in those two beauties before they run off."

"Yeah," Niko said, moving to stand next to Aisling, blocking Andy's path to the suitcases, leaving only the door inside the mansion as his exit. "I wanna a turn in the sack with Emily, but you need to make her part of the family first."

"Someone's got a crush, I think," Ash said, nudging Niko in the ribs.

"Are you kidding?" Niko said. "Seeing her in that fourth Dagger Academy movie, 'Castle of Galaxies,' when she was in that evening gown for the school ball..." She shook her head, a little embarrassed smile on her face. "Well, that's when I realized I was bi."

"Maybe if you ask her really nicely, she'll wear the gown for you, love," Ash said to Niko, who visibly shuddered with excitement, playing out the moment in her head.

"Go on, go!" Niko said to him. "We'll crash in another room for the night if we have to, so you damn well better not come out of that room until both of those girls are imprinted, or I will beat the living shit out of you."

"Yes ma'am, 2nd Lieutenant Red Wolf," Andy said, mocking a salute, which made her smack him on the shoulder. "God, I hope I don't get performance anxiety."

"You're not the third guy in 'History Of The World Part I,' Andy," Niko said.

"He is a eunuch," Aisling said, acting out the bit.

"*He* is a eunuch," Niko said, continuing it.

"He is *DEAD*," the two girls said together, collapsing into a fit of giggles.

"Now go in there and give those two beauties the best fucking orgasms of their lives," Aisling said, grabbing one of his belt loops on his jeans, yanking him towards the doorway.

"How did I ever get so lucky?" he said, kissing Niko, then Aisling.

"By being the best damn man any of us have ever met," Niko said, rubbing the back of his neck.

"I love hearing you say that. I'm sure it's not true, but thanks."

“It is,” Ash said, “but we're not gonna stand here all night stroking your ego. If you don't go upstairs and fuck those two lucky bitches senseless right now, I'm going to have Niko kick your ass.”

“Okay! Okay!” Andy laughed. “I'm going, I'm going!”

He hadn't been entirely joking about the possibility of having trouble getting it up, not because he didn't want to, but because he still considered himself way below their league. Each step through the hallway, up the stairs and down the other hallway were slightly plagued with nervousness. But all that of that was dropping away with each step, as he remembered that kiss from Sarah, how intense and inviting it had been, and that minx-like smile of Emily's, toying and yet also welcoming, maybe even laced with a hint of thankfulness.

A few hours ago, he'd been terrified that he'd end up striking an adversarial relationship with these two supremely talented actresses, and now he was worried that he'd not live up to their expectations. Their expectations. Of *him*.

The life he lived was not meant to be believed.

As he got to the door to the bedroom, he cocked his head, finding the door closed, something rather uncommon in the house. He'd never felt the need to close the master bedroom door before now, so he thought this might even be the first time he'd seen the door actually closed.

He was about to knock on the door, his hand raised, about to rap his knuckles on the wood, when he looked at his own hand quizzically. “The hell am I doing?” he muttered to himself and then moved to open the door.

There, on the bed, were Sarah and Emily. They were locked in a kiss, Emily sitting on Sarah's lap, the tiny girl's hands tugging ever so slightly on the unbraided portion of Sarah's red locks, their lips pressed together heatedly, making out as though they hadn't even heard him enter.

They'd also changed clothes since he'd seen them just a little bit ago. Both girls were dressed in white Oxford button up shirts, violet and purple neckties loose but still hanging around their necks, black skirts that hung down to the middle of their thighs, black thigh high stockings with violet and purple trim at the top of them clinging to their legs. They looked a little like British private school uniforms, but Andy knew that specific color code of trims. They were Dagger Academy uniforms.

The Dagger Academy movies had been oddly huge successes, following five different students growing up through several years of a bounty hunter college, set in a land “across the stars.” The first one had been expected to do alright, but the five lead actors, one of which was Emily, had all been so winningly charming, that audiences had looked past the sometimes clunky special effects and fallen in love with the story.

From the time she was thirteen until she was twenty-three, Emily had starred in six Dagger Academy movies, and all said and done, they'd grossed over a billion dollars. He was more than a little surprised she was wearing the school outfit from it now. He'd figured she'd never want to even think about those films again, considering how much of her life they had eaten up.

“Oh, Professor Rook,” Emily said, looking over her shoulder at him, still grinding a little bit against Sarah. “Miss Heartseye and I seem to have been bitten by a... what was it?” She nudged Sarah.

Sarah giggled a little, licking her lips, her blue eyes fixated on him like she wanted to eat him alive. “By a roxtreaux beast,” she purred. “It's so fucking hard to think straight right now, Professor.”

Andy's eyes widened a little bit. She hadn't been kidding. She actually *had* found that story he'd written early on in the pandemic, months before even Aisling had come into his life.

After about two months of quarantine, Andy had gotten frustrated with trying to work on another Druid Gunslinger novel, and had decided what the hell, to write a bit of porn fanfic, just to flex his writing skills, something to take his mind off of the whole lockdown. He'd written a bit of fanfic set in the Dagger Academy series, sometime after the last movie, when Dahlia Hairtrigger's boyfriend had died heroically saving the galaxy, leaving her to go her last year at the Dagger Academy alone.

He'd introduced a new friend to Dahlia, a woman named Raven Doomeye, but he'd clearly described the character very much like how Sarah actually looked. In the fanfic, the two bounty hunter

students had been out on a wild hunt after a target, who'd sicced a herd of wild roxtreaux on them. The roxtreaux, as he'd written it, disarmed their prey by injecting them with an aphrodisiac venom that fogged their minds with lust. It had mostly been an excuse to write a bit of porn using a handful of his favorite actresses, starting off as a lesbian scene between Hairtrigger and Doomeye until a member of the school faculty, Professor Deathwhisper, came to save them. Deathwhisper was an invented character as well, and he'd modeled her after Alice Karteaux. He'd thought about introducing a male proxy for himself in the story, but decided just to let it lie as it did, posting it to some random corner of the internet under some silly name he'd made up. He'd never expected anyone to actually read it.

It seemed like both Emily and Sarah had read it, but read that story very well, because they had the details down to a tee, even going to far as to have Emily's shirt with a jagged rip just above her waist on one side, a rip in Sarah's left stocking just above the ankle, both the places where the roxtreaux had bitten them in the story. Emily turned on Sarah's lap, her back to her girlfriend's chest, rolling her hips in his direction, that skirt still concealing most of her legs from him. "You have to help us, Professor," Emily whimpered. "I don't want to die here on this desolate rock, before I've even finished school." She raked her nails along the back of Sarah's neck, her other hand smoothing along one of her own thighs, tugging a little on that skirt, as if she was torn between trying to pull it down or up. "But I feel so very strange, like parts of my body are on fire. My naughty parts especially."

"Well, Miss Hairtrigger, the only antidote to roxtreaux venom is to ride it out," Andy said, stepping into the room, closing the door behind him. He tried to affect a British accent, but immediately abandoned it, deciding just to stick to his own voice. "Vigorous exercise will help, as it encourages the body to fight off the neurotoxins."

Emily nodded, her face a contorted mix of fear and lust. "Just tell us what to do and we'll do it, Professor. Whatever it is! You're our only hope."

"Just remain there for the moment, and I'll begin administering some treatment," he said, moving to the edge of the bed, sliding down onto his knees, as he made sure both Sarah and Emily had their legs spread, his hands slowly pushing up Emily's skirt, revealing that alabaster flesh of her thighs before exposing that she hadn't put on panties, a small brownish triangle of curls atop her dripping wet pussy. A lesser man might've thought Emily dyed her blonde locks, but Andy knew better, himself a blonde (when he wasn't shaving his head, which was almost never these days) with brown pubic hair. "Remember, whatever you feel, it's perfectly natural," he said, as he lowered his lips down to flick his tongue along her snatch.

"Oh. OH. OH my!" she groaned, her hips pushing up towards his face, as he sunk two fingers inside of her cunt, his tongue continuing to draw shapes along her clit. "Fuck, Professor! You're... quite the cunning linguist!"

Andy almost wanted to groan at the pun, but decided instead to focus on the work in front of him. When Emily had said her last boyfriend hadn't gone down on her, Andy had almost taken offense to that, and decided it was going to be the first thing he did with her. He could feel her body squirming and writhing against his face, her hands moving to hold onto his head. Her whole body erupted in a quick spasm when he dragged the soft hairs of his goatee across her clit, her thighs clamping on his ears for a moment. She kept him pinned there for several seconds before she relaxed a little bit, whimpering in tiny little chipmunk squeaks. "Fuck, sir, that was amazing," her British tinged voice purred at him. "I've never cum so quick before. You're *very* good at that..."

He looked up from between her thighs, noticing that somewhere in the middle of it, Sarah had unbuttoned Emily's shirt, opening it, although the tie still remained dangling around her neck, resting between her small, pert tits. Emily brought a hand up, folding an arm across her chest, a touch self consciously.

"They aren't as large as they should be, sir, I know," she said, looking down. He couldn't tell if she was still playing a part, or was genuine nervous about how he might look at her body. He wanted to put that to rest as quickly as possible. Andy stood up, moving in closer, lifting Emily's chin up, turning

her eyes back to his, as he pressed a kiss to her lips, letting her taste herself on his face.

“You are perfect exactly as you are,” he said, “both of you.” He moved to one side and leaned in to kiss Sarah, as he felt Emily's hands unbuttoning his jeans. “Any man who's told you that you need bigger tits can come tell me, and I will beat him to a pulp before of your very eyes, or fall trying.”

“Can we have more, sir?” Emily asked. “Of you?”

Sarah nodded enthusiastically. “I fucking want some too. My brain's on fucking fire.”

“Alright, but let me tell you this,” Andy said, trying to weave his knowledge about the vaccine into the storyline they were playing out. “Whoever goes first in getting a dose of serum will be completely unable to help the other when it comes to her turn. Once you get your dose, you will, ah, go into a healing coma, which will burn the last of the neurotoxin from your system. You two are such close friends, you should decide who you want to get dosed first, and whom you want to go second.”

He took a step back and Emily slid off Sarah's lap, moving down onto her knees in front of him, before she pulled the giant redhead down to join her. They made such a contrast, the blonde and the redhead, the pixie and the amazon, but the one commonality they shared was that utter adoration they had for him in their eyes.

Emily tugged his baggy jeans and boxers down to his knees, letting his thick cock spring free and slap Sarah in the face, causing the redhead to giggle fiercely, her nose scrunching up in amusement. “Quite the weapon you wield, professor,” Emily said, reaching up to give his fat dick a soft stroke, moving it to keep it away from Sarah's lips. “I heard a rumor from a member of the faculty, Professor Red Wolf, sir. About the very first taste of the serum. Is it true? Let's find out!” she said with a giggle.

At that, Emily held onto his cock by the base with one hand, her other hand moving to grab Sarah's head, pushing the redhead's mouth onto his shaft, that large dollop of precum dripping onto Sarah's tongue as soon as her lips enveloped his cock.

The minute that precum hit her tongue, Sarah's hands clamped onto his hips, and her body immediately began vibrating like she'd just been hooked up to a car battery, her blue eyes rolling back into her head as a gurgling moan chirped in staccato bursts of sound that buzzed along his cock, her lips refusing to give even a millimeter of space between them and him.

After several seconds, Sarah's breathing resumed a more normal rhythm and she forced her blue eyes open once more, looking up at him, tears at the edges of them, as she slowly pulled her head back to let her lips pop off his cock. “Oh. My. Fucking. God,” she whispered. “What the fuck was that, Ems? What the fuck just fucking happened? How did that make me cum so fucking hard? I'm still fucking shaking. What the literal fuck?”

Emily giggled again. “Oh my god, it's true, it's actually fucking true. Let me have my first taste,” she said, cradling his balls with one hand, stroking his shaft with the other, coaxing another droplet of precum to the tip of his dick. As soon as that milky white pearl emerged, she pushed her mouth over the head of his cock, not taking it deep, mostly just keeping the first few inches past her lips as her tongue swiped along the tip of his cock, gathering up that taste. As soon as her tongue lashed along that dollop, he felt her tiny body lock up, her finely manicured fingernails sinking hard into his ass, her eyes looking up at him, almost in deification, worshiping the sight of him while the orgasm shredded through her, Sarah looking on, somewhere between concern, fascination and jealousy.

“Is it... is it always like this?” Sarah asked him, as Emily finally started to come down from her initial taste, both women now primed to him.

“The first orgasm is always the strongest,” Andy said to her, his hand stroking along the top of her head, as she turned to look up at him. “Other than the imprinting orgasm, which all the girls have described as something unlike anything they've ever encountered. But I think Ash told me that all of her orgasms now are about ten times stronger than they were in the Before Times. Niko and Lauren both said that was about right. Niko's said a number of times that she never knew what cumming was like before me.” He chuckled softly. “I wish I could say I was that good, but I think it's mostly the vaccine.”

“Less men, better orgasms, the new world has so much to offer women...” Emily moaned, reaching over to unbutton Sarah's shirt. Neither girl had put on a bra, and Andy was a little surprised that Sarah's breasts were plumper than he'd thought, rounder and fuller with large aerolas and stiff pink nipples standing at attention. She'd never done a nude scene before. Neither of them had. And now, here they both were, in a half-state of undress. “Sares, do you want to go first?”

“Totally, but I don't fucking know if I can, Ems,” Sarah said to her. “But I think I fucking have to, I think I have to fucking go first, so I'm fucking locked in, so I can't back down. I'm just fucking scared I won't be good enough for him, that he won't fucking love me like I fucking love him. He's, like, my fucking hero, as a writer.”

Andy wanted to point out that both of the women were already completely locked in *now*, having gotten a taste of his semen to prime them for imprinting, but was afraid that might make things even more awkward for them, so he kept quiet.

“It's okay, Sares, it's fine, it's fine, it's absolutely fine,” Emily said to Sarah. “I'll be with you the entire time. Here, I know what we can do.” She stood up again, pulling Sarah to her feet with her. The two of them moved around Andy's body, turning him around so his back was towards the bed, then Emily pushed him sharply, forcing him to fall onto the bed face up. “Climb on top of him.”

“Ems, I'm... I'm not fucking sure...”

Emily stepped in behind her and slipped one of her hands up and under Sarah's skirt, rubbing her hand against the redhead's pussy beneath the fabric, obscured from Andy's view. “Sares, you are literally drenching my hand right now. You nearly fingered yourself until your hand dropped off after that time at the convention, and now, here he is, the man you wanted, and he's told you, quite explicitly, that he wants to fuck you. Now get out of your own way and climb atop that cock of his. This is your favorite dream. Look at him.” Her other hand reached up and grabbed Sarah's hair, forcing her to look at him, while Emily carried on, her posh English accent almost making her seem even more dominating. “He wants you, you daft bitch. He's probably jerked off thinking about you, haven't you, Andy?”

Andy reddened a little bit, then nodded. “More than a few times.”

“You see?” Emily's grip in Sarah's hair loosened a little bit, and Andy could see the lust building up behind Sarah's dark blue eyes, rising up to meet the levels of love already present there. “I'll do you one better. I'm going to give you to the count of five to get on top of the love of your life, and if you don't, I'm going to fuck him first, a fact I will surely lord over you for the rest of all our days.”

“Oh my fucking god, you totally would, wouldn't you, you bitch? The number one person on my 'I Wanna Fuck So Bad' list, and you'd totally fuck them before me, wouldn't you? I so fucking hate you right now!”

“Five...”

“You know I'd totally hate you, like, forever and longer.”

“Four...”

“Four?! It was just, like, five, only a second ago.”

“Three...”

“Oh no you fucking don't,” Sarah said, tugging Emily's hand out from under her skirt. “You can have him after I've fucked him. He's mine first.”

Sarah slowly peeled away from Emily and moved one knee up on one side of Andy's thighs, bringing the other up to straddle him, leaning over him, her heavy tits swinging beneath her, her eyes holding on his face.

“That's okay, isn't it, Andy?” she said, bending down to kiss him. “That I want to be here?” She kissed him again. “With you?” Again, only longer. “That I love you?” She wriggled her hips, and he could feel her reaching down beneath her skirt to grab his cock, rubbing the tip of it along her pussy. “That I wanna fuck you?”

Emily peeled off her shirt, but left the tie hanging loose around her neck, as she crawled up on

the bed alongside Andy, turning his head one side so she could take a turn kissing him. "That *we* want to fuck you," she said. "For ever and ever..."

"That's totally okay, right?" Sarah said, turning his eyes back to her. "Because if it's not, then, well..." she said, pausing for a second, breaking eye contact for a moment before their eyes met again, resolve hardening behind them, "then I guess it's better to beg for forgiveness than to ask permission." Her hips slammed down on top of his, punching his cock deep into her drenched cunt, a sluttish moan bubbling up from her throat. "Cause momma's gotta fucking eat. Fuck, you feel too fucking good. Shit, I'm fucking cumming already, shit shit shit shit SHITSHIT!"

Sarah's fingernails raked hard against his chest, not quite deep enough to draw blood, but enough to raise red lines of tender flesh, visible through the dark thatch of blonde curls on his chest. Her eyes watered up as she trembled atop of him, her head thrashing about to make those coppery curls swipe back and forth like a matador's cape in the wind. For several seconds, she just stayed there, impaled on his cock, vibrating in quivers, until finally the sensations eased up and she leaned forward, Emily reaching to wipe the tears from Sarah's eyes. "You okay Sares?"

"This is the greatest fucking day of my life," she whimpered, her voice tiny and dumbstruck. "But I need more. I want more." She looked down at Andy, then leaned in to kiss him. "I need to feel more than just that oh so fat dick of yours inside me. You know what I fucking need, don't you?" Her lips kept returning to his in between every sentence. "I need you to pump a hot load of jizz right inside of my cute little fuckhole." This time she lifted her head up and kissed Emily right in front of his eyes, their tongues tangling up, until Emily tilted her head a little, and leaned them both down, until all three of them were kissing in one big mess, a weave of tongues and lips.

Sarah started to grind her hips on his lap, finally leaning back until she sat upright, and Andy could place his hands on her body, one on her hip, the other over one of those round tits of hers, feeling her nipple hard as a rock against his palm.

"Tell me I'm pretty," she pleaded to him.

"You're fucking gorgeous," he told her.

"Tell me I'm smart."

"Brilliant, witty and charming."

"Tell me that it's okay that I'm a big dork."

"I *love* the fact that you're a big dork."

She bit her bottom lip nervously, glancing over at Emily, who nodded to her with that coy smile of hers. "Tell me I'm *your* big dork."

"You're my big dork," Andy laughed.

"Again," Sarah said, starting to ride him harder, her ass smacking down on the tops of his thighs each time she bucked into him.

"You're *my* big dork."

"What am I?"

Emily squeezed his shoulder, nibbling on his ear, her teeth tugging on his earlobe. "Say it. She wants to hear it. Cum in her tight little pussy and say it."

Sarah's rhythm was frantic now, her cunt clamping and squeezing on his cock, trying to get that release from him, her hair a complete mess now, the braids having partially come undone, threatening to spill everywhere, her hands on his chest making her arms press her tits together, as if presenting them for him to see, her deep dark blue eyes never once looking away from him, imploring him, as if she wanted something she couldn't bear to ask for.

The image was so erotic, Andy knew he couldn't resist, not that he wanted to. So when he felt that tightening up in his body, his hands grabbed onto her hips and held her down, his cock impaled hilt deep inside of her snatch beneath that skirt, as his green eyes held her gaze, while he said "You're *mine*."

At that last word, his balls drew up and his cock blasted Sarah's snatch so full of cum, he was

certain he could feel it dripping out onto his balls, seven or eight squirts of heavy cream inside of her, her eyes immediately rolling back in her skull, as she flopped atop of him like someone had just flipped a switch inside of her and turned her off. Andy barely had time to pull his head to one side so that Sarah's face fell safely into the pillow, her tits mashed against his chest, as she started mumbling "imprinting" over and over against into the pillow.

"Oh my god," Emily whispered into his ear, "that is the hottest fucking thing that I have ever seen with my own eyes." Emily reached up and brushed part of Sarah's hair out of her face for her, seeing her muttering. "How long is she going to do that?"

"For a couple of minutes," Andy said, slowly moving to roll Sarah off him, laying her down on the side of him opposite of Emily. The skirt had hiked up and he could see a small landing strip of copper curls above her snatch, so he tugged the skirt back down for her. "Then she'll just fall very still. She'll wake up in about twelve to sixteen hours."

"That's all it takes?" Emily said. "Now she's just permanently bonded to you forever?"

"Well, not forever, I'm sure," Andy said, as Emily moved him so that each of them were laying on their sides facing each other. He must've looked a little nervous, because Emily took one of his hands in hers and interlaced his bulky fingers with her slender ones. "I'm sure once we're out of this crisis, science will come up with some sort of solution so that people aren't quite so chemically dependent on each other, but for the time being, yeah, she's bonded to me, and she'll need to absorb some of my cum once every couple of weeks."

"That won't be a problem," Emily giggled. "She's a wildcat. I swear to God, she might even be a nymphomaniac, not that you'll mind, although you're going to have to go with us on movie shoots from now on. We'll work it all out, I'm certain." She leaned in and pressed a tiny kiss on his nose. "Ready for me yet?"

"I don't think you've met a man in your entire life who's been ready for you," he said, which made her laugh in amusement. "Me included. You're really sure you're okay with all of this?"

"Can I tell you a secret?" she said, that impish smile widening on her face a little bit. "I sort of help set all this up."

Andy narrowed his eyes. "I don't know how that's even possible."

"When Sarah and I arrived on the base two weeks ago, we were put in a sort of group quarantine, and were mostly only allow to see people who had already been vaccinated and were with partners, a few staff members aside. Sarah was very nervous that someone would find out we were together, so we just acted like acquaintances, actors who didn't know each other but knew of each other," Emily said, not letting him pull his hand away, in fact bringing it to rest on her chest, just above her heart. "So while Sarah was having panic attacks and thinking our lives were over, I got to know some of the people who were on guard duty for us."

"Niko..." Andy groaned, grinning in spite of himself.

"Well, yes, Niko, but not *just* Niko," Emily said. "Also, I met one of Mister Covington's family, Rachel. And so I hatched a plan."

"I don't understand why you even needed to," Andy said. "They partner you women up with men you want to be with, don't they?"

"Is that what they've told you?" she gasped. "No! Oh my god, no! No, that's not it at all, Andrew. I mean, it might have started that way, but since the foundation of New Eden, any woman that a man wants and asks for is brought here and imprinted, to be part of his new family. Maybe that's not true for all of the women, but it most certainly is for some of us! Did... did you really not know that? Have you truly not asked for anyone specific?"

"I didn't even know that I could, not that I think I would. Why wouldn't Niko tell me that?"

"Maybe she doesn't even know," Emily said. "We were told not to talk about the process at all, to anyone. But I'm a little busybody, so I poked around a bit, and Rachel told me a lot more than I think she intended to. I also talked to Niko about the various men who were in the community already. She

said she really didn't know that many of them, other than her partner and his friends, so I asked her to tell me about them.”

“Oh lord...”

“Once I found out you were, well, *you*, and that Niko had such a high opinion of you ... you really should marry all of your girls, Andrew, but my God, would Niko especially do literally *anything* for you ... I decided that I had to get Sarah into your family, no matter what. I knew how she felt about you, and if she'd found out you were here and she couldn't fuck you, well, it might've sent her into an uncontrollable spiral of depression, and I would not allow that to happen. She's had struggles with depression much of her life, and her love for you is deeper than the Pacific. If I could get myself into your family as well, all the better, but if Sarah and I simply lived in the same town, even with different male partners, we could still be together regularly enough, so I had to ensure she made her way to you, and that was the bare minimum of what I would accept.”

“What did you do?”

“So Rachel controls the distribution process at the vaccination center. She determines how women are sent to their partners and at what speed. She is also, like, the biggest Dagger Academy fan, thank god for that. I got all of this done with just a few autographs and a few selfies with her. I don't like trading in on my fame, but I decided that just this one time, I would bend my moral compass, to ensure that Sarah and I weren't miserable.”

“What does that mean?”

“It means, I convinced Rachel to send out women in batches of two, because the other thing Rachel had told me was that her partner, that prick Covington, liked to gamble with women, so I made sure that he would see this as an opportunity to hold one of his poker games, and that both Sarah and I would be available as prizes in them. Niko said you'd never been invited to one before, so I also needed to make sure there was a reason for you to get involved.”

“Christ, if I'd have known you and Sarah were in it, I might have gone in on that alone.”

“Oh, bless Andrew, but no, you wouldn't have,” Emily said, kissing his nose. “You're too scrupulous. Niko made it exceptionally clear to me that you saw your partners as people not property, another part of the reason I so wanted to ensure Sarah made her way to you. But that meant convincing you that you were rescuing someone, and hoping you would also give in to temptation when it was presented to you on a silver platter. So when they started vaccinating us all with the inoculation, I bumped that doctor, Charlotte, and made her accidentally inject herself. That meant she had to get partnered up with someone within a few weeks, and I knew that Charlotte wouldn't leave her daughter behind. I also knew that Charlotte was a friend of Niko's, and that Rachel had been told by Covington to watch out for a mother-daughter pairing he could get his hands on, that sick fuck.”

“This is like some kind of fucking heist movie!” Andy said in amazement.

“What I didn't know was that Charlotte was so heartbroken over the death of her husband, that she wouldn't care who she was assigned to. I had wanted Charlotte to be assigned to you and her daughter to be assigned to Covington, so you would feel the need to rescue her daughter and when you did, you would likely also take Sarah and I.”

“What the hell happened?”

“Rachel got them both assigned to Covington instead, but thankfully, Niko decided on her own that she was going to make sure you were at that card game to rescue both of them, because she and the Doctor had become work friends. Niko convinced Rachel that you were a great cardplayer, and also made sure that one of their usual players dropped out. She's quite clever, your girl. I also put a bug in her ear that if she thought you were such a wonderful man, maybe you should consider trying to get Sarah as well.”

“You didn't mention yourself?”

“I didn't want to overtax you, but I hoped that maybe I might be pretty enough to pull your eye.”

“Every woman here is pretty, Emily,” Andy chuckled. “But you're also clever and well-rounded.”

I've seen some of your interviews, and you're a very thoughtful person. I couldn't bear the thought of you being stuck with someone you hated. That's why I brought you here, so that if I wasn't your type, you could bond with one of my friends instead."

"Oh, I know, I know, Andrew," she said, kissing him again, just for a moment. "And I love that about you. You're a fundamentally good person at heart."

"You only had Niko's word for that."

"Well, no," she said, squeezing his hand again. "I also talked with your ex quite a lot. Everyone looks at me and thinks 'oh, she's so friendly, I'll just talk her ear off,' not realizing I'm taking all of that in and using it for my own advantage."

"You're like Littlefinger."

"Oh, except I won't get caught with my hand in the cupboard, love," she giggled. "And I use my manipulation powers mostly for good."

"I can't imagine Erin had much good to say about me, though."

"It wasn't what she was saying, it was how she was saying it." Andy obviously looked confused, because Emily continued. "She told me that even when you broke it off with her a decade or so ago, you spent so much time telling her why it wouldn't work, what was wrong with your relationship, how she wanted something different than what you were. And even while she was complaining that you wouldn't do what she asked, I could hear her telling me again and again that even though she'd done such horrible things to you, you were still trying to *help* her. If a man will do those kinds of things for a woman he used to love, imagine what he'll do for a woman he currently loves, I thought."

"Heaven and Earth..."

"Precisely. By this point, Niko and I had become friends, so when she told me that she had set up a plan to get you invited to the card game, I knew that *my* plan was working and that you would get Sarah into your family. If the doctor and her daughter hadn't been enough of a convincer, I was going to go to Niko and tell her that I also needed rescue, but it didn't come to that, thank god. Still, little did I know you were going to muck all of my meticulous planning on the day of!" she said, laughing.

Andy's eyebrows raised even further. "I'm... sorry? ... How did I muck it up?"

"I had convinced Rachel to talk Covington's usual dealer, a girl named Veronica, into cheating on your behalf. It was a chance for Rachel and Veronica to get back at Covington for how he'd been treating them. Veronica would help you with key cards at pivotal moments, so that you would finish first, and thus have the pick of the women. Knowing that you would get five women in first place, I felt confident that you would pick Sarah in addition to the Doctor and her daughter. If I got included also, all the better. But as Mr. Watkins told me on the ride over..."

"...I convinced them not to use her as a dealer, because I was afraid she might cheat *for* Covington. Oh god, I'm so sorry."

She giggled furiously, her face scrunching up in amusement. "I mean, I'm not angry. It's fine, it's fine it's fine it's fine. You're even a better card player than Niko said you were, apparently. Sarah made it here, I made it here, the Doctor and her daughter made it here. Everything all worked out in the end. You're crazy principled, but I admire that about you. Sarah is now with the man she loves, and I'm falling in love with that same man myself more every minute."

"The Doctor won't be staying, though."

"Oh no!" Emily said, genuinely looking a little saddened by the news. "Why not?"

"She's not into white guys." That made Emily smirk. "So my friend Phil Pak will take her in, although her daughter Asha's staying here. The good Doctor didn't think it wise for a woman to be paired with the same man her mother's paired with. She'll still be around regularly, though, as Phil and I see each other at least once a week."

"My goodness, I must say I rather agree with her assessment," Emily said. "Now, not to be too blunt about it, but I rather think you'd better get around to fucking me rather soon, don't you? Pardon

my coarse language.” At that, Andy had a good open laugh. “What’s so funny?”

“So you may have spent a lot of time talking about me with Niko, you must’ve never once asked her about what I like in bed, because she would’ve told you one thing first and foremost…”

“What’s that, soon-to-be husband-of-mine?”

That took Andy aback for a second before he said, “Women who swear are my biggest turn on. I love profanity, dirty talk. It revs my engine something crazy. That might’ve been one of the things that first turned me on to Sarah, was how casually she swore in interviews, and still made it sound so charming.”

“Well,” Emily said, widening her pale blue eyes for a moment, “if that’s true, then perhaps I should tell you one of my biggest turn ons in return.”

“Oh, by all means,” Andy said. “I want to make sure you’re enjoying it as much as I am.”

“This does not leave our house, however, understand? What happens in our bedroom is between those of us who sleep in it and no one else.”

“Absolutely. The things I’ve called my girls in bed, I’d never say that shit out in public. How we act in the bedroom isn’t how we act in life.”

“Bless your heart, Andy,” she said, giving his hand another squeeze. “The two biggest things I love in life are romance and sex. Sometimes I want them together, sometimes I want them apart. As long as you can respect that, we’ll get on like a house on fire.”

“As long as you tell me what you’re in the mood for when, I’m happy to deliver, Emily.”

“That’s more than most of the men and women I’ve dated can say.”

“Well, did you tell them?”

“Tell them?” she asked, cocking her head to one side.

“Yeah, tell them what you were in the mood for, when you were in the mood for it. If you don’t tell your partners what you want, and when you want it, they’re going to guess wrong from time to time. You can’t expect me to just guess, not for a long while anyway. You’ll have to tell me.”

She looked pleasantly taken aback, then brought one of her hands up to her temple, pinching her fingers together before exploding them, a mind blown gesture. “No! You know, I never thought of it that way! I’m going to have to do that from now on, and if I don’t tell you, you must ask me, so I remember! I can be such a scatterbrain sometimes.”

“So you were telling me about your turn on?”

“Oh. Yes.” She smiled, almost as if she realized she’d gotten off track. “Sometimes in bed, I just want to be plowed. Drilled. Hammered. Just fucked within an inch of consciousness. Tossed around the bed like a ragdoll. Not broken, mind you, but used, and still with an eye towards my pleasure also! Pull my hair. Spank my ass. Pinch my nipples. Nothing that will leave a mark, but make me feel it, like I’ve gotten the blood to your loins so strong, you simply have to ravish me.” She grinned a bit. “Sorry, you simply have to **fuck** me.” She traced a fingertip along his cheek. “I’ll work on getting my language in line with what you like, if you can get in line with what I want. I’ll never swear quite as much as Sarah does, not that I think that’s possible, but I don’t mind getting a bit more filthy in my language if that makes you happy.”

“When you’re happy, I’m happy,” he chuckled.

“Great. Yes. Excellent. Now that you’ve hopefully had time to regain your stamina, do you think you could do me the great honor of fucking my cunt until my brains are leaking out of my ears and my legs are too wobbly to stand on?” Her youthful exuberance, tinged with that spritely accent of hers, made it even harder for him to swallow his next breath. “I’m rather in dire need of that right now.”

“Start rough, finish romantic?”

“Precisely.”

“As you wish, m’lady.”

Emily looked over, noticing that Sarah was now completely zonked out on the bed, not even muttering any more, the imprinting process past the stage where it needed to be announced, the vaccine

little Hollywood whore, itching for her next fix, a fucking junkie for your spunk... god, I fucking want that... I fucking need it... I came like a trollop from you just putting that wide cock inside of me... Now I think I'm fucking cumming all over again, dammit... Carve your name in my little pussy... make it *your* fucking pussy... paint my tight young cunt white with your spunk... I fucking need it... I fucking need you to fuck me..."

Andy's hips drew back and then thrust forward again, starting a rough and steady rhythm, pulling her lithe form back into him over and over again, making sure his cock bottomed out inside of her pussy each time, his fingernails raking on her hips. He lifted a hand up to give her asscheek a slap, and felt her tighten up on his cock when that skin reddened beneath his touch. He reached up and grabbed a fistful of her light blonde locks and yanked on them to make her head lift, a sound halfway between a squeal and a giggle bubbling from her lips. "God yes, you savage! Fuck me until I'm crying! Pound me until I feel your brand on my very fucking soul! Turn me into a rutting slut, turn me into *your* slut! Fuck me on that marvelous fucking dick! Harder, you beautiful goddamned beast! Rail me! Fuck the living shit out of me! Fuck the life from your newest whore! Make me take it all! Make me take that cum! Make me your whore!"

She was shouting loud enough that Andy half suspected some of the girls were outside of the door, their ears pressed to the wood, listening in and maybe even enjoying themselves. Sarah had mostly kept her volume down, but it seemed like Emily had been fixated on going the other direction, almost like she wanted Niko to know how much she was enjoying herself.

"This is glorious," she whimpered, "but I want it, I need it... I need to feel you cumming inside of my sweet young cunt. I've cum three or four times already while you've fucked me stupid, but you have a greedy little slut, Master, and she wants more, oh so very much more." She leaned her face down and kissed Sarah's unconscious lips, before pulling back. "She needs to be part of your family, like this one is." Her fingers stroked ginger curls away from Sarah's face, before she looked back over her shoulder at him once more, her face a mask of lusty fuck frenzy. "Make me yours. Claim me, like you did my other lover. Own us both, Master. Own us! Make me *yours.*"

Andy felt an involuntary shiver of delight at her calling him that. He couldn't help himself. But she'd also said she wanted to be "loved like a princess" at the end, and he didn't want to disappoint her, because this memory was going to be seared in her brain.

He pulled his hips away, sliding his cock out of her, hearing an unsatisfied whine melting from her lips for just a moment before he flipped her over onto her back, his hand closing around her neck for just a moment, giving it a tiny squeeze, watching her eyes widen as she nodded at him before his hand slipped away from it. Her slender legs lifted up to wrap around his waist, the soft fabric of the stockings smoothing along his skin as he moved to line himself up once more, pushing his cock back into her snatch, hearing those sloppy noises when he did. Her heels were pressed into his body, not letting him pull too far back, as if she didn't want to feel his cock slipping out from her twat even for a moment, so mostly he was just churning his cock inside of her.

"Tell me you're at least as half as good a man as you seem like you are," she whispered, his forehead resting against hers.

"I try."

"Tell me you're going to be a good husband for Sarah, and also for me."

"I promise to try my best."

"Tell me you'll love me at least half as much as you love her," she said, taking Sarah's limp hand within her own, folding their fingers together.

"I'll love you both with all of my heart."

"Then kiss me, and cum in me, and we can claim each other. You've made me into such a wanton slut for you, but now make me an honest woman. Make me *your* honest woman, your slut, your wife or whatever in-between. Bring me into your wonderful fucking family. Cum inside of my needy little cunt so hard you feel like I do, like this is all you've ever wanted your entire fucking life. I

love you, Andy Rook, I love you so fucking much, so just *claim me already!*

Her lips shoved against his, one of her hands still holding onto Sarah's, the other squeezing the back of his neck as she clenched onto him with her stocking clad legs, her tongue demanding the presence of his as his body finally could resist no further, and he blasted a barrage of spurts of cum into her twat, a rat-a-tat series of jets, her feet giving frantic little kicks of her heels against his ass as her body accepted the injection of cum, and the process began, although she stayed locked in a vice around his waist for much longer than he expected her to. Eventually, however, the process did what it always did, and her limbs fell limp and slipped away from him, as she sunk into the bed like a dead weight.

She was, naturally, mumbling “imprinting” over and over again, but unlike any of the other women he'd imprinted before now, she had a broad smile from ear-to-ear on her face while she did, her fingers still intertwined with Sarah's.

As much as he wanted to lay down and fall asleep with them, it wasn't even dark outside yet. He glanced at his watch and saw it was barely past 2 in the afternoon. He felt like could just sleep for a short nap if he tried, but his curiosity got the better of him, and so slipped off the bed and moved his way over to the door, standing right at it before he opened it suddenly, swinging it inward, finding Niko and Aisling standing there, big grins on their faces.

Niko immediately sprinted past him, her phone in her hand, as she slid up on the bed and immediately took a photo of Emily and Sarah's unconscious faces, framing it so their intertwined hands were framed right in the middle of it. “God, she's smiling while she mumbles!” she said, not lowering her voice at all, because she knew how completely unconscious the two women were. “I've never seen that before. They even wore the Dagger Academy outfits for you. Fuck me, you lucky bastard.”

“Emily asked her to take a picture of them while they were imprinting, so they could see what they looked like adrift on bliss,” Ash said to him, giggling at how wobbly he was standing. “Looks like they did quite a number on you, though. You about to fall over?”

“Oh, don't pretend like you weren't listening outside of the door,” he grinned.

“We weren't, until Emily was yelling loud enough for the whole damn house to hear.”

Niko moved to pull up a sheet over the two women, then the comforter, to make sure they wouldn't be cold while the vaccine and Andy's semen mixed inside of their bodies, bonding them to him on a cellular level, fundamentally altering their very biology. She slipped back and off the bed, moving back over to Andy. “If you aren't crawling in bed with that mass of pale perfection tonight, then I sure as fuck am,” she laughed.

“If I'm honest, I think Sarah would be worried if she didn't wake up with me in bed with her and Emily, so I'll come back and crawl in bed with them later tonight. You're both welcome to join me, obviously.”

“I am physically incapable of saying no to that,” Niko said.

“Same,” Aisling echoed. “But Phil's going to be here in about an hour, so you should probably go and get another shower in. As much as I personally like you smelling like high end perfume and wanton pussy, I think he'd rather you'd washed up first.”

Andy laughed and nodded. “Yeah, fair enough.”

“We'll come shower with you,” Niko said.

“We both want to hear all about the Hollywood additions to our family,” Aisling added.

“Okay, but if you touch my dick and it breaks off, you two have nobody but yourselves to blame.”

(Very long chapter, I realize, but it just felt like one piece. I thought about splitting it into two or three, but it's all vaguely one piece connected in my head. I'd hoped to get additional chapters in my other two on-going stories out this week, but I'll do those for the next update and skip a week or two in this one to let it sit with folks. As always, feedback, suggestions, thoughts and opinions are welcome – corruptingpower@aol.com)

