



a novella

COMPLETION

STYLO FANTÔME

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OceanofPDF.com

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Mission Statement

I not only write, I read. A lot. Probably more than is healthy. There are a lot of things I love about self-publishing/indie authors, and a lot of things I'm not a fan of. Just personal preferences, no disrespect meant. So when I decided to self-publish, I made some promises to myself to try my hardest to avoid doing those things I didn't like seeing/happening in other stories. Now I would like to make those promises to you, the reader:

I promise to never leave you hanging. If I write a story with a cliffhanger ending, I will only publish it when the second part is completely written.

I promise that all **cliffhanger sequels** will be published within 16 weeks – **maximum** – of the previous part (i.e., part **two** will come within four months of part **one**. Part **three** will come within four months of part **two**, and so on, and so forth). You will never have to wait six months, or a year, or *years*, for a sequel to any **cliffhangers** that I might write.

I promise that, while I am an **unsigned indie** author, I will never raise the price of any part of a **series** above \$2.99. I will not “hook you” with book one, two, and three at \$1.99 and/or \$2.99, and then suddenly book four is \$4.99. I refuse to pay for series that are like that, so I will never do that to you.

I promise that if I am lucky enough and blessed enough to have fans, I will interact and communicate with them as much as possible – you are who this is all for, after all.

If at any point in time, I fail to live up to any of these promises, you have my permission to tar and feather me, beat me, leave me for dead, or worst of all – call me out.

No work is ever really completed, no story ever completely told, but I will always try my hardest to bring you my best.

Thank you for reading.

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DEDICATION

To Sue

For asking me questions that lead to thoughts that lead to moments in a story. This epilogue wouldn't exist without you.

And to SueBee

This epilogue wouldn't have been published without your encouragement.

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The Kane Trilogy
COMPLETION

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~Back Together Again~

“Stop. Stop, I'm begging you.”

“Begging, huh. I must be doing something right.”

“I can't take anymore.”

“You'll take everything I have to give.”

“*God, stop.*”

“I don't think so.”

“*Please.*”

“Are you finished?”

“Um ...,”

“Then neither am I.”

“*Please!*”

Jameson leaned back on his heels. Tate gasped for air underneath him, one of her hands resting against her chest, the other pushing her hair out of her face.

“If you don't like to be punished,” he started in a low voice, “then maybe you shouldn't be so bad.”

“I'm sorry. I can't help it,” she panted, licking her lips.

“Are you finished?” he asked again. She finally opened her eyes, looked up at him.

“This isn't fair, you know,” she pointed out. He snorted.

“Since when have I ever given a fuck about what's fair?”

“This goes beyond that.”

“*I'm sorry, am I still needed?*”

Both of them craned their heads around towards the voice. Sanders stood upright and dusted off his pant legs. Adjusted his tie. Tate chuckled and Jameson turned back towards her.

“I'm not sure. Tatum, are you going to behave?” he asked. She smiled big.

“Baby, I *always* behave myself.”

“Now that's a fucking lie.”

“But all I asked was -,”

“Tate.”

“If you would just -,”

“I'm warning you.”

“Just tell me when -,”

“*Tatum.*”

“*Are we leaving soon!?*” Tate couldn't hold back, asking for the millionth time. Jameson sighed and leaned back over her, trying to grab onto her wrists.

“This time, Sanders, hold her arms down,” he instructed.

“No! No! I'm sorry! Two against one isn't fair!” Tate yelled. Sanders took hold of her wrists and held them against the floor while Jameson scooted down her body.

“You asked for this,” was all he said before he lowered his head.

“No!” she shrieked, but then his lips were against her.

“I can't believe I came all the way home just to witness this,” Sanders complained, looking away. Jameson lifted his head.

“Shut up, you love it.”

And then he went back to blowing raspberries on Tate's stomach.

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~1~

A lot can happen in two years.

Tate drove back to Boston with Jameson and Sanders. She stayed with Jameson, lived with him in Weston. It was home, after all.

He was home.

Jameson was the devil. Sometimes he was cruel, sometimes he was sadistic, sometimes he made her want to tear her hair out. But always, *always*, he made her love him even more. Underneath everything, was his love. His trust. His adoration.

Sure, they weren't perfect, and she was pretty sure they had turned fighting into an art form. One time she threw a dinner plate at his head and called him retarded. Then he held her down in the shower, calling her a hot-head. But it worked for them, and afterwards he “punished” her by tying her wrists together and fucking her in the hallway. She loved it.

Every single second.

When they got through the summer without anymore hiccups, she decided to take his and Sanders' advice, and she went back to school. Sanders had been right, Tate was a smart girl, and she excelled at her classes. She was going to work towards a business degree so she could open her own bar, and Jameson informed her that if she finished the year strong, he would help facilitate that dream.

But then a bomb was dropped. That next spring, Sanders decided it was time to leave the nest. Tate took it a lot harder than she would have thought; they had grown ridiculously close. He was her best friend, they went everywhere together. He taught her how to drive a stick shift, she taught him how to play beer pong. What would she do without him!?

She wasn't sure how to deal with it. Jameson was of no help at first, wouldn't even tell her the reason why – neither of them would. She pouted. She gave everyone the silent treatment. But finally, she gave in and told him if he had to go, then he had to go, and wished him well.

Though she did make sure to give him a going away party he would never forget.

By the time June rolled around, Tate had a lot of freedom. Ang had moved to Los Angeles – his porn career finally took off, no more B-rate for him. Sanders was in Moscow. Her old roommate Rusty had moved away,

and even Tate's sister, Ellie, was settled down with a new boyfriend, way out in the country side. And Tate loved Jameson, she really did, but she couldn't spend *all* her time with him. They would kill each other if they didn't come up for air once in a while.

Jameson solved the problem by making good on his promise – he bought her a bar. Just came home one day and gave her the keys. At first she was angry. If it was going to be hers, she wanted to be the one to pick it out, to scout the location, to see if it worked for her. She wanted to yell at him, get mad. But somehow it evolved into crazy sex in the conservatory, and suddenly she was making a midnight phone call to Sanders, explaining to him that his geraniums wouldn't be there when he came home.

Jameson had actually picked the perfect location. It shouldn't have been a shock, really. Tate had learned to expect perfection to come out of most of his decisions. The man didn't do things by halves. And it also turned out that the bar Tate used to work in had closed down, and she was able to hire most of the old staff, people she trusted and knew worked well. She was very confident that her first foray into business would be a success.

Turned out “*success*” wasn't a strong enough word – business was *booming*. It took off like a rocket. She managed the place as well as worked the bar for the first six months. It completely killed her college career, and almost caused Jameson to kill her. He didn't like her being gone so much. She eventually dropped out of school altogether, figuring she was doing well enough on her own anyway. And after one too many late nights, she decided to back off of working on the floor. Set some hours for herself. Took a vacation even, visited Sanders.

It was all going so well that by the following spring, she approached Jameson with the idea of opening a second bar. Something a little different. A little darker, *sexier*, and in a different part of town. His response was a hearty “**no**”, at first. But she had ways of convincing him, and it helped that she promised to keep the same hours. It took a couple months of begging, but she finally got her way.

“*We should have a party.*”

Jameson suggested it towards the end of the summer. It was shocking – Jameson never wanted to have a party. Never wanted to leave the house, and never wanted people to come over. Tate had been busy scouting new bars, and figured it was his way of getting her attention.

“What kind of party?” she asked.

“A special kind.”

“Oh god. I'm not ready for an orgy.”

“*Prude.*”

He thought it would be fun for one last hoorah, of sorts. The new bar, along with the old bar, would take up all her free time. It would be a while before they would be able to get out and get away, or anything like that; so why not have Sanders come home for a visit, and they could spend an evening in New York together?

Well, who could say no to that? Didn't seem like such a big deal.

Though she seemed to have forgotten that virtually *everything* Jameson did turned into a big deal, some way or another ...

*

“Can we please *gooooo!*?” Tate groaned at the foot of the stairs. It was an hour or so after the library incident, and still, Jameson was being tight lipped about their plans. Had only told her to be ready to go in an hour. It was one o'clock in the afternoon, and it only took three or four hours to drive to New York. Seemed kind of early for dinner.

If they were going to dinner.

I hate surprises.

“Jesus, you're like a toddler,” Jameson grumbled, finally coming down the stairs.

“Well, I've been waiting down here for *forever*,” she pointed out. He rolled his eyes and turned his back to her.

“Ten minutes. It's been ten minutes since you came down here,” he corrected her. She smoothed out the material over his shoulders, then pulled the hem of his suit jacket into place.

“It *feels* like forever,” she tried to argue.

“Shut the fuck up or we won't be going anywhere.”

She skipped out the door behind him.

Sanders drove. It felt kind of strange, having him behind the wheel again, but he refused to ride as a passenger in almost any car he was in, so they let him drive. Tate didn't pay attention to where they were going, so she was surprised when they stopped at her bar. She stared for a second, taking in the neon “*O'Shea's*” sign.

“You brought me to work?” she asked. Jameson nodded, putting his hand on the small of her back.

“Yes.”

“You throw shitty parties.”

“Shut up.”

It turned out to be a surprise party. Jameson had arranged everything – the bar was closed, and there were drinks and enough food for everybody. Tate laughed and full on kissed him, to the point cat calls had to be issued to get her to let go of him.

She ate, she drank, and she most definitely made merry. Possibly too merry. Several cocktails and a couple shots later, Jameson announced it was time to go. They really were going to New York, and they would have to book it if they wanted to make it in time for their dinner reservations.

“Mmmm, how many hours does it take to get there?” Tate purred, leaning into him after they were in the car and on the freeway.

“We have about three left to go,” Jameson replied, loosening his tie a little. Tate ran her hand up and down it.

“What should we do to pass the time?” she asked softly, then nibbled on his ear lobe. He chuckled.

“I did just throw a party for you. I think you owe me,” he suggested. She laughed, then stretched one of her legs across his own.

“Oh really. And what do I owe you?” she asked, her voice husky as she raked her nails down his chest.

“Something big.”

“I think you owe *me* something big.”

“You can have that at the end of the night.”

“I want it *now*.”

“No.”

“Why not?”

“Because Sanders is driving and you still haven't learned how to keep your mouth shut.”

Jameson had actually had the Bentley outfitted with a privacy window between the front and back of the car, but it wasn't entirely soundproof, and he was right; Tate wasn't quiet at the best of times. When she was tipsy, like she was right then, she wasn't able to keep quiet *at all*.

But he did point out that she couldn't make too much noise if her mouth was full. Before the thought was even fully voiced, she was on her knees,

pulling his belt loose. She had him coming in record time.

Dinner was amazing. The best food, the most expensive champagne, and the two people she loved most in the world. Even Sanders had a couple glasses and was convinced to laugh more than a few times.

“No getting drunk, you're our designated driver,” Jameson reminded him. Sanders cleared his throat.

“Of course not, I am not a '*drunk*’,” he replied. Tate cackled.

“Remember that time ... when Jameson was out of town? And we got wasted,” she stammered in between chuckles. Sanders smiled.

“Yes. You tore down the curtains in the library,” he recalled. Jameson's eyebrows went up.

“That's how those got ripped!?”

“Tattle tale,” Tate laughed even harder.

Dinner had been late, which led her to guess that they were going to stay in a hotel for the night. So Tate was shocked when Sanders drove right through downtown and pulled up in front of a night club.

“Seriously?” she asked, glancing back at Jameson.

“Seriously. Occasionally, I like to see you smile.”

Jameson wasn't the biggest fan of dancing, and generally hated proper night clubs. Too much noise, too many people, too many rules. If he was going to be crammed into a building with dark lighting and sexy music and half naked women, he figured he should at least be allowed to have sex at some point. Most U.S. night clubs frowned on that kind of thing, so he rarely went – if Tate felt like a night out, she usually had to do it solo.

But he'd gone all out for her that night. They bypassed the huge line, of course. Mr. Kane did not wait in lines. A velvet rope was swept aside with great flourish, and then they were led into the dark club by a young man who seemed way too excited to help them.

Someone should've warned him that Jameson's a stingy tipper when it comes to guys.

Of course there was the main dance floor, and of course there were VIP tables. They walked past all of those to a back wall, in front of which stood several wrought iron, spiral staircases. Tate looked up and was surprised to see matching balconies that showed people dancing. Private rooms. Nice.

“If you need anything, anything at all,” the young man was gushing as he showed them around their room, “just pick up the phone and a waitress

will be right with you. Tammy will be your server, and she'll be with you shortly."

Jameson made himself comfortable on a velvet couch while Sanders stood by the door, looking uncomfortable (i.e., normal). When a waitress showed up to take their order for bottle service, Tate went out to bop around on the balcony, and didn't come back in until the liquor was delivered.

Scotch for Jameson. Perrier for Sanders. And of course, Jack Daniel's for Tate.

She had the best time. Jameson sat in the room and smoked cigars, chit-chatting with Sanders, but that didn't stop Tate from finding fun. It turned out that a semi-famous rap star was in the VIP room next to theirs, and while she was dancing, Tate got to talking with some girls that were on his balcony. Before long, she was stretching and crawling over the railings, tumbling into their party.

It was a good two hours before she made her way back to the balcony. She was significantly tipsier, but still having fun. She cackled and shouted into her room, leaning over the railings. Jameson finally came out.

"Jesus, I thought you were going to stay over there all night," he snapped.

"Pfffft, you knew where I was, you could've come and gotten me," she pointed out.

"I shouldn't have to chase you down."

"You love chasing me down. *Heellllpppp*," she whined, holding her arms out to him.

He shook his head, but Jameson was laughing as he helped lift her over the railings, back onto their side. She laughed as well, stumbling into the room and falling on the couch. Sanders stared across the room, but a smile played on his lips.

"Having a good time?" he asked.

"The *best* time. But my feet hurt," she groaned, sticking her legs up in the air and shaking her feet in his face. She was wearing ridiculously high stilettos. She wondered why she'd thought they were a good idea.

"I told you not to wear these," Jameson reminded her as he sat next to her and grabbed onto one of her ankles, removing the offending shoe.

"Shut up, they're hot looking," she snorted, wiggling her other foot around, trying to stay out of his grasp.

“Very hot. Sanders,” he barked. “She has spare shoes in the car. Go get them.”

Sanders nodded and hustled out of the room.

“Oh, thank you, so much better. You take such good care of me,” Tate groaned, stretching her legs out once he got her other shoe off.

“Always, *Liebe*,” he agreed, gently massaging one of her feet.

Liebe. German for “*Love*”. It never stopped feeling good to hear it. She felt warmth spread across her chest.

“This was a very good time, Jameson. Thank you,” she told him.

“It was. Ready to go home?” he asked. She snorted again and sat up, pulling her legs away.

“Are you kidding!? The night's still young! You're not ending this early for me,” she warned him.

“This night is getting *boring*. I can only talk about Russian literature for so long before I feel like strangling Sanders,” Jameson pointed out.

“You could be having fun with me, instead of being an old man,” Tate suggested, standing up and stretching her arms over her head.

“Watch it,” he warned her. She smiled at him over her shoulder, then went and closed their door.

“*Old man*. How old are you now, Jameson? Thirty-three? God, that's depressing. I should trade you in for a younger model,” she teased him. He leaned back into the couch, stretching his arms out along the back of it.

“Funny, sometimes I have the same thoughts about *you*,” he countered. She rolled her eyes.

“Please, you could *never* find another woman like me.”

“No. But it might be fun to try.”

“You want to try?” she asked, coming to a stop. He smiled, but his eyes were narrowed.

“Hmmm, I don't know. It's been so long. Maybe I'm '*too old*' to play the field anymore,” he told her. She gasped melodramatically.

“No! Not *the* Jameson Kane! Never. You've still got '*it*', I'm sure,” she assured him, her voice syrupy sweet. He barked out a laugh.

“Well, thank you for that vote of confidence, Tate.”

“God, it's must be so easy to be you,” she sighed, running her fingers over his jacket, which was hanging on the back of a chair.

“You think so?” he asked.

“I know so.”

“You try handling and trading the same amount of money as the GNP of a small country, in a single day, and tell me how easy it,” he snapped. She shrugged, slowly turning her back to him.

“I meant the other stuff.”

“What other stuff?”

“Not Jameson Kane, *the financier*. Jameson Kane, *the man*.”

She peeled her top off and chucked it over her shoulder. He was silent, so she kept going. Unhooked her bra and threw it as well. Then she picked up his jacket and slid it on, turning around as she buttoned the top button. It was so big it almost hid the tiny shorts she was wearing, and displayed everything from her cleavage down to her belly button. Jameson stared back at her, one of his eyebrows raised.

“You think that's easy? I deal with *you*, every day,” he reminded her. She laughed and slowly moved around the couch, till she was behind him.

“Please. I'm the easiest part of your day,” she argued, leaning over him from behind and stretching her arms along his. When her hand ran into his watch, she slowly unclasped it and slid it off his wrist. Pulled it onto her own.

“*You are easy. Dealing with you, however, is another story entirely.*”

“You're so funny!”

She slipped out of her shorts and kicked them aside before continuing her turn around the couch. She was completely naked under his jacket, but the material still hid all the good bits. Jameson's eyes bounced from her legs to her chest to her face. It made her smile. After all the time they'd spent together, after two years, he still looked at her like she was breakfast.

Best thing ever.

“I thought you wanted to party,” he questioned as she moved to straddle his lap.

“Oh, I definitely want to party,” she chuckled, working his tie loose and then slipping it over his head.

“What did you have in mind?” Jameson asked, watching as she put his tie on herself.

“Hmmm, don't know. Maybe I could just slap you around for a while, see where the night takes us,” she joked.

“Jesus, you really do want to be me tonight,” he snorted.

“Don't I look the part?”

“Not quite as good looking as me, but almost.”

“God, you're such a dick.”

“Good thing you love dick.”

“That's not even funny.”

“Yes it is.”

Tate leaned forward and kissed him.

They had been kissing each other, on and off, for over nine years. Every single day for the last year and a half, but it never got old. Never got stale. She always wanted more. She moaned when his fingers wrapped around her jaw, tilting her head to give him better access. Hissed when his teeth bit into her bottom lip. Whispered “*please*” as his fingers clawed their way up her thighs.

“This is the real reason you got a private room,” Tate chuckled as Jameson twisted them around, laying her down on the couch.

“I know how you get when you drink,” was his response as he unbuttoned the jacket.

“I'm not -,” she tried to argue, but it turned into a gasp as he squeezed her breasts.

“Time to be quiet now, Tate,” he instructed her, his hands sliding down to her hips for a brief moment before he started undoing his belt.

“I don't want to be quiet,” she complained.

“Shut up.”

“You like it when I'm loud.”

“Only when I want you to be loud. And now I want you to shut up.”

“Maybe I don't want -,”

“*Shut the fuck up.* This is your last warning.”

Hmmm, do what he wants, or what I want ... well, it's my party, so this should be about what I want.

“*Make me,*” she challenged him.

Jameson's response was instantaneous. He roughly yanked the tie up over her head, grabbing her wrists in one hand at the same time. He pinned them above her head and tied them together, then knotted the tie around the leg of an end table behind her. There was almost no slack, and when she yanked at her restraints, they knotted tighter.

“Always gotta be pissing me off,” he growled, his teeth meeting her neck while his hands went back to his pants.

“I like to keep it interesting. Untie me,” she whispered, licking at the shell of his ear.

“Too late. If you're lucky, afterwards I'll untie you and let you leave with us,” he replied, his hands forcing her legs around his hips.

“You know I don't like to be tied up,” she reminded him. He actually laughed.

“Do you think I give a fuck?”

“But I thought this party was for me.”

“It is.”

And then he was inside of her. Tate cried out, her shoulders arching away from the couch. His hand came down against her breast bone, pressing her down flat, then he leaned forward. Kissed her softly.

“Do you want to be untied?” he whispered, his lips against hers.

“I want you to do whatever you want,” she whispered back.

He slammed his hips against her so hard, she actually shrieked, and her hands automatically jerked against the tie, yanking the entire end table forward. A lamp wobbled and fell to the floor, but Jameson didn't seem to notice. Just kept fucking her.

Oh wow, he's been saving up for this ...

On a technical level, Tate didn't know how to describe the sex they had; it wasn't “*making love*”, that was for sure. At least, not the way most people thought of it. When they really got going, there was always at least some small, sharp sting of pain, with a thick layer of pleasure blanketing it. *Perfection*. Jameson was simply too big, in every sense of the word. On top of her, inside of her, his hands against her. He took her over and overflowed her and she spilled over with him.

Absolute perfection.

*This is how **we** make love.*

“Jesus, Tate, I tell you to shut the fuck up, and you start screaming even louder,” Jameson hissed, pounding into her. Tate tried to respond, but couldn't catch her breath. She tried to reach her arms towards him. That's why she hated being tied up – she wanted to touch him, to *always* be touching him.

“It's the only way your hear me,” she finally managed to get out.

“Is that a fucking joke? How could I ever *not* hear you; you never stop talking.”

“And *you* never listen.”

He slapped her across the face.

He's pulling out the good stuff awfully early – he must want this over quickly.

“Watch how you fucking speak to me,” he growled. Tate shook her head, straining her hips towards his own.

“I’ll speak to you any way I fucking want,” she pressed. He slapped her again, and then his hand was tight around her neck. Squeezing. Almost choking.

“Goddamn, Tate, you’re mouth,” he moaned, his mouth moving to her breast. Biting. Kissing. Samesies.

“You love it,” she panted, her whole body starting to shiver.

“I know,” he whispered, his tongue tracing a long line from her cleavage clear to the hollow in her throat.

“Jameson, Jameson, *please*,” Tate cried out.

His hand moved away from her throat and he yanked at the tie, pulling her hands free. Tate’s fingers immediately went into his hair, scratching and pulling. Jameson growled and pulled away from her, leaning back on his knees. His hands gripped onto her hips and his thrusts turned almost brutal.

“Taking you longer than I thought it would, Tate,” he chuckled, glaring down at her. She scratched her nails down his chest, really digging in, ripping a button off his shirt.

“What can I say? *Old age* has made you soft,” she teased.

Jameson didn’t hold back when he slapped her that time, and Tate really did scream when she came. She could feel every single muscle she had lock into place, even causing Jameson to cry out. He pumped twice more into her, then he was coming, too. She shuddered and gasped for air, wrapping her body around him when he fell onto her chest.

“Holy fucking shit, Tate,” he breathed. She managed a laugh.

“I know.”

“I must be an old man, cause I swear to god, one of these days, your pussy is gonna kill me.”

“I’ll be sure to have that put on your tombstone.”

He laughed as well, then kissed her breast bone.

“Thank you, Liebe.”

“You’re very welcome, Love.”

Tate held him even tighter. Her head was spinning from the alcohol and exertion. Her thighs were shaking like she’d just run a marathon. Her neck

was stinging and her cheek was burning. All her old favorites. She pressed her face into his hair and breathed him in.

"I love you," she whispered.

"I know, baby girl."

"And you love me, too."

"More than words can express."

"Good. Now get off of me, you weigh a ton."

Jameson snorted and blew a raspberry on her chest. She shrieked, tried to push him off, but he just blew another one. It devolved into giggling, then arguing, then threats, and soon enough his tongue was in her mouth and she was using her feet to pull his pants away from his legs.

"Fuck, Tate, at this rate we'll be here all night," Jameson whispered, his teeth sharp against the line of her jaw. She nodded.

"Sounds good to me," she replied, panting as two of his fingers reduced her to a pool of wetness. She was ready to beg him to fuck her again, when the door to the room started to open.

"Sir, I don't think these -," Sanders' voice began to say.

"Don't come in here!" Tate and Jameson shouted in unison. There was a pause, then the door slowly swung shut. Once upon a time, Sanders walking in on them in compromising positions had been funny. Now, they both made an effort to spare him from any more embarrassing or awkward moments.

Jameson helped her to her feet. Gave her a wolf-grin when it took her a moment to stand right. She slapped him in the chest before going about getting dressed again. She couldn't find her bra, though, so she just put her shirt on, then got back into Jameson's jacket. While Jameson buckled his pants, she skipped over to the door and let Sanders inside.

"These were all I could find," he said, holding up a pair of sneakers. Tate took them from him and glanced at Jameson.

"Did you pack these for me? I'll look ridiculous," she told him, before bending over and slipping on the shoes – a pair of white, skater-style, DCs.

"I know how you are; we can't make it through a whole night without you complaining about your fucking shoes. I just grabbed the flattest ones I could find and threw them in the car," Jameson explained, taming his hair by running his fingers through it a couple times.

"Very thoughtful of you."

"I know. Let's get the fuck out of here. Sanders, did you settle up for me?"

"Yes, sir."

"Excellent. So glad you're home."

"Um ..., me too, sir."

They started filing out of the room. There was a brief argument because Tate wanted to keep the almost full bottle of Jack Daniel's. Jameson told her to leave it. She didn't want to waste the booze or money. He pointed out that she'd had enough booze, and it wasn't her money, so she shouldn't worry about it. She glared at him and tucked the bottle under her arm, stomping out the door ahead of him.

"That girl," Jameson grumbled, but he chuckled while she gingerly made her way onto the spiral stair case.

"I'm sorry, but someone seems to have forgotten something," Sanders' voice came from inside the room. He turned around, and then Jameson really did laugh. Sanders was holding up a rose colored, lace bra. The one Tate hadn't been able to find.

"You know what? Keep it. A souvenir for when you go back to Russia," Jameson joked, winking at Sanders before turning to leave.

The bouncers weren't keen on the idea of Tate leaving with the bottle, and another argument was had. In the end, Sanders was able to talk it out of her hands. She danced outside, and was delighted to discover that the rap star party from the private room next to theirs was waiting out there, as well.

While they waited for their cars to be brought around, the two groups socialized. Well, Tatum chatted with the ladies while Jameson and the rapper smoked cigars. Sanders stood by a wall.

"So I gotta ask," one of the girls started saying. "How do you keep a man like that? I read an article saying he used to sleep with a different girl every night."

Tate laughed and looked over her shoulder. Jameson was standing a little ways behind her. One hand held a cigar to his lips, and the other was shoved into his pants pocket. Her high heels dangled from his wrist, and she smiled.

That man is perfection.

"Lots of threesomes," Tate finally answered, and all the girls laughed.

Eventually, the rapper's limo was pulled around and they had to say goodbye. Tate waved them off, then danced back to her boys. The DC shoes she had changed into allowed for a lot of movement and she wondered why she hadn't just worn them in the first place. She backed Sanders up against a wall and forced him to suffer through her “*twerking*” on him. When the car was pulled up, he finally pushed her away. She snorted with laughter and fell against Jameson.

“Ready to go home?” he asked. She nodded, clutching his lapels and pulling him closer.

“More than ready,” she replied, before kissing him sloppily.

“You realize,” he pulled back from her as his hands squeezed her hips, “you're providing a show.”

“Huh?”

Jameson jerked his head to the side and Tate glanced behind her. Several men with large cameras were across the street, snapping away. She glared at them. They had probably shown up for the rap star, but then realized who Jameson was; Tate didn't like it. Paparazzi had been responsible for a lot of her and Jameson's problems early on, so she didn't like to provide them with anymore fodder.

So she turned around and gave them the finger, with both hands, holding them up in front of her face.

“That just makes them take more pictures,” Jameson informed her, wrapping his arm around her waist and walking her forward, up to the car.

“So? Nothing usable, they'll have to blur it all out,” she replied.

“You're ridiculous.”

“*You're* ridiculous.”

“Tate?”

“Yeah?”

“*Shut up.*”

The drive home didn't seem as long. Probably because she spent most of it on his lap, kissing and touching as much of him as he would allow. He produced a bottle of Dom Perignon, 1999, and they toasted their glasses. The second glass wound up getting spilled down Tate's front, and then it was a free-for-all. By the time they rolled up to the house in Weston, she was straddling Jameson's lap and he was gripping her jaw, forcing her to look straight up while he poured the champagne down her throat. It spilled over the sides of her mouth and ran down her neck, over her breasts.

“That was a waste,” she breathed when she'd swallowed everything. She ran her hands over her chest, then flicked champagne in his face.

“Tatum, if it gets you wet, it's never a waste,” was his retort. She laughed.

“Good response, Mr. Kane. Can we go inside now?” she asked.

“I thought you'd never ask.”

They tripped up the front stairs, banged up against the door. Like a couple of horny teenagers, unable to keep their hands off each other. Jameson finally unlocked the front door and they literally fell inside, landing hard on the stairs. Tate groaned and Jameson pulled her up, moving her so she was a couple steps ahead of him.

“Jameson, wait, just wait,” she breathed, gripping onto his shoulders while he pulled at her shirt.

“No,” he replied, moving on to unbutton her shorts. She shoved his hands away.

“I know you want to take me upstairs and ravage me,” she tried to say, their hands fighting with each other.

“No shit. Stop talking.”

“But I had other plans,” she said, holding onto his wrists.

“What other plans? I'm fucking you tonight, I don't give a shit about your plans,” he snapped, yanking free from her.

“Oh, I didn't say we wouldn't be having sex – I definitely want you to fuck me,” she told him, smoothing her hands up his chest.

“Then what the fuck are you talking about?” he demanded. She leaned in close, wrapping her arms around his shoulders.

“I'm talking about tonight. I was thinking that you should fuck me in the ass,” she whispered.

The next second, she was shrieking as Jameson threw her over his shoulder. She laughed uncontrollably as he jogged up the stairs, taking them two at a time.

“Jesus, Tate, why didn't you say something earlier!? I would've left that fucking club hours ago!” he complained. She gripped onto his belt.

“I wanted it to be a surprise.”

“A very welcome one. Goddamn, did you get fatter?” he teased, adjusting her weight as he strode down the hall.

“What!? Oh, that's it. Put me down. I'm putting on a onesie and you aren't getting sex for a week!” she yelled at him, but was still laughing.

“Oh, I don't think so. Too late. You already said it, so it's happening,” he replied. As they went through their bedroom door, she shot her arms out, gripping onto the door frame.

“No way. This'll teach you to make fun of me.”

“I don't know why you're still talking, Tate. It's not like you have a say in any of this.”

Then he yanked her free of the door.

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“Wake up.”

Tate groaned and burrowed further under the pillows. But Jameson refused to be ignored and suddenly the mattress was shaking underneath her.

“What!?” she snapped, pushing herself up. “What time is it!?”

“It's eight o'clock. C'mon, get up,” he urged. He was leaning over her, both of his palms flat on the mattress, shoving it up and down.

“*Eight!?* Jameson, we just went to sleep like two hours ago! Go away,” she groaned, starting to lay back down. But he grabbed her arm, pulling her sideways off the bed.

“No no no, time to get up. I have a surprise for you,” he offered, helping her to stand up.

“I hate surprises,” she complained, but followed as he dragged her to the bathroom.

“You'll like this, I promise,” he assured her.

“Doubtful. I just want to sleep, Jameson. I'm sore in ways you can't even imagine.”

“You'd be surprised.”

Tate snorted.

It was a good surprise, though. Jameson had drawn a bath for her, complete with bubbles and everything. She moaned as he helped her into the sudsy warmth, and she kept moaning till she was chin deep in bubbles. Her eyes were closed, so she wasn't aware that he was joining her till she felt him climbing in the water. It was a huge tub, and he sat at the opposite end, arranging her legs so they were on top of his own.

“Okay, so it's not so bad,” she conceded, and he laughed.

“I thought you'd like it,” he replied, grabbing a sponge and soaping down one of her legs.

“Thank you. But what got into you that you had to do this at eight? I would have loved this at two in the afternoon, when God intended for good human beings to wake up,” she pointed out. He chuckled and started massaging her left foot.

“Because I had something else I wanted to talk to you about,” he started. Tate frowned. Jameson was rarely hesitant, and if he was starting a

conversation by doing something nice for her, then she was doubly afraid.

“Oh god. Now I really wish I'd stayed in bed,” she groaned, resting her head back against the porcelain.

“I have some issues that I need to go over with my lawyer,” he informed her.

“So?”

“So, I also need to have my will re-drafted, and there's a business merger I'm looking into,” he went on.

“Still not sure how any of that involves me. Unless you're leaving everything to me in your will. Then I'm very interested,” she joked.

“You wish. It involves you because the lawyer who handles this stuff isn't in the country, and won't be for a while. I have to go to him,” Jameson continued.

“Okay. Bon voyage,” Tate yawned.

“You're coming with me.”

“Excuse me?”

“I said, you're coming -,”

“No, I heard you,” Tate started, sitting up right and looking at him.

“What do you mean? Why do I need to go?”

“Because I want you there, I like having you with me when I travel,” he informed her.

“Well, that's awfully sweet of you, but I have a job, Jameson. I have things going on here, I just can't -,” she began rambling.

“It's taken care of.”

“Huh?”

“It's taken care of – I spoke to the bar manager and bartender, they're going to run everything, it'll be fine. You haven't been there that much lately, anyway,” he pointed out. Tate pulled her feet away from him.

“What the fuck, Jameson!? Would you like it if I called your work and arranged for you to have time off behind your back?” she demanded. He laughed at her.

“That wouldn't work, my secretary would never listen to you.”

“This isn't right, and you know it. You don't get to do something like this,” she snapped.

“Well, your business *is* half mine. I could just close it down.”

Fucker.

"I knew it," Tate hissed, pulling herself to her feet. "I knew it was only a matter of time before you threw that in my face."

"Tate, calm down and just listen to me," Jameson sighed.

"Why? What's the point? Whether I listen or not, you're just gonna make me do whatever you want, so let's just cut out the bullshit," she said, wrapping a towel around her body.

"Watch your mouth," he replied quickly. She glared at him.

"*You* watch it. So where are you dragging me to now!?" she asked, stomping out of the bathroom.

"It won't be for that long, Tate, so just calm the fuck down," Jameson called after her. She rolled her eyes and made her way into their closet.

"I don't care. This is shitty. Where are we going?" she repeated the question. He finally followed after her.

"Hong Kong."

"*Hong Kong!*?"

"Did I stutter?"

"For how long!?"

"One week, maybe longer," he answered her. Tate groaned, grabbing one of his old t-shirts out of a drawer.

"Maybe longer? Why not just make it a month, seeing as how I'm not even needed here to help run *your* business," she grumbled, letting her towel drop to the ground before yanking the shirt over her head.

"You can shut the fuck up any time now," he offered.

"*You* shut up. When are we leaving?" she refused to look at him as she wiggled into a pair of yoga pants.

"In about two hours."

"*Two hours!*?"

"Yes. So you better start packing."

"*You* fucking pack. I didn't know about this trip, I didn't plan this trip, *I don't want go on this trip*, so you know what? I'm gonna keep on with the trend and not have anything to do with this trip," she informed him, then went to stomp out of the room. Jameson grabbed her arm, stopping her in her tracks.

"You better change your fucking attitude. Whether you like it or not, we're getting on a plane soon, and I don't wanna spend the next twenty-four hours dealing with your shit," he warned her. She smiled sweetly at him.

"Oh, you'll spend a lot longer than twenty-four hours dealing with it."

Then she yanked away and stormed into the bedroom.

Tate didn't have to pack. She wrapped herself into a blanket burrito and stayed like that, listening while Sanders packed a bag for her. She felt kinda bad, but she also knew that he had to be in on the trip – he was going, after all. And she didn't like surprises. Not like that, not ones that undermined her as a business owner and a boss.

She made one last valiant attempt to refuse to go, but Jameson just picked her up, blanket burrito and all, and carried her out to the car. Before she could work up the energy to seriously be a bitch, they were at the airfield, loading their belongings onto the plane. A *private* plane; Jameson had finally bought one. Mostly for her – what with Ang's career exploding, he couldn't really visit whenever he wanted, so Tate was flying out to L.A. and Vegas all the time. Eventually, Jameson decided it would be more economical to just buy a plane and give her free use of it.

She decided not to think about that little fact as she made herself comfortable on a couch. He sat down next to her, taking off his jacket while the plane took off.

“You've been suspiciously quiet,” he commented, looking down at her.

“I can get loud if you want,” she offered. He chuckled.

“No, thank you. I'm surprised you're this uppity. I thought you'd be wrecked with a hangover this morning,” he pointed out.

“No such luck,” Tate sighed. She was actually pretty sure she might have still been just a little bit drunk. But she wasn't going to tell him that.

“Good. I hate dealing with you when you're ill.”

“The feeling is entirely mutual. And I'm not hungover, so don't worry about it.”

“I won't.”

*

Two hours later, Tate felt like she was going to die. She panted for air, resting her back against a wall. Jameson chuckled.

“Done?” he asked. She licked her lips, letting her eyes droop shut.

“You make this worse, I hope you know.”

“I could leave,” he offered.

“Could you!?” she snapped back.

Jameson started to stand up, but at the same time Tate felt her stomach dip to the left and she grabbed onto his pant leg. He didn't move, and when she lurched forward to stick her head over the toilet, he sat back down. Gently gathered all her hair and held it at the back of her head.

"The things I do for you, baby girl," he sighed as she dry heaved and gagged into the toilet.

"God, I have never felt this bad. I just want it to stop," Tate begged, bracing one hand against the toilet tank. Jameson used his free hand to rub her shoulders.

"Want something to drink?"

"No, I'll just puke it up."

"Better than stomach acid."

"Will you make fun of me if I start crying?" she asked, taking deep breaths as she felt another wave of nausea roll through her stomach.

"Not till you're done puking, I promise," he replied. She managed a laugh, but that just made her stomach cramp up worse, and she was back over the toilet.

Sanders eventually appeared with a ginger ale. Jameson moved to sit on the floor with her, feeding her crackers. She thanked him, then laid down, resting with her head in his lap. She was too hungover to be mad at him anymore. Besides, she knew that most wealthy stock-broker-CEO-financier-tycoon-type dudes wouldn't be willing to hold their girlfriend's hair back while she puked, so she figured that made up for Jameson talking to her staff behind her back.

When there was absolutely nothing left to vomit up, they finally moved back into the main cabin. Tate stretched out on a couch, beaching herself against Sanders while Jameson went to scrounge up something real that she could eat and potentially hold down.

"Are you alright?" Sanders asked in a soft voice, closing his laptop.

"No, I'm dying," she croaked, shivering. He draped his arm on top of her, rubbing her wrist affectionately.

"You are not dying. You shouldn't drink so much," he pointed out. She pinched his leg.

"Hindsight is twenty-twenty. You should've stopped me," she retorted.

"It is not my job to police how much you -,"

"Sanders?" she interrupted, wrapping her arm around his waist and pressing her face against his ribs.

“Hmmm?”

“Please shut up now, you're making me feel worse.”

“Of course.”

Tate slept against him all the way to San Francisco. They landed there to refuel, and Jameson actually left the plane to run an errand. Normally, Tate would have been suspicious, but she was too hungover to care. He could be arranging the sale of her body to an oil sheik, and she wouldn't care. So long as no one bothered her while she was hungover.

After they took off, she slept some more, clear to the halfway point between the U.S. and Hong Kong. Then she woke up, let out a loud belch, and realized she was starving. Sanders was sleeping in a back room, but Jameson had stayed up to keep an eye on her, so he had some food brought out for her.

“Jesus, Tate, don't make yourself sick again,” he laughed, watching as she wolfed down a plate of food.

“I feel like I haven't eaten in years,” she replied around a full mouth.

“You're certainly eating like it.”

“Jameson,” she ignored his rudeness.

“Yes?”

“Why do you need me to come to Hong Kong?” she asked. Now that her brain was clearer, she didn't feel the need to be quite so bitchy.

“Because. As hard as it is to believe, baby girl, I like being around you,” he told her, moving so he was sitting next to her.

“That's very sweet, Jameson. But I really, *really*, don't like how you went about it. You could've just asked me,” she said, pushing her tray away and tucking her feet underneath herself.

“I was trying to do something spontaneous. Fun. Remember those words?” Jameson taunted her. Tate tried to glare, but couldn't hold it up. She smiled and leaned into him.

“Once upon a time. And Hong Kong? It's gonna be so hot,” she complained.

“You'll love it, I promise,” he assured her, kissing the top of her head.

“You can't just ditch me,” she started, wrapping her arm around him. “No spending all day in meetings. I hate that. You ruined London for me, that one time.”

“You're never gonna let me forget that, are you?” he sighed.

“No, probably not,” she shook her head.

"I'll spend every day with you, I promise, *Liebe*," he whispered. She smiled.

"Good."

They talked for a while, about a lot of different things. Conversation always flowed between them, despite the fact that they were two very different people. It just worked for them. Then an hour before they were scheduled to land, Sanders wandered out, looking fresh as a daisy in a newly pressed suit. Tate looked down at herself, still wearing her hangover clothing, and laughed. Kissed Jameson before flouncing off into the back to change and clean last night's makeup off her face.

When they landed, Tatum felt almost halfway normal again. She had changed into a pair of shorts and a tank top, looking as unlike a financial mogul's girlfriend as she possibly could. She yanked her hair up into a ratty ponytail, shoved on her aviators, then followed them off the plane.

It was hot, like she'd predicted, and good lord, the humidity. She could feel herself sweating through her tank top and wondered how the guys could hold up in their suits – Jameson was in a three piece! But he acted as cool and comfortable as ever, strolling through customs like it was something he did every day.

"So are you meeting your lawyer today?" Tate asked during the ride to the hotel.

"No. He's actually not in Hong Kong," Jameson replied.

"Excuse me?" Tate didn't believe her ears.

"He's not in Hong Kong. He's in Singapore," he explained.

"So why the fuck didn't we go to Singapore!?" Tate demanded.

"I don't like Singapore. I like Hong Kong. He's going to meet me here," Jameson continued, scrolling through messages on his phone.

"Oh. Like tomorrow?"

"Like in a couple weeks."

Tate sat very still. In Boston, Jameson had said it would be a week, *maybe* longer. Now suddenly, the lawyer was going to show up "*in a couple weeks*". It was all very strange. How far away could Singapore be!?

"I don't understand," Tate started slowly, trying to keep her cool.

"Singapore is like right next door. You could be there and back in a day. Why not just go to him?"

"Because I don't want to. I like it here."

“So because *you* like it here, now Sanders and I have to be here with you. Indefinitely,” Tate clarified. Jameson nodded.

“I feel like we're stating the obvious here.”

“Then how come in Boston, you said -,”

“I don't give a shit what I said in Boston. Plans change, Tate. We're here now, and we're not going anywhere. Deal with it.”

Tate hated it when he talked to her like that; it was one thing to get nasty in bed. It was quite another during the light of day. He wouldn't appreciate it if she talked to him the same way. But she didn't say a word. She had long since learned that snapping back didn't work. A person couldn't fight fire with fire, not with Jameson. Calm was much more effective. She stared at him for a second longer, then sat back in her chair. Didn't say another word till they got to the hotel.

She continued not saying anything as they checked in, and didn't make a sound when they got to the room. A penthouse suite, with two bedrooms, a kitchen, living room, and wrap around balcony. She could tell he was waiting for her to say something, to comment on how nice the place was, but she didn't utter a word. After their luggage was delivered, she followed the concierge out. As she got on the elevator, Jameson stepped into the hallway, but he didn't say anything. Just glared at her as the doors slid shut.

Tatum loved Jameson, she really did, but sometimes she needed her space.

They were staying at the Four Seasons, which was right on the water. Tatum walked around for a little while. There had been heavy cloud cover when they'd landed, but they were starting to dissipate. As she walked along the ocean front, the sun beat down on her.

Tate knew she was kind of being a brat. For God's sake, she was walking on a beach in Hong Kong, when twenty-four hours before she had been in Boston, thinking she'd be spending a quiet weekend at home. She was with the man she planned on spending the rest of her life with, a man who still made her heart race and her panties melt. A lot of people would kill to be in her shoes.

But she still had the urge to fight against authority, and Jameson was about as authoritarian as they came. And it wasn't right, him dragging her off for weeks at a time, no matter what he said. They were in a relationship, they should be equals, but he seemed to forget that from time to time.

Would just drag and pull her around, like she was his chihuahua. She didn't want to be a chihuahua. She wanted to be a rottweiler.

So I can bite him on the ass.

It was doubly stupid to be upset because she knew it was just in his nature. Every now and then, Jameson had to bang on his chest and act like the king of the jungle. Act like nothing and no one mattered to him, because he was just a bad ass. Whatever. Normally, she just let it run its course.

Something felt different about this time, though. The secrecy, the going behind her back. It seemed a lot more premeditated. Usually he just acted like an ogre and wouldn't let her leave the house or go to L.A., or something. This was a bit much. Talking to her employees? Flying her around the world? Not cute.

The sun was setting so Tate made her way back to the hotel. But she didn't want to go back to the room, not yet, so she made her way out to the pool area. She discovered a large hammock, strung between two palm trees, so she climbed in it. By the time she was comfortable, the sun had completely set and it was dark out.

Tate didn't know how long she had been laying there when she heard footsteps approaching. She sighed and didn't bother turning her head. She knew who it was; wondered what had taken him so long.

"Am I going to get yelled at if I bother you?" Jameson asked, stepping up next to the hammock.

"Eh. Too comfy to care right now. I'll work up the energy for it later," she replied.

He gripped onto the netting and Tate braced the hammock while he slid into it opposite of her, parting his legs around her own. They swung a little bit, but didn't tip over, and soon he had her feet resting on his stomach. She settled back down, staring up at the sky.

"I wanted this to be a fun trip," he finally broke the silence.

"Then maybe you should've included me in it, as opposed to just dragging me along," Tate suggested.

"Maybe I wanted it to be a surprise," he countered.

"Maybe I think it's not a very good surprise."

"I can't read your mind, Tate."

"No, hence why you should talk to me."

He swallowed thickly and she could feel him working to control his anger.

“If I ask you to do me a favor, do you think you could suspend your brattiness for a little while and just humor me?” he finally asked. Tate snorted.

“Well, when you ask so sweetly ...,”

“*Just trust me.* Okay? I have never made you do anything you didn't end up liking,” he pointed out.

“Oh, I beg to differ,” Tate laughed. “Remember that time you -,”

“Shut the fuck up, Tate.”

They laid in silence for a while. Jameson was once again massaging her feet, and she sighed, revelling in the feel of it. Two years ago, if someone had told her that Jameson Kane would be rubbing her feet for her, she would have laughed at them.

Just enjoy this trip. Do it for him. He does a lot for you.

“Jameson,” she whispered, after about ten minutes.

“Hmmm?” he replied.

“Which one is Cassiopia?” she asked.

“Excuse me?”

“Is it that one?” Tate asked, pointing at the sky.

“You're asking me about constellations?” he clarified.

“It's either that, or bitch at you some more. Your choice,” she told him, but she was joking.

“Come over here.”

It took a bit of maneuvering, and she almost tipped the hammock over, *twice*, but finally Tate was facing the same direction as him. The hammock was wide, so Tate tucked into his side, laying next to him with his arm under her head.

“I wanna see 'em all,” she informed him.

“Jesus, I'm not an astronomer, Tate,” he snapped.

“Yeah, but you are *Jameson Kane*. You know all,” was her response.

“Shut up. Look, right there.”

He pointed up and slightly to the right. When she still couldn't tell, he grabbed her hand and held it in his own, pointing her finger. He moved around, showing her the shape; sort of an “*M*” in the stars. Then he showed her some of the astrological signs. It was nice, talking about something non-sensical, something that didn't pertain to anything that was going on around them.

“How did you learn all these?” Tate asked, after he explained how Orion's Belt turned into the Hunter.

“A class in high school. Read some books,” he replied, wrapping his arm around her shoulders and tugging her closer, forcing her to roll onto her side. She anchored her arm around his waist.

“I never learned about that in school,” she said through a yawn. He snorted.

“Probably because you were too busy blowing your teacher,” he suggested. She laughed.

“Shut up, I didn't become a slut till *after* school,” she reminded him.

“Do you ever miss it?” he asked.

“What, school?”

“No, life before ..., all this. Being able to sleep with whoever you want, whenever you want,” he explained. Tate grew still. Why was he asking her that?

“How do you mean?” she asked warily.

“You used to get to do whatever you want, whenever you wanted. Do *whoever* you wanted. Like *Angier* – you slept with him for like five years. Do you ever miss that?” Jameson tried to make it clearer. But it didn't clear anything up.

“Do I ever miss sleeping with Ang? What kind of question is that?” Tate demanded, planting her hands on his chest and pushing herself up. He shrugged.

“Just a question. Just curious,” he replied, smoothing her hair off of her face.

“Do *you* miss sleeping with every woman in the tri-state area?” Tate countered. Jameson laughed.

“*Liebe*, every woman in the tri-state area couldn't compete with you. No, I don't miss it,” he assured her. She narrowed her eyes.

“You're being suspiciously sweet,” she called him out. He snorted.

“I can't win with you. Just shut up and answer the question,” he said, yanking on a strand of her hair.

“No, I don't miss sleeping with Ang, or anyone else. Why would you ask me that?” she pressed. Jameson shrugged.

“Sometimes ... sometimes I just like to double check that you're happy,” he finally said.

I am such a bitch.

“Jameson,” she breathed, laying down on his chest. “Even when you piss me off, I am still happier with you than I have ever been in my whole life.”

“Good answer.”

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Jameson had a hell of a kink in his neck. That's what he got for spending the night in a hammock with Tate on top of him. And not in a sexy-fun-time way. No, more like a startled-awake-by-janitors way. Not sexy at all.

They made their way upstairs, and he was able to convince her to take a shower with him, but it was short lived. Sanders knocked on the door halfway through, before things had a chance to get really interesting. Apparently Jameson's "*package*" had arrived, the one he'd been waiting for; Sanders wasn't very good at being discreet. Luckily, Tate was too distracted by Jameson's fingers. He would just have to wait for his turn, so he made sure to give her a big enough orgasm that she wouldn't have cared if the bathroom walls fell down around them, never mind Jameson sneaking out.

"She's better?" Sanders asked as Jameson came out of the bedroom, rubbing a towel over his head.

"Yes. She was pissed because I'm '*yanking*' you two around," he chuckled.

"I told you she wouldn't like the surprise element."

"I know. Is the car ready?"

"Yes, it's waiting downstairs."

It was about a twenty minute drive to the airport. Jameson had originally wanted to hire a town car or a limo during their trip, but Sanders shot that idea down. He didn't feel comfortable with someone else driving him. *He* would drive, or he wouldn't be in the car at all. So even though it was supposed to be a vacation for him as well, Sanders was once again Jameson's chauffeur, carting him around Hong Kong in a rented Rolls Royce.

As they made their way across the island, Jameson's mind wandered. He stared out the window, but didn't take in any of the sights. Thought about Tate. Her laugh. Her eyes. Her body. He'd been looking at her almost every day for the last two years, but it never felt old. And really, he'd been looking at her for a lot longer than that; just in his memories. He thought back over the years. Smiled as he remembered the first time he had ever seen her ...

*

Eloise O'Shea introduced herself to Jameson at a party thrown by Jameson's father. Both their families were there, and he had met Mathias O'Shea before, but never the O'Shea women. Eloise was exceptionally pretty – when he met her, his first thought was that she could have been a model, if she wanted. Tall, with long legs and smooth hips. She smiled the right smiles, said the right things.

Boring.

He vaguely remembered her gesturing to the rest of her family, her mother and Mathias, who was standing almost in front of a young woman. A leggy, coltish girl who bore very little resemblance to her sister, Jameson could barely see her. He didn't look twice, anyway. He was a month away from twenty-one and already wealthier than anyone had a right to be; young women didn't interest him. Tall blondes with shapely bodies, however, were right up his alley.

Jameson and Ellie met again on several occasions, “bumping” into each other. He would later learn that a lot of it had been carefully crafted by their parents, arranging the whole relationship from the get go. Every time, Ellie angled for a date, mentioning restaurants she liked, offering to get him into exclusive events, blah blah blah.

Jameson didn't give two fucks about restaurants or events – he just wanted to know what she was like in bed.

It took a long time, longer than he would have liked. She was charming and smart, but boring as fuck. He had been raised to be polite, however, so he stuck it out. He'd never gotten along with his father, but for once, the old man was pleased with his decision. Jameson was tired of butting heads with him, so staying with Ellie just seemed easier.

She wasn't horrible in bed – though of course, most women had to actively try to be bad in bed. She was eager to please, but it soon became apparent that she wasn't eager to please him in the ways he really wanted. And Jameson was coming to realize that the things he wanted were pretty far from “normal”.

The first time he ever “met” Tatum O'Shea, it was the beginning of February. Jameson had managed to avoid officially meeting the O'Shea clan for as long as possible, but after two months of dating Ellie, he

couldn't beg off anymore. No one could pitch a fit quite like she could, and Jameson hated a fit. So he agreed to have dinner at her house.

He was standing in the living room, having a brandy with Mathias, when the front door swung open, then slammed shut quickly. Jameson glanced in the hall, then did a double-take. A girl was walking towards the stairs, snapping into her phone. She had long black hair that had been yanked up into a messy ponytail on top of her head, and she was wearing running shorts that were so ridiculously tight and tiny, she might as well have just been wearing underwear.

But thinking that made him wonder if she was wearing any underwear at all, which then led to thoughts of peeling her shorts off of her and doing unspeakable things to her ... most likely involving tying said shorts around various parts of her body, and -

"Kane," Mathias barked. "Have you met my other daughter, Tatum?"

That's the girl from the Christmas party!?

"No, I haven't," Jameson replied.

"Willful child, that one. We told her you would be here tonight, told her what time to be home, but did she listen? Of course not. Ridiculous. And that outfit. She looks like a prostitute," Mathias grumbled. Tatum was oblivious to all this as she paced in front of the stairs, arguing with whoever was on the other end of the phone.

Stop looking at her like that, she's sixteen, you fucking pervert.

"It's not so bad, she was obviously exercising," Jameson managed to respond.

Tatum finally got off her phone and jogged up the stairs. Jameson cleared his throat, looked away. Mathias grumbled some more, but they didn't talk about Tatum again. Though Jameson spent the better part of the night watching the stairs, waiting for her to come down, wondering what she'd look like in normal clothing.

She never came – he would later learn that her father had sent her a message telling her not to, telling her that she had already embarrassed him enough in front of their guest.

Over the course of his relationship with Ellie, Jameson didn't see Tatum a whole lot. The two girls were far enough apart in age that they really didn't have that much in common. On top of that, they were two very different people. Two people who didn't get along very well. Ellie never

invited her sister anywhere or to anything, and Jameson avoided family gatherings like the plague, so he never had a reason to be around Tatum.

But every time he did find himself around her, he was struck by her presence. She was somewhat shy and reserved, but when she did smile, it was big, and lit up the room. She had sharp, dark eyes, and was very smart. And her body, dear lord. She was only five years younger than him; if they had been twenty-five and thirty, it wouldn't have made a difference. But seventeen and twenty-two? Jameson knew the way he looked at her was inappropriate. Still, good looks were good looks, he couldn't deny that, and Tate had looks in spades. Different from Ellie. Darker.

There was something about her that brought out the dark thoughts in Jameson, as well.

The first time Jameson tried to break up with Ellie, he had been very blunt. He told her the main reason was because she was boring in bed. Jameson wanted something else, something different. Ellie screamed and threatened and cried. Jameson didn't care.

That first attempted break up was the first time he slept with someone outside of their relationship. He had gone to a bar, hooked up with a waitress. A very adventurous girl with a ridiculously talented mouth, but the best part – the woman loved when he pulled her hair. Something about this thrilled him. The harder he pulled, the more she liked it. The deeper she sucked him, the harder she rode him.

This is what I want.

And so it continued for a year and a half. He would try to dump Ellie. They would have a fight. He would warn her that he was going to sleep with someone else, he would go sleep with someone else, he would tell her that he slept with someone else – and Ellie would still beg him to stay. It was insane. What an insane, fucked up relationship.

He would come to learn that he specialized in those kinds of relationships.

But outside pressure from his father, from her parents, from Ellie herself, kept him with her. Deep down, Jameson admitted he was weak. He would rather take the path of least resistance, then just dump the bitch and deal with his father's wrath. So Jameson stayed. Slept around, explored his darker proclivities with other women.

And as she got older, he could admit, he would occasionally fantasize about Tate. She was sexy as fuck, and forbidden fruit. She was nice as could

be, always polite, a “please and thank you” kind of girl; which just seemed to spur him on more. The nicer and politer she was around him, the more he wanted to do ..., something. Shake her out of her pastel existence. Scare her. Wrap his hand around her throat and squeeze.

But only a little.

It was all a fantasy, though. He also thought pop singer Katy Perry was sexy, but he was most likely never going to sleep with her. He would never actually touch Tate; wasn't actually, literally, attracted to her. Too young, too immature, too inexperienced, too off-limits.

No, there would never be anything between him and Tatum O'Shea.

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“Hello?” Tate called out, creeping around the penthouse. She kind of remembered Jameson saying he had to run an errand, but she'd been in a post-coital fog. Not a whole lot can get through that kind of fog.

The boys had been gone for a long time. Once again, Tate was suspicious. Where were they sneaking off to? And she wasn't necessarily surprised by Jameson behaving that way, but it was a surprise coming from Sanders. He wasn't a fan of surprises either, and certainly didn't like taking part in them.

Oh god, this is all an elaborate plan to sell me in to sex slavery. Took him two years, but he finally found a buyer.

Tate meandered around the rooms. Ate some grapes. Danced naked on the balcony. Then she finally got dressed and laid down. Took a nap. She woke up to the sound of the door opening. She sat up, rubbing at her eyes.

“Tate?” Jameson's voice rang through the room.

“In here,” she yawned out.

“Well, be out here.”

Feisty.

Tate crawled out of the bed, dragging her feet as she made her way into the living room area. Jameson looked her over and burst out laughing. She blinked at him.

“What? What!?” she asked.

“Were you sleeping?” he ignored her question, walking up till he was right in front of her.

“Yeah. Why?”

“Your hair, you slept on it while it was wet.”

He was still laughing as he lifted his hands to her head. She could feel him patting down her hair, so she reached up and felt it, as well. She cringed. Yeah, not good. She was basically rocking a giant rat's-nest-poof on the back of her head.

“Guess another shower is in order,” she teased, leaning into him and wrapping her arms around him.

“Okay, but this time, *you* get to spend the whole time on your knees,” he warned her.

“Hey, no one made you do that for me, and I would have been happy to reciprocate, but you ran away. Where have you guys been all this time? Where's Sanders?” Tate asked, realizing for the first time that he wasn't there. She glanced around, but didn't see him anywhere in the room.

“Look, I know you don't like surprises, but I think you'll -,” Jameson started.

He was interrupted by a banging noise, though. Something banged into the hotel room's door, and then it opened a little. There were voices in the hall – Tate recognized Sanders speaking softly, though she couldn't make out what he was saying. Then someone else started to talk, and they weren't being soft at all.

“I didn't fly all this way on a moment's notice just so you and Satan can tell me what I can and can't do.”

Tate let out a shriek and started running for the door, just as it began to swing open. Sanders walked in first, but she ran right past him, throwing herself at the other voice.

It's been too long.

Angier Hollingsworth hadn't changed much over the years – she often joked that he was a vampire. The man didn't seem to age. He was still lanky, his hair still messy, his smile still naughty. The only difference was now he was semi-famous and pretty wealthy. Tate hadn't seen him in quite a while, because both their schedules were so busy. She couldn't get time away to see him as often as she used to, and he couldn't get any time at all, period. The porn industry was very demanding, and Ang was sitting at the top of it.

Well, more like laying down, really.

“What are you doing here!?” she yelled, leaping on him. Ang stumbled backwards with her weight, dropping his luggage as he fell against the wall in the hallway.

“I was invited!” he told her, wrapping his arms around her as she wrapped her legs around his waist.

“I've missed you, Angie-wangy,” she sighed, pressing her head into his neck. Ang always felt a little like home to her. Warm, familiar, comforting.

“I always miss you, Tater tot,” he countered, hugging her tightly.

“God, I think I'm going to be sick,” Jameson's voice came from behind them.

Tate laughed and unwrapped herself from Ang, stepped back onto the ground. She helped pick his bags up and carried them into the hotel suite. Showed him around a bit, let him ooh and aah over the décor, the balcony.

“Seriously, Ang. What are you doing here? Jameson hasn't told me anything, I'm not even sure what *I'm* doing here,” Tate asked while they looked out over the ocean. Ang turned towards her.

“He called me a week or two ago, told me he'd be bringing you out here, thought maybe you'd like the company,” he explained.

“Sanders called you a week ago?” she asked.

“No, Satan.”

“*Jameson* called you!? Himself? Like actually spoke to you?” Tate guffawed.

Jameson and Ang had never become friends. They tolerated each others' presence for her, but they were just two totally different people. They were cordial and polite, got along on a basic level, but that was it. There were no phone calls or text messages between them. The idea of Jameson calling Ang was downright bizarre.

What the fuck is going on?

“He called you – *two weeks ago* – to ask you to come on this trip? And I didn't even know I was coming on this trip till yesterday morning?” Tate clarified, still in shock. Ang swallowed thickly and shrugged, turning back to look out at the water.

“Might have only been a week, I don't know. And he only said he *might* be bringing you, and that he *might* want me to come. I only got the call yesterday morning that he actually wanted me here,” Ang broke it down.

“God. I must have really made him feel bad,” Tate mumbled, remembering their talk in the hammock – which must have happened *after* Jameson had called Ang.

“Not surprising. You're kind of an asshole.”

Tate punched him in the arm.

“Shut up. Let's get something to eat, and you can tell me all about your latest sex-capade,” Tate suggested, linking her arm through his and leading him back inside.

“You know, believe it or not, I might actually be a little over having sex,” Ang told her, and Tate burst out laughing.

“I don't believe it. You? Not possible.”

Jameson was in some sort of phone meeting, so Tate took Sanders and Ang downstairs to a restaurant. Sanders told Ang all about Moscow, and Ang told Sanders all about reach-arounds.

Just like old times.

Jameson finally joined them, which added a sharp edge to the conversation. Tate had often wondered if the rivalry between the two men would ever die down. Two years was a long time, but both still seemed to be locked in some sort of war with each other.

“You owe me *big time* for this,” Jameson commented after Ang had left to find a bathroom. Tate snorted.

“I shouldn't have to owe you for something I didn't ask for,” she pointed out.

“Shut the fuck up and tell me how grateful you are.”

“Beyond words, darling.”

“Shut up.”

“Jameson,” Tate started, “why are you still so pissy with him? And if he makes you so antsy, why did you invite him?”

“I am not '*pissy*' with *Angier*, I just *don't like him*. And I invited him *for you*,” Jameson repeated the sentiment.

“You acting like a bitch about the whole thing kinda ruins the gift,” she teased.

“Tatum?”

“Hmmm?”

“*Shut the fuck up.*”

“Anything for you.”

They were silent for a while. Sanders picked at his salad. Jameson glared off into space. Tate smiled at him. He finally glanced at her, did a double-take, then stared at her.

“What? That blank stare makes you look like a cow,” he said bluntly.

“Jesus. How did you ever manage to pick up women with a mouth like that?” she replied.

“I got you easy enough.”

“Thank you,” she suddenly blurted out. Jameson groaned and ran a hand over his face.

“Your mood shifts become tiring. What are you thankful for?” he sighed.

“For you bringing Ang, for trying to salvage this trip for me. For putting up with me,” she offered. Jameson nodded.

“Good. You should be thankful.”

“Oh, trust me, I am.”

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Jameson sat at the foot of the bed, watching Tate as she shut the bedroom door. All the lights were off in the room. The blinds had all been drawn, only leaving a sliver of light coming in just at the bottom of the windows. They had never turned on the air conditioning when they'd gone to lunch, so the room was sweltering hot. But Tate made no move to turn on the AC. She knew he liked it warm.

She knows me so well.

Jameson loved this side of Tate. Of course, he loved all sides of her – first and foremost, he loved her heart and soul. But he thought it was stupid that people never wanted to admit that sex played a part in a loving relationship. Yes, he loved having sex with Tate. Yes, he loved how she was in bed. It was a large part of what had drawn him to her in the first place, her sex appeal.

He especially loved that he was the only one who got to see that side of her, anymore. Outside of the bed, in public, Tate was a spitfire. A dominating personality, she knew how to command a room. How to garner attention. Her wit and personality, her smart mouth and sassy words. She didn't take shit from anybody, over anything. Very independent. Very strong willed.

So it gave him a dark thrill to see such an independent, strong willed woman down on her knees. Lowering herself to crawl across the bedroom floor to him. So slow in her movements, accenting the sway of her hips. She reached his feet and sat back on her heels. Placed her palms on his knees, then slid them up his thighs, pushing his legs apart. Her body quickly filled the void and she slid up his length, pressing her lips to his ear.

“*Game?*” she whispered, slowly moving till she was straddling his lap, raised up on her knees.

“*What kind of game?*” he whispered back. She kept shifting and sliding around, moving like silk against his body, till she was kneeling at his side.

“You can't say one word,” she breathed, moving around so she was pressed against his back.

“Or what?”

“Or I win, and it's all over,” she chuckled, working his tie loose and dragging it over his head.

“Doesn't sound like a very fun game to me,” he pointed out, letting her pull him back. She forced him to lay down flat as she moved back to his side.

“Trust me, I'll make it fun,” she assured him, and he felt her hands on his belt buckle.

“You say that. Somehow I doubt it,” he challenged her. She snorted and yanked his pants down.

“By the end of the night, you'll be worshipping me. Game starts now,” she said.

“Wait, I never -,”

Her teeth skimmed the underside of his dick, and Jameson choked on air. She chuckled; a condescending sound that made him want to yank on her hair and tell her who was in charge. But he hated to lose. So he swallowed his groan and closed his eyes, reveling in the feel of her lips working their way to the base of his cock.

This woman will be the death of me.

Of course, that was nothing new. Jameson had slept with a lot of women in his day, and none of them compared to Tate. She always kept him wanting more. Was always more than enough, which was really saying something, considering the crazy things he'd done in past. The crazy things that had become somewhat standard to him. Almost boring, even ...

*

“... is all the paperwork ready?” Jameson asked, strolling down a wide hallway while trying to eat a hot dog. Lunch on the go.

“Everything is ready. Is there a reason you keep asking?” Sanders replied, flipping through some pages in a folder he was carrying. Jameson glanced down at him.

“Attitude. I like it. I'm just double checking – that stupid fucking party is tomorrow, and I know Dunn hasn't done a goddamn thing to prepare for it. What a mistake, going into a partnership with that guy,” Jameson grumbled, taking another bite of his food.

“I never understood why you agreed to it. The party is all set – I booked the caterer and drove down to Boston yesterday to check out the office space. Everything is ready to go. What are the plans for tonight?”

Dinner?" Sanders asked, shutting the folder and placing a tablet on top of it.

"No, no dinner," Jameson said around a full mouth. "Club. If this is my last night in New York for a while, I'm gonna make it count."

"A very adult approach, I'm sure."

"Watch it. I don't like attitude that much."

"Any particular club?" Sanders ignored him.

"I'll figure it out. But I don't want to stay at home, you can have the movers start boxing up the rest of the shit. We'll stay at the Waldorf," Jameson informed him.

"Alright, I'll book a suite."

A man came around a corner and Jameson went to side step him, but it forced him into Sanders. The bump was enough to knock all the stuff out of Sanders' hands. The younger man glared up at Jameson, flicked his eyes to the mess on the floor, then back up. Jameson held up his hands, trying hard not to laugh. Sanders hated messes.

"I've got it, I've got it, don't worry your pretty little head," Jameson teased, then bent down to pick up the mess.

He wasn't looking forward to living in Boston. He wasn't necessarily a fan of Bean Town. But he owned a home there, and Dunn was an old friend who had been looking for a helping hand. Jameson had more than enough money to throw around, and life had gotten pretty stagnant, so he thought maybe it would be fun. He could work with his clients from anywhere in the world, location didn't matter. And New York was always just a drive away, so it couldn't be too bad.

I'll be back living here by New Year's.

Jameson went out alone. He had no problems doing things alone, because not only was he ridiculously happy with his own company, but being wealthy and good looking had multiple advantages - he rarely ended any night alone.

And that night he ended with twice the fun.

The next morning, Jameson was awoken by a shaft of sunlight burning across his eyelids. He groaned and tried to lift an arm to block it, but something was on top of him. He finally opened his eyes. A woman was laying on top of his arm, pinning it between the mattress and her breasts. He couldn't quite feel his fingertips. He looked down at his chest and another woman was stretched across him.

“What fucking time is it?” he croaked out, yanking his arm free.

“Just after seven in the morning, sir. If we want to get to Boston in time to be settled and ready for the event, we should leave soon.”

Sanders' voice was soft, and Jameson looked around till he found the younger man. He was standing in front of the windows, opening another set of drapes.

“Yeah, fine, get them out of here. I've got a headache the size of Belgium,” Jameson complained, shoving the other woman off of him before crawling out of the bed.

He stumbled into the en suite, yanking on a pair of boxers as he went. He yawned and ran his hand through his hair, frowning at his reflection. He looked hungover as fuck; hopefully he'd improve before the evening. He didn't want to look that way in front of potential clients. He shrugged and shoved a tooth brush in his mouth while he turned on the water. He was opening the complimentary tooth paste when he heard raised voices in the next room. He turned off the water and listened. When one of the girls began shouting, he stepped back into the room.

He almost laughed. Sanders was trying to corral the women towards the front door of the suite. One woman was fine, yawning and yanking on a pair of knee high boots. But the other woman – the one who had been sleeping on his arm, if Jameson wasn't mistaken – was not taking kindly to being kicked out. She shouted and argued with Sanders, demanding to know who he was, and why she had to leave. When she shoved Sanders, though, that was going too far. Jameson tossed his toothbrush into the sink and strode through the suite.

“There you are!” the girl all but shrieked. “Tell this pip-squeak I -,”

Jameson didn't care. He grabbed her by the upper arm, yanked open the front door, and practically tossed her into the hall. She yelled and stumbled against a wall. The other girl – Jameson couldn't remember either of their names – left on her own accord. As she pulled on her jacket, she winked at him.

“Call me.”

Then she took off down the hall. He smiled and slammed the door shut.

*“And **that** is how you deal with them,” Jameson said, turning to Sanders.*

“Pardon me, but I wouldn't touch those women if you paid me to,” was the assistant's response. Jameson laughed and ruffled his hair.

“Such a princess. C'mon, pack my clothes and let's get the fuck out of here.”

By the time they got in the car, Jameson didn't feel so bad. The four extra strength Tylenol he swallowed helped, and by the time they got into Boston, four hours later, he almost felt normal. But his mood was something else. Somehow, Sanders had managed to get them lost.

*“No, no, **you** got us lost,” Sanders countered as he turned down another street.*

“How the fuck did I get us lost!? I'm in the back seat!” Jameson snapped.

“You kept telling me when and where to turn. I have repeatedly told you that I don't appreciate back seat driving,” Sanders reminded him.

“Shut up and get us the fuck out of here. Where are we? I feel like we're going to get shot,” Jameson grumbled, staring out the window.

They were in a shitty neighborhood, in a part of Boston he'd never been to; a part he'd never wanted to visit. His father was originally from the Boston area, so Jameson had actually spent a lot of time there when he'd been a child, but hadn't been back a whole lot as an adult. And certainly never to the frickin' ghetto, where he appeared to be now.

He glared out the window, watching as they passed boarded up businesses and liquor stores. He opened his mouth to snap at Sanders to drive faster, but was then caught off guard. They were passing some sort of restaurant, and slowing down for traffic. But that wasn't what caught his attention.

*Two women were eating outside at a picnic bench. Or more correctly, **on** a picnic bench, sitting on the table top. While the car waited at a red light, Jameson watched as the girls hopped off the table. One of them stretched her arms above her head, laughing as she did so. She was wearing a large pair of mirrored aviators that hid half her face, but she had a great smile, and an even better body. She was wearing tight leather leggings, and a white tank top that left little to the imagination. He didn't recognize her at all, which made sense – he didn't really know anyone in Boston. But there was something about her that was familiar. Something ...*

“Sanders,” Jameson barked as the car started to roll forward. He watched as the sexy woman pulled on a jacket. “Sanders, turn the car around.”

“Sir, I think the freeway exit is just ahead, I can get -,”

“Turn the fucking car around.”

Sanders did as he was told, but it took a while to find a place, and by the time they were rolling past the restaurant again, the two women were walking down the street. The one who had caught Jameson's eye was doing some sort of silly gallop, making her friend laugh. Then both girls got into a shitty looking VW and he couldn't see her anymore.

“How strange,” he mumbled, trying to stare into their car as they drove past. He couldn't see anything.

“Did you recognize them, sir?” Sanders asked. Jameson sat back in his seat, frowning.

“No. No, not at all.”

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One thing Tate had learned about Jameson was that he was obsessed with money. Almost as much as he was obsessed with sex. It wasn't even necessarily because he wanted to be rich, he just couldn't sit still when there was a profit to be made, a deal to be drawn, something to be happening. He didn't even have to be making money for himself, hence why he kept working at all. Jameson had enough money to retire for multiple lifetimes. He mostly kept working to help *other* people make money. It was just second-nature to him.

So *of course* he found a way to make money in Hong Kong.

"You promised not to leave me alone, remember?" Tate pointed out as they walked down a street.

"And I haven't, I would like it noted. I flew your best friend out here. I think I can have a day to myself to work," Jameson told her. Tate frowned but didn't argue. She leaned into his side, wrapping her arms around him.

"*Fiiiiine*. I just don't get it. If you have time to be wheeling and dealing, don't you have time to be flying to Singapore to visit your lawyer?" she asked.

"Tate."

"Yes?"

"Shut up. I'll see my lawyer when I want to see my lawyer."

"*Fiiiiine*."

"Look. I'm trying to invest in this property. How about we throw a party – you like parties," Jameson suggested. Tate smelled a bribe and let go of him.

"I like my kind of parties, not yours. It's fine, really, go do your deal, make your money. I'll just spend all day with Ang. *Alllll day, alllll alone*. With Ang. Alone. Ang. And me. *Alone*," she teased.

"I swear to all that is holy, if I find out you did anything inappropriate, I'll -," Jameson started to threaten.

"You know talk like that just gets me hot," she warned him. Jameson pressed his lips together hard, but didn't say anything else.

They stopped in front of a large building. He made a phone call while Tate poked at Sanders, making him move around. Finally, Jameson kissed her goodbye and left them to their own devices.

“What should we do?” Sanders asked. Tate gave him a wolf grin.

“Anything we want,” she replied in a husky voice. He turned pink and looked away.

“Please don't make me uncomfortable.”

She laughed and hugged him close, leading him back down the street.

“I wouldn't dream of it. Let's get Ang and go get into trouble,” she suggested.

“On second thought, please, feel free to make me uncomfortable.”

Jet lag had knocked Ang out for a solid twelve hours, but he was up and ready to go by the time they got to the hotel. Tate changed into her bathing suit, then they went off in search of a beach. Jameson could work on making money. Tate would work on her tan.

“It's way too fucking hot,” Ang complained, laying down flat on the sand, not even bothering with a towel.

“It's not as bad as I thought it would be,” Tate said, dropping her towel down and spreading it out flat.

“Cause Satan keeps it like a sauna in your house. Where's his little demon, anyway?” Ang asked, sitting up and looking around.

“Can you imagine Sanders in a bathing suit?” Tate laughed, stretching out on her towel. “He'll be back in a couple hours, I'm sure he's off making mischief of his own.”

“Does he even know how to spell mischief? Sanders wouldn't know how to stumble into trouble,” Ang snorted.

“That's what you think.”

“Huh?”

“Nothing.”

They were silent for a while. Tate settled in, soaking up the warmth and humidity. Hong Kong did kinda feel like a giant sauna to her. When they were outside, the heat and heaviness of it all just made her want to curl up and take a nap. Which she pretty much did, right there on the beach. But then something woke her up. She felt something against her leg.

“I didn't realize it left such a scar,” Ang mumbled.

Tate opened her eyes. Ang was still sitting up and was looking down at her legs, frowning. He was running his forefinger up and down a scar that ran parallel along the side of her right knee. It really wasn't that big, maybe three or four inches, and had faded over the year.

“It's not so bad. I think it's kind of cool, makes me look like a bad ass. I tell people I got it in a knife fight,” Tate joked, bending her knee up. She had been in a nasty car accident the previous winter, gotten pretty banged up. The cut had required stitches, which wasn't so bad.

The broken leg, however, had sucked ass.

“I'm glad I wasn't there, I probably would've lost my shit,” Ang commented.

“God, Jameson lost his shit enough for you, me, and twenty other people. I swear. If I ever doubted that man's love, that accident certainly proved it. I didn't know he could get that upset,” Tate said, sitting up and looking at the scar as well. She had been jogging. The driver hadn't been paying attention. Next thing she knew, she had been waking up in a hospital room.

Jameson actually tried to beat up the driver. Only Sanders and two police officers had stopped him. Then he stayed in her room, the entire time she'd been in the hospital. Didn't take one phone call, didn't see one client. Slept on chairs till she got her cast, then slept in the bed with her. Completely wrapped around her, like he was afraid to let her go.

“I can't imagine Satan getting upset over anything,” Ang laughed, wiping sand off of her leg.

“You'd be surprised. It was very sweet. He was very worried about me,” Tate said softly.

“Maybe there's hope for him after all.”

Tate chewed on her lip. She had never told Ang the full story. They had been visiting Sanders when the accident had happened, halfway across the world. It had been a supremely fucked up trip, though luckily most of the drama hadn't involved her – for once. She didn't feel quite ready to share it all with him.

“Jameson asked me something weird last night,” Tate changed the subject and lowered her legs.

“Why doesn't that surprise me?”

“He asked me if I ever miss sleeping with you. Isn't that weird? He's never asked me something like that before,” Tate started.

“He's threatened by me. Good. I like it,” Ang teased. Tate threw a handful of sand at him.

“Shut up.”

“And what did you say?” he asked. She shrugged.

“I told the truth – no. I mean, we had some great times, Angie-wangy, but I love my life now,” she was truthful. Ang nodded.

“Yeah. Life isn't so bad,” he agreed, letting sand run through his fingers.

“So you don't miss it at all?” Tate asked, but she was smiling. Ang snorted.

“Tater tot, do you know what I was doing before I got on the plane? Having a foursome with three of the top winners from AVN last year. I love you, you fuck like a champion, but I'm good,” he assured her. Tate burst out laughing and threw more sand at him.

“Oh geez, what happened to *'I'm over having sex'*, Mr. Jaded-One? *Pffft*, having foursomes. Over sex, my ass,” Tate kept shoveling sand at him.

“Okay, maybe *'over it'* was an exaggeration. Stop!” he shouted, shoving sand back at her.

“How come we never had a foursome?” Tate demanded, turning her head away and just blindly flinging sand.

“Hey, I tried! Remember that open house we went to!?” Ang reminded her, and then a handful of sand hit her in the chest.

“Angier! I was not going to fuck some random couple at a house viewing! We were there for the free food!” Tate shouted.

“You were always too prudish for me, thank god Satan came along,” he teased.

Tate gasped and turned to face him, only to get sand thrown in her open mouth. While she gagged and coughed, Ang tackled her to the ground. They rolled around in the sand, limbs flailing, struggling to shove as much sand as they could into each others' clothing.

“I can't breathe,” Tate hacked as he pinned her arms above her head and straddled her waist.

“Do you give?” he asked, gripping both her wrists with one hand while his free hand scooped up more sand.

“I give, I give, you win, get off of me,” she begged, rolling her hips.

“Hmmm, now that I've got you at my disposal ...,” Ang murmured.

“Stop it,” Tate laughed.

“All this talk of foursomes has gotten me pretty worked up,” he told her.

"Please. You couldn't handle me, I'm way freakier now than when we used to sleep together," she taunted.

"I'd like to test that theory."

"Pffft, too bad."

"Ahem."

They both snapped their heads up to see Sanders standing behind them.

"Ang is being an ass!" Tate whined.

"Tate's refusing to sleep with me!" Ang whined as well.

"The 'ass' part I believe," Sanders started. "Tate refusing to sleep with somebody, however, is somewhat shocking."

They all laughed at that one, and Ang got off of her. After they had shaken most of the sand out of their bathing suits, they headed back to the car. She hadn't realized she'd slept so much; they'd been at the beach for almost three hours.

"What're we doing for dinner? I'm *starving*," Tate groaned, struggling to yank a tank top over her head.

"Jameson has something planned for the two of you. Mr. Hollingsworth and I will be dining in our rooms," Sanders explained.

"What!?" Tate exclaimed, popping her head through the neck hole.

"Ang flew a bajillion miles to be here, at a moment's notice! He's coming to dinner with us."

"It's fine, Tate, I can just -," Ang started.

"The reservations are specially made, they can't be changed. I am very sorry," Sanders interrupted.

"This doesn't make sense. Why did Jameson fly him all the way here, just to leave him out? When we get back, I'm going to inform *Mr. Man* that Ang *will* be dining with us," Tate said.

"Jameson isn't at the hotel."

"Huh?"

"He's not there. His appointment ran late. He will be meeting you at dinner."

Tate groaned.

The whole time she was getting ready, she didn't stop thinking about it. Why invite Ang, but then not want him around? She knew Jameson didn't like him, but he couldn't avoid him the whole time they were there, it would be ridiculous. But since he had flown Ang halfway across the world, Tate decided she could let it slide. For at least one night.

Tate shimmied her way into a tight, designer dress, and took care with her makeup. She didn't doubt that they would be eating at a nice restaurant and wanted to look up to par with Jameson.

She was shocked when Sanders pulled up in front of the restaurant and Jameson was waiting outside. He never waited for her. Usually when they met for dinner, he was already seated and working on his first drink. Or his actual meal, depending on how late she was running. But there he was, walking up to the curb and opening her door.

"What are you doing?" Tate blurted out, staring up at him. She tried to remember the last time he'd held open a door for her.

"Being a gentleman," he replied, holding out his hand.

Tate burst out laughing.

"Can you even spell that word?"

"Get out of the fucking car."

Tate stumbled a little as he yanked her out, still laughing. They said goodbye to Sanders, then made their way inside. But before they could make it past the entrance way, Jameson pulled her to a stop.

"What? Is there something on my dress?" Tate asked, looking down at herself. He was staring at her in the strangest way.

"No. You look perfect. I wanted to tell you that, before we went in," he said. She snorted and looked up at him.

"Are you feeling okay?" she chuckled, pressing her hand to his forehead. He pushed her away.

"Yes. Just ... you know everything I do for you, I do out of love, yes?" he questioned.

Funny time was over.

"Okay, now you're scaring me."

"Shut up," Jameson snapped, then put a hand on her back, guiding her forward. "I'm just trying to warn you. This is for your own good. Something that needed to happen."

Tate went to reply, went to ask him what the hell was going on. But then they turned a corner, and all the breath left her body. She stopped moving and he pressed up against her from behind.

Holy. Fucking. Shit.

Tate hadn't seen or spoken to her parents in a long time. Before Jameson had re-entered her life, she'd gone seven years without speaking to her father. It worked for her. He didn't like her. She didn't like him. Her

mother was a moot point – too drunk or high to ever matter. It was harsh, but it was the truth. They didn't care about her, so Tate didn't care about them.

So what the fuck are they doing here!?

The elder O'Sheas were seated at a table, picking at appetizers. Her father looked older, more weathered. He hunched over his plate, glaring at the restaurant. Her mother's eyes bounced around the room while she sipped at a large glass of wine. They looked completely out of place.

"No. No, I don't want to do this," Tate hissed, trying to back away. Jameson held his ground and she felt his hands come to rest on her shoulders.

"I wasn't aware that you had a choice."

"I'm not fucking around, Jameson. No more games, remember?" she reminded him.

"This isn't a game. This is life, baby girl. Time to suck it up and deal with it," he told her. She gasped.

"Fuck that noise, I'm out of here," she tried to twist away from him, but he held her in place.

"*Liebe*," he whispered, his lips right at her ear. She held still. "Just do this. Say what you need to say. Forgive them. Tell them to eat shit and die. Whatever. But get it out and get it over with, you can't have this hanging over you anymore."

Tate took a deep, shaky breath. He was right. Of course he was right; Jameson was *always* right. Bastard. She leaned back against him.

"Why?" she whispered.

"Because I care about you, and it's been long enough."

She didn't want to be crying when she faced her father, so she pulled away from Jameson and strode across the floor. She was at the table before her parents even realized she was in the room. Her father managed to get to his feet, though he didn't smile. His eyes traveled up and down her form, and the disapproval was evident in them.

*It doesn't matter. You're good enough for Jameson, **that's** all that matters.*

"Mother. Daddy," Tate said in a crisp voice. Jameson pulled out her chair so she could sit down, then he sat down as well.

"We got appetizers while we waited for you," Jameson explained, gesturing to some food that was on the table. Tate's stomach had turned into

a giant knot and she waved him away.

“How are you, dear? It's been too long,” her mother cooed, a distinct slur to her voice.

“Has it?” Tate asked, staring at the other woman.

“I'll admit, I was shocked when I heard from Kane,” her father interrupted.

“Yes. I was a little shocked, myself,” Tate agreed, cutting her eyes to Jameson. He didn't look nervous at all. He actually winked at her.

“How have you been? I'm sure your life is fabulous, I'd love to hear all about it,” her mother said.

“Really? Cause last time we spoke, you recommended that I not be with Jameson, to spare Ellie's feelings,” Tate reminded her.

Might as well cut to the chase.

“Well, I ... you were ... that was different, dear. That was in the house, we didn't realize how serious you two were,” her mother tried to explain.

“Oh, so when I'm just sleeping with him, I'm not good enough. But now that we're 'dating', it's okay?” Tate clarified. Her mother actually smiled.

“Of course! Ellie's so happy with her life now, and Jameson is such a lovely man, you've done very well for yourself, Tatum. You two make a very handsome couple,” her mother assured her. Tate actually laughed, glancing at Jameson again.

“Is this real life?”

“Well, we are really good looking.”

Thank god a waiter showed up then. Jameson automatically ordered for Tate, and for once, she was grateful for it. She twisted a napkin together between her hands. When the material began to rip, Jameson pulled it away from her.

“So,” her father began again, once their food had been delivered. “I've seen you in the media.”

“Really? I wasn't aware you were a fan of TMZ,” Tate commented, stabbing a carrot onto her fork. She wasn't sure what Jameson's plan for dinner had been; no great revelation had been made. No breakdown or breakthrough. Just more of the same bitterness.

“It's hard to avoid when friends and colleagues are constantly showing me pictures of my daughter making a fool out of herself,” her father replied.

"I'm sorry, what pictures are those?" she asked, putting her silverware down.

"Pictures of you at events, outside of ridiculous night clubs, acting like an idiot. When are you going to grow up!?" he demanded.

"I have a question," Tate tried to keep her voice calm. "Why am I always the ridiculous one? The idiot? Jameson is in those pictures, too."

"It's completely different! He is ... Kane is ... it's totally different!" her father barked out.

"No, it's actually an excellent point. Why is it okay for me to be in these scandalous pictures, but not Tatum?" Jameson asked, dropping his napkin onto the table.

"You know what I'm talking about! You're a man, she's a woman! It's disgusting, seeing her splashed across the internet," Mr. O'Shea grumbled.

"Really? I never get tired of looking at Tate, in person or online," Jameson commented, turning towards her. She smiled at him.

"You know, Daddy," Tate sighed. "I think Jameson brought us all here hoping for some sort of resolution, but I think we're too far gone for that."

"I could have told you that years ago."

It was one thing for Tate to tell herself she would never speak to her parents again. It was quite another to hear it from her parents. She nodded and wiped at her eyes, still trying hard not to cry.

"Good. That's good to know. Then I want to tell you something," she said, her voice shaky. She felt Jameson's hand suddenly, resting against her leg. Squeezing.

"Don't get hysterical," her father groaned.

"Let's all just calm down and have a drink!" her mother suggested.

"You've never liked me. Why you had a second child is beyond me. You always treated me like I was second place. Like an after thought. Nothing I did was ever good enough for you, and for years, I beat myself up over that. But now I know, I could've been goddamn perfect, and it wouldn't have been good enough for you. I own a successful business and I'm dating Jameson fucking Kane, and I'm still not good enough!" Tate's voice started to raise.

"I don't have to sit here and listen to -," Mr. O'Shea started to growl.

"Oh, yes, you fucking do. If this is really us cutting ties, then I'm going out with a bang. *Fuck you*, Daddy. You never knew me, and you never will. You'll never know the amazing things I've done, or am going to do. You'll

never be invited into any aspect of my life, and you'll certainly never meet any children I may have. I'm very glad you came all this way for nothing. Fuck both of you, and have a super awesome life," Tate snapped, then stood up.

Her father yelled good riddance at her, but Tate ignored him. Jameson called out her name, but Tate ignored him, too. She kept walking out of the restaurant, trying to ignore everything around her.

You'd think after all these years, becoming an orphan wouldn't hurt so bad.

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Tate had been right. When Jameson had found out that the O'Sheas were visiting Thailand, he'd thought it was possibly the perfect opportunity for some resolution between child and parent.

He had apparently thought very wrong. He watched as Tate stormed out of the restaurant, then he sighed and pushed away from the table.

"You know," he started, pulling his wallet out of his pocket. "I've never understood. Why do you hate Tatum so much?"

"A better question is why do you like her? She's never getting a dime from me, if that's your angle, Kane," Mathias O'Shea warned him. Jameson barked out a laugh before tossing some bills onto the table, enough to cover their meals.

"I hope that's a joke. Tate was a broke nobody when I ran into her in Boston, you never even figured into it. I have more money than you, anyway. I'm very sorry to have dragged you here, this was a bad idea," Jameson sighed.

"I could have told you that, if you'd told me resolution was your intention. I saw those profane photos, her giving the finger to those cameras. Disgusting. You need to get her under control," Mathias informed him.

"You're telling me how to handle Tate?" Jameson clarified.

"Well, someone should handle her! Girl needs someone who can put her in her place," Mathias said.

"Tate is absolutely perfect the way she is; *you're* the one who needs to be put in his place. Unfortunately, I just don't care enough to do it. I brought you here to give Tate some closure. I hope she achieved it with that outburst. We won't be seeing you again," Jameson said, then started to turn away.

"Was she pregnant?" Mathias barked out. Jameson froze. Turned back towards them.

"Excuse me?"

"I've never been able to figure out why you stayed with her. I understand the need for a mistress, but galavanting around with some slut on your arm is unbecoming. Did you stay with her because you knocked her up?" Mathias demanded.

Jameson was enraged. *He* could call Tate a slut. No one else.

"You listen to me," he said in a low voice as he leaned over the table. "Don't you *ever* speak of her that way again. I plan on being with Tate for a very long time, which means I'm going to have to deal with the damage *you* caused. I'm sorry I tried to do this; clearly *you* are the lost cause."

"I don't have to take this abuse. I was invited here, by you! I thought you wanted me to talk some sense into that girl, but clearly, that's not possible. So I hope you two are very happy together, wallowing in your filthy relationship," Mathias coughed out.

Enough is enough.

"I am going to *bury* you. Do you hear me? Kiss everything you own goodbye. This time tomorrow, I will own every business, every share, every holding you possess. You'll be goddamn lucky if I let you keep your fucking house. And if I hear you say anything disparaging about Tate, *ever* again, I'll take that, too. You never have to worry about her again, she is no longer your family. She's *my* family now, and you aren't worthy of knowing her."

Jameson didn't wait for a response, just walked away. He could hear Mathias sputtering, could hear Mrs. O'Shea trying to calm her husband down. He ignored it all and took out his cell phone, calling Sanders to tell him to bring the car around.

He found Tate just around the corner. She was leaning back against a wall, staring off down the street. Jameson moved to stand in front of her, but she didn't look up at him.

"Are you mad at me?" she asked. He barked out a laugh.

"Why on earth would I be mad at you, Tate? For speaking your mind? I love it when you're a bitch," he reminded her. She started to laugh as well, but then he saw the tears.

"I just don't get it," she squeaked out. "What did I ever do to him? I never did anything. I used to do everything they wanted. How can you hate someone you don't even know?"

"Because he's miserable, baby girl, so he wants everyone around him to be miserable," Jameson explained. She sniffled and wiped at her face.

"Well, he does a damn good job of it, cause I feel pretty fucking miserable," her voice finally cracked at the end, and the tears couldn't be stopped. Jameson pulled her into a hug.

"Don't say that. You have me. You don't need him. I'm sorry I did this," he whispered, rubbing his hands up and down her back.

"It's not your fault. I just ..., *hate him*, Jameson. I really, really hate him, and I don't want to. I don't even want to know him. I don't want to be related to him," she cried, locking her arms around his waist.

"It's done. You said what you wanted to say. You never have to see him again."

"I swear to god," she groaned, finally catching her breath, "I'm changing my name when we get home. I don't even want to be an O'Shea anymore. I don't want that name. I don't want that connection."

Jameson took a deep breath. Pressed his face into her hair.

"Sounds good to me."

*

Tate woke up in the middle of the night to discover she was alone. She thought about getting up and looking for Jameson, but she was too exhausted. Meeting with her family had been draining. Jameson had all but carried her up to the room, undressed her, then tucked them both into bed. She fell asleep with him wrapped around her, warm and comfortable.

Figuring she was better off not knowing what nefarious deeds he was up to, Tate went back to sleep.

In the morning, she woke up feeling somewhat refreshed. She'd never actually had an outburst like that with her father. Sure, she'd snapped at him, that one time Jameson had taken her home. But to actually say how she felt, say everything she'd ever sort of wanted to say; it felt good. She felt like she had finally closed a chapter. So when she got out of bed, she almost skipped into the living room.

"I thought you were going to sleep the day away," Jameson commented as he munched on toast at the breakfast table.

"Thought about it," she replied, kissing him on the cheek before sitting down across from him.

"How are you feeling?" he asked, not looking away from his newspaper. Tate shrugged and plucked some bacon off of his plate.

"Surprisingly good," she told him, stuffing the food into her mouth. "I mean, last night I kind of wanted to puke. But now, it's like ..., gone. You know?"

"Good. I'm glad."

“Where were you last night? I woke up and you were gone,” Tate said, then reached over and stole a piece of toast.

“I had stuff to do.”

“At three in the morning?”

She took another piece of bacon.

“There is an entire spread over there,” Jameson pointed out, finally looking away from his paper. “Why do you always take my food?”

“Cause it tastes better when I steal it from you,” she teased.

“God, I almost prefer you when you're depressed and crying.”

“Fucker.”

“Always.”

“So where were you?” Tate tried again, polishing off all his bacon.

“I told you, I had some business. It was states side, hence the early hour,” Jameson answered cryptically. Tate narrowed her eyes and grabbed a fork, began picking at his scrambled eggs.

“What kind of business?” she asked suspiciously. Something about his answers made her nervous. He was keeping something from her.

“Bad business,” he answered, then stood up. He picked up his plate and sat it in front of her.

“Oh god. Just tell me now, am I being sold into slavery?” Tate groaned. He chuckled.

“No. Just some trash that needed to be taken care of, *Liebe*. Nothing for you to worry about,” he assured her, then kissed her on the head before going into the bedroom.

Hmmm. Still don't trust him.

Tate finished breakfast and was fully prepared to rape him in the shower, but she was informed that she needed to get ready. They were meeting an acquaintance of his for doubles tennis. *Tennis*. Tate actually laughed.

“Is this a joke?”

“Nope. Tell *Angier* he needs to be ready in an hour.”

“*Angier* won't even know which end of the racket to hold.”

“Good thing he's on your team, then.”

Tate hadn't played tennis since high school. Ang had *never* played tennis. When she woke him up and told him what they'd be doing, he looked at her like she was crazy, but she promised that it would be fun. She

was going to wear her Serena Williams-esque shorts, so at least his view would be nice during the game.

“Does Jameson like tennis?” Ang asked as she brought him coffee in bed.

“I’ve never even seen him play tennis,” she replied.

It took some coaxing, but eventually Ang got out of bed and put on some shorts and a t-shirt. Tate ruffled his hair and he piggy-backed her all the way to her suite. Jameson was waiting inside, also in shorts and a t-shirt, a black hat shoved low over his eyes. He glared at them as they galloped around the room, but didn’t say anything. Tate got changed into her gear, then they headed out.

“So why are we playing tennis?” she asked, once they were in the car. She and Ang sat in the back, while Jameson rode up front with Sanders.

“I ran into an old friend of mine. She invited us to play, I thought it would be fun,” was his answer.

Ooohhh, this “acquaintance” is female, I get it now.

“Is this ‘she’ hot?” Tate asked.

“Exceedingly.”

“*Barf*. Sandy,” she decided to change the subject. “Do you play tennis?”

“Not if I can avoid it.”

“Are you going to play with us today?”

“God, no.”

They pulled up to a swanky resort and filed inside. Sanders disappeared into the lounge while Jameson led the rest of them to the tennis courts. Tate was laughing at a story Ang was telling when someone caught her eye.

There was a woman a couple feet away from them. She was ridiculously tall, probably five-foot-ten, or eleven – in flat sneakers. She was wearing a white pleated tennis skirt, so short it was almost pointless, and a skin tight white tank top. Her shiny black hair had been slicked back into a tight ponytail, and she wore a white visor. All the white set off her deep tan to perfection. But that didn’t bother Tate.

No, the way the woman draped herself all over Jameson and loudly kissed his cheek, *that* bothered Tate.

“Angier, Tatum, this is Isadora,” Jameson introduced the woman, all while yanking away from her. Tate smiled.

Good boy.

“Ah, hello, I am so pleased to finally meet you!” the woman gushed in a thick accent. Tate couldn't quite place it, it almost sounded Spanish, but not quite. The woman's voice was also thick and heavy, coming from the back of her throat.

“Oh, thank you, nice to meet you, too. Thank you for inviting us,” Tate said quickly, moving to shake Isadora's hand. The other woman ignored it and leaned down, kissing Tate heavily on the cheek. Tate had the strange feeling that she was being hit on.

“But of course, I had to. I had to meet the woman that tamed our ferocious Kane,” Isadora giggled, leaning into Jameson and pressing a hand to his chest.

What the hell is going on? Is he trying to orchestrate a threesome? I'm not fucking this giraffe.

“Yeah, well, he is so ...,” Tate struggled to maintain her smile, “*ferocious*, I suppose. How do you two know each other?”

“He didn't tell you?” Isadora laughed, an almost musical sound, octaves descending the scale. Tate and Ang glanced at each other. He looked just as confused as Tate felt.

“I didn't realize a conversation was necessary to have tennis,” Jameson snapped, then walked away from them.

“Ah. I see you haven't quite tamed him yet,” Isadora teased, winking at Tate.

I don't appreciate all this winking and giggling and breathing. Not from someone that pretty.

“Did you two used to date?” Tate asked, though she was pretty sure she already knew the answer.

“Yes. It seems like forever ago,” Isadora sighed, looking longingly after Jameson. “He has a vacation home in Rio, that is where I'm from. I am a singer. It was a whirlwind, only a month or so, but Kane leaves a lasting impression, doesn't he?”

“He certainly leaves something, that's for sure,” Tate agreed.

They finally followed after Jameson, to a court that Isadora had booked for all of them. Tate all but shoved Ang into the overly-sexified Brazilian, then cornered Jameson by a bench. He was uncovering his racket and swinging it through the air.

“Alright, let's get it over with so we can play,” he sighed, obviously ready for her indignation.

“You invited me to play tennis with a woman you used to fuck. With a woman who clearly still wants to be fucking you,” Tate laid it all out.

“To be fair, she wants to fuck you, too,” Jameson corrected her.

“Oh, excuse me, that totally changes things. Hold my shorts while I go initiate a sixty-nine.”

“Don't make promises you won't keep.”

“Why didn't you just tell me? I like to be mentally prepared when I have to interact with one of your groupies,” Tate groaned, pulling out her racket as well.

“Hey, I have to interact with *Angier* all the time. You can suck it up for one hour, baby girl,” Jameson pointed out. She snorted.

“That's one hour too long.”

“I actually did it for him,” Jameson said, his voice quiet and confidential.

“Huh?”

“She's lonely here. Desperate. And I know *Angier* will fuck anything with a pulse. Seemed win-win,” he explained.

“You're such a sweetheart,” Tate said, unable to keep the sarcasm out of her voice. He swung the racket against her ass, causing her to yelp.

“Don't piss me off. We'll play, they'll flirt, we'll get drinks, and hopefully we can all end the day having sex,” Jameson told her.

“It almost sounds fun, when you put it that way.”

The Brazilian made sexy eyes at Ang for a while, but it was obvious that Jameson was her ultimate goal. As they all took their sides of the court, Tate glared as the other woman flirted and touched Jameson. Leaned against him. Breathed on him.

“What are we doing here?” Ang asked in a low voice.

“That chicks wants to fuck Jameson. He's trying to pawn her off on you. Be sexy,” Tate advised him.

“Bitch, I was born sexy.”

Tate had to agree. Ang was wearing a pair of old fashioned looking Ray Bans, and his hair was cropped extremely short on the sides, but long and wild on top. There was a touch of James Dean about him; something 1950's. His bad boy smile was firmly in place, and though Isadora was focusing on Jameson, she threw a couple flirty glances Ang's way.

“Well, sexy it up some more, get her attention. I don't want to spend the rest of the day trying to talk Jameson out of an orgy,” Tate hissed.

“We could end up in an orgy!?”

“Angier, don't make me serve the ball into the back of your head.”

Tate was rusty – tennis had never really been her sport. She could knock the ball back and forth, but she wasn't great. Ang couldn't play for shit, it was comical watching him lope up and down the court. They both laughed a lot, collapsing into giggle fits enough times to earn a snap from Jameson.

Isadora played the game beautifully and elegantly, like Tate knew she would, and of course Jameson was good at it. If there was something Jameson wasn't good at it, he simply didn't do it, so Tate had figured he'd do well at tennis. Together with the Brazilian bombshell, they dominated the game. Tate couldn't quite figure out why they didn't switch, place a bad player with a good player, to at least even the odds.

But it quickly became apparent that Isadora didn't want to even the odds. She cooed in Jameson's ear, wiggled her ass in his face. Tate spent half the game making puking faces at him, which just earned her wolf grins and him feeding into the flirtation.

“I don't think she's interested in my sexy,” Ang informed Tate, looking over his glasses as Isadora bent straight at the waist, keeping her knees locked while she tied her shoelaces. Jameson stood directly behind her, waving his racket at them.

Tate gave him the finger.

“Yeah, we're not here to play tennis. She invited us here so she could become fuck buddies,” Tate grumbled.

“Wouldn't be all bad. She's kinda hot,” Ang pointed out. Tate snorted.

“I didn't come all the way to Hong Kong to have an orgy with Jameson's ex girlfriend.”

“Does this kind of thing happen a lot?”

“Yes. We went to the Met gala last fall, and *god*, what a nightmare. There was this model, some young blonde thing that Jameson had slept with like a million years ago. Followed him around all night. I don't want to go through that again,” Tate told him.

“What are you going to do about it?” Ang asked.

“Whore you out.”

Before he could argue, Tate jogged up to the net, scooping up the ball as she went.

“Oh, thank you, Tatum,” Isadora gushed in her syrupy accent, running up to the net as well.

“No problem. Say, Ang has never been to Hong Kong before, you should totally show him around after this,” Tate blurted out, not even trying to be subtle.

“Really? I was hoping to catch up with Kane a little more. So little chance to talk during the game. I would be very glad to keep him company while you show Angier the sites,” Isadora offered.

Hmmm, I'm not the only one lacks subtlety.

“See, I kind of had plans with Jameson,” Tate lied. There weren't any set plans, but she figured she didn't need them. He was her boyfriend. If she said he was busy, then he was goddamn busy.

“Yes, of course! The party!” Isadora exclaimed. Tate blinked in surprise.

“What?”

“The party! Kane told me all about it, thank you so much for inviting me!”

“Are we gonna play, or fucking chit chat all day?” Jameson yelled from the back line. Tate stepped to the side.

“Your lovely partner was just telling me all about our party!” Tate shouted back, shielding her eyes with her hand. His own eyes were hidden by the bill of his hat, but the set of his jaw was ominous. He wasn't happy.

“My partner should learn to keep her mouth shut. Let's finish this game,” he called back.

“Oh, I'll finish this game, alright,” Tate grumbled, stomping away.

“Something up?” Ang asked, walking up close to her. Tate leaned into him, pressing her face against his chest and letting out a mock scream.

“What the fuck is going on?” she breathed, turning her head to the side and resting all her weight against him. “First dinner with my parents. Then fucked up tennis. Now a party? Jameson hates parties, he hates any kind of physical activity that isn't sex, and he hates my parents.”

“Maybe he's trying to turn over a new leaf,” Ang suggested, but she could feel him trying not to laugh.

“When you're done dry humping, some of us would like to keep playing!”

Tate glared as Jameson's voice carried across the court. Oh, so he could let some hoochie Brazilian rub her ass all over his crotch, but Tate couldn't

hug Ang!? Oh, it was on. It was soooooo on.

“Ang, could you do me a favor?” Tate started, running her hands up and down his sides.

“Hmmm?”

“Just go with anything I do.”

“Huh?”

Tate ignored him and peeled her top off. She wasn't being scandalous, she was wearing a sports bra – there were plenty of women running around the courts wearing the same thing. No, that wasn't enough to get the reaction she wanted. But turning around and pressing her back to Ang's front and doing a toe touch stretch, she was pretty positive *that* would inspire a response.

“Does he look upset?” Tate asked, not even trying to hide her smile as she pretended to stretch from one leg to the other.

“Murderous. Are we trying to piss him off?” Ang questioned.

“Just having some fun, messing with him. He made me sweat with all his flirting, now it's his turn,” Tate laughed.

“Then let's make it count.”

Ang smacked her on the ass, hard enough to cause her to fall forward and place her hands flat on the ground.

“I'm not fucking around, Tate. You have two seconds to knock it the fuck off!” Jameson yelled.

“Ooohhh, feels like a challenge to me! Game!?” she yelled back, slowly standing up and stretching her arms above her head.

“Don't push me – you won't win.”

“Pffft, I always win.”

Tate spun around, facing Ang as she stretched her arms back, forcing her chest out. Ang didn't even hide the fact that he was staring at her tits.

“I'm not really sure what kind of game you're playing, but I gotta be honest, I like it,” he joked. Tate snorted and lowered her arms, coiling them around his neck. He rested his hands on her hips.

“Does he look mad?” she asked. Ang glanced behind her.

“Hard to tell. He always looks mad,” he pointed out, walking backwards and forcing her to follow.

“If he's standing still, he's not mad,” Tate explained.

“Oh, then he's definitely mad.”

“Is he moving?”

“He's right behind you.”

Before Tate could respond, she was grabbed by the arm and spun around. She let out a shriek as Jameson bent forward, throwing her over his shoulder before standing up right. She laughed and waved goodbye at Ang as she was carried off the court.

“Why are you always fucking pushing me?” Jameson demanded, kicking open the fence door and heading towards the main building.

“Because it's so much fun,” Tate snickered and snorted, trying to push herself upright.

“I don't find it fun,” Jameson told her.

“You certainly found *Ms. Brazil* fun,” Tate countered.

“Jealousy isn't attractive,” he reminded her.

“*Ms. Brazil* rubbing her ass all over your crotch wasn't particularly attractive, but I got through it.”

He slapped her on the ass.

“You probably enjoyed it.”

“Not even a little.”

“Well, I enjoyed it, and that's what counts.”

“Jameson, put me down,” Tate urged.

He dropped her abruptly and she stumbled on her feet, grabbing onto his arm to find her balance. She glared up at him.

“I was going to tell you about the party,” he began slowly. He'd always been a little bit psychic – she'd just been about to ask him.

“Oh really? What, right after people started showing up? *What party, Jameson?*” Tate demanded, folding her arms across her chest. He sighed.

“That real estate deal. Turns out Isadora is trying to go in on the same hotel property. Everyone thought it would a good idea to have a party for investors, introduce everyone. I offered the suite,” he said quickly.

“Why!?” Tate whined. “Why did we have to have it at our place? And tonight! Is there a fire!?”

“Just how the chips fell, baby girl. Gotta roll with it,” Jameson suggested. Tate sighed and rubbed at her forehead.

“I swear, I'm not being a bitch, Jameson, but after last night, I just don't think I have the energy to watch sexy-pants out there flirt with you all night while I socialize with a bunch of people I don't know and will never see again,” she explained. Jameson rolled his eyes and pulled her close.

“Shut up. You'll look sexy and find some guy of your own to flirt with,” he pointed out, guiding her towards the lounge.

“You hate it when I flirt with other men.”

“Flirting is fine. Acting like a whore is another. That will get you slapped.”

“Promises, promises.”

Tate was laughing, so she wasn't really paying attention to what was going on – they were walking past the main entrance, heading towards the lounge where Sanders would be waiting. Before they could make it, though, a man scurried away from the front doors and blocked their path.

“*Kane! Kane! What are you doing in Hong Kong!?*” the guy practically screamed in their faces. Two other men appeared out of nowhere and suddenly camera flashes were blinding her. Tate held her hand up, blocking her face.

“Guys, c'mon, we just got done playing tennis. Fuck off,” Jameson snapped, moving so Tate was mostly hidden behind him.

“What can you tell us about the new super resort!?” one of the other camera guys yelled.

“Nothing. Security!” Jameson shouted, keeping one arm around Tate while trying to side step the paparazzi.

“Is it true you met with Mathias O'Shea last night!?”

That caught Tate's attention. Normally they never bothered with her, only harassed him about business issues. Why would they care about her father?

“Seriously, fuck off.”

“Is it true Kane Holdings just forced O'Shea out of his position on the board of -,”

“Shut the fuck up, right now!”

“- and Kraven Brokerage is moving to block the trades being made by O'Shea's firm!?”

What the hell are they talking about!?

“Tatum! Tatum!” camera guy number two shouted, grabbing her by the shoulder and spinning her around. “Is it true your own father thinks you're Jameson's personal prostitute?”

“What!?” Tate shrieked, stumbling backwards.

She never got an answer though. Jameson's fist slamming into the guy's face pretty much shut everyone up.

I bet Hong Kong prison won't be very fun ...

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At the beginning of their relationship, if it could be called that, Jameson played a lot of games with Tate. She had started it all, he had just wanted to finish it.

For one of his games, he had taken her home to visit her estranged family. Not a very funny game, it turned out. He thought the estrangement had been just that; a group of people who had gotten used to not talking to each other. They would get together, have some drinks, then go back to being the same as any family – still dysfunctional, but at least in the same room together.

*He had been very wrong. Jameson could actually admit when he was wrong, it just didn't happen very often. It turned out the O'Shea issues ran much, much deeper than just Tate sleeping with Jameson when she was eighteen. No, there was **a lot** more. Mrs. O'Shea had a serious alcohol and prescription drug problem. Ellie was holding a grudge to the point she was almost delusional. And Mathias O'Shea ..., well, Jameson may have been a sociopath, but Mr. O'Shea was closer to being an actual psychopath. Violent, mean, no empathy. Very strange.*

It was no wonder Ellie wound up in an abusive relationship. Had Tate's life gone according to plan, she probably would've found herself in a similar situation. Her family cutting her off had probably saved her life, somewhat. Sure, the relationship Jameson and she'd had at the time hadn't exactly been normal, but she had been a fully functional partner in it, complete with her own opinions and free will.

Up until that little vacation, their relationship had been very casual. Sure, Jameson had somewhat realized that Tate meant more to him than just sex, but he hadn't delved into it too much. Figured it would just run its course.

He had come out of the shower one morning to discover Tate gone from his room. Which was fine, he didn't care too much what she did with herself. He had just started to pull clothing out of his luggage when he'd heard shouting from the room next door. Ellie and Robert's room.

Jameson didn't know why, but he'd had a bad feeling. He yanked on a t-shirt and some track pants, sighed, and headed out of his room. He hadn't wanted to deal with real family issues, didn't want to be the person to break

up a family fight. But he had heard Tate's voice in the fray, and as always, she had piqued his curiosity.

When Jameson saw Robert hit her, saw Tate go down to the ground, the first emotion he felt was shock. Utter shock, that someone could hurt Tate. The second emotion was rage. Pure rage. He hadn't even thought about it, just slammed through the bedroom door and pinned Robert to the wall.

*Jameson knew Tate wasn't exactly a wilting flower. She was a tough girl who had gone through some tough things, not to mention the fact that she had probably experienced more aggressive behavior from Jameson himself, while in bed. But in his mind, it was completely different. He was allowed to touch Tate that way because she was his; because it was consensual. Because she asked him to do it. Because she liked for him to do it. Because he would never, **ever**, hurt her. No one else was allowed to touch her like that, treat her like that.*

Should've ripped his fucking head off.

That had marked the change. When Jameson looked back over the years, that moment was the true defining one. That's when he knew it was something different, that it was something more. Any other girl, he would've ended the trip, ended the relationship. Too much drama. Jameson wasn't about drama, he was about sex. But for Tatum, he wanted to grind Robert into dust. Wanted to pick her up and carry her away from it all. Shield her from her horrific family. Do bad things to her in bed, so she could forget about the bad things in real life.

I wanted to save her. Took me all these years to figure it out, but even back then, I wanted to be her prince on a white horse.

*

Tate sighed and leaned back against a wall. Jameson was smiling and mingling around the party. No one seemed to notice the bandage wrapped around his knuckles. When he had punched the photographer, he had clipped the camera. Sliced right through his skin.

Of course he hadn't gone to jail. Bribes went pretty far in Hong Kong, and by the end of the whole ordeal, the paparazzi were the ones being carted off in a police car. Jameson sent a bell hop to tell Ang and Isadora that they would need to find their own way back to the hotel, then he carted

Tate outside. Sanders appeared not long after, snapping his fingers at the valet.

"Why would he say that?" Tate had asked, leaning over Jameson's hand, trying to judge whether or not he would need stitches.

"Because people are assholes. Maybe he'll think twice before asking questions like that again."

"You shouldn't have hit him."

"I should've hit him harder."

"What was all that stuff they were saying, about my dad?"

"Stuff you don't need to worry about."

"Jameson -,"

"Don't push me on this, Tate. I'm not in the fucking mood."

Tate hadn't pushed him on the matter, but she didn't want to let it go, either. But after they got back to the hotel, she didn't have time to grill him. He immediately hopped in the shower to get ready for his party. So Tate followed suit and picked out an outfit. Took a shower as well. Made herself look as good as possible.

What a fucking waste.

Just like she'd predicted, she didn't know anybody, and just like she'd predicted, she had to watch Isadora pour herself all over Jameson. Tate wasn't jealous, per se, she just didn't appreciate the blatant disrespect. Ang showed up and blew a raspberry on her neck, promising to distract the Brazilian goddess for her. But before he could make it across the room, he got distracted by a different pretty girl.

Men. What a bunch of fuckers.

"Are you alright?"

Tate smiled as Sanders moved to stand next to her.

Okay, not all men.

"I'm fine. Just bored. How are you? Feels like we haven't gotten to spend any time together," Tate said, pouting her lip out. Sanders cleared his throat.

"There'll be time later, I'm sure," he replied, adjusting his tie.

Hmmm, awfully early to be twitching. He's nervous.

"Sandy," Tate started. *"Is there something going on that I should know about?"*

"Why would you ask me that?"

"Because of this party. Dinner last night. Ang. Isadora."

“The party is because of the resort property he is investing in, Mr. Hollingsworth is for you, dinner was a matter of right-time-right-place, and Ms. Silva just happened to be an investor in the same resort,” Sanders prattled off quickly. Tate turned to fully face him.

“One thing I’ve learned about you – when I really want to know the meaning behind an action, you feed me all the obvious points. But I know *you* know what I’m really asking,” she called him out. He swallowed thickly, didn’t quite meet her eyes.

“Then the question is why do you keep asking me, if you know I’ll always respond that way?” he countered.

“You’d tell me, wouldn’t you? If he was planning something bad?” Tate asked in a quiet voice. Sanders’ eyes finally met hers.

“Of course I would,” he assured her, his voice very serious. She smiled and reached out, squeezed his arm.

“And what will it take to convince you to move home for good? I miss you,” she decided to change the subject.

“And I miss you, as well. But you know it’s not that simple,” he replied. She snorted.

“It is. There’s plenty of -,”

“*Sanders!*”

Jameson had a voice that could carry when he wanted it to, so there was no mistaking who was calling. Sanders gave a tight-lipped smile to Tate before making his way across the room. She watched as Jameson laughed, clapped Sanders on the back. Introduced him around.

This is so fucking boring.

Tate groaned and pushed away from the wall. A glance at her watch told her it was only five in the afternoon. The party would go on for a while, but she was over it already. She wound her way through people, smiling politely at everyone. When she finally got to the other side of the room, she slipped into the bedroom, shutting the door softly behind her.

Her phone was at one end of the dresser, plugged in and charging. She could see the notification light blinking on it, so she made her way over. Turned on the screen. It was from Rusty, her old roommate. Tate laughed as she scrolled through pictures of the other girl at a bachelorette party in Vegas. Tate had been invited to the same party, but had turned it down because she’d thought she would be busy with the bar. Turned out she was busy on the other side of the world.

Well, not technically busy.

Tate didn't know how long they texted back and forth. Long enough that she made herself comfortable, bending over the dresser and resting her elbows on top of it. She told Rusty all about her own trip, about Jameson dragging her from one odd incident to the next. Rusty and Jameson had met, several times, but the other woman had always been a little afraid of him. So Tate sent some embarrassing photos of him, hoping to humanize him a little.

"What are you doing?"

Tate glanced up to see Jameson standing in the doorway, his hand still gripping the knob.

"Talking to Rusty," she explained, going back to her phone.

"There's a party out here, you know," he pointed out. She nodded.

"I know."

"Full of people."

"Yes."

"In person, that you can talk to."

"Got it."

"Tatum. Get the fuck off your phone and get out here."

"No thanks."

She heard the door shut, and then he was walking towards her.

"I wasn't asking, Tate," he warned her.

"I'm just really not in the mood, Jameson. I swear. Have your party, I'll just hang out in here. You can wake me when everyone goes," Tate offered, finally looking at him again. He had moved to lean against the dresser right next to her.

"I thought you liked parties," he said in a soft voice. She chuckled.

"I like my kinds of parties. This is people chatting and smiling and trying to guess how much everyone is worth. What no one seems to realize is none of them are as rich as you, so the rest doesn't matter. Boring. They don't even notice if I'm there or not," she told him.

"I notice, and that's all that matters," he corrected her. She snorted.

"I'm too tired to argue with you. Go to your party, flirt with your Brazilian, it'll be over before you know it," she instructed him. He moved to stand behind her.

"I'm sensing a little jealousy," he replied, then she felt his hand on her back. He slowly ran his fingers down her spine.

“Not jealous. Maybe a little annoyed, but not jealous.”

His hand kept moving, sliding over the material of her tight pencil skirt, smoothing over her ass.

“And attitude, I'm sensing *lots* of attitude. I don't care for that,” he said.

His voice was getting hard, the pressure from his hand heavier. Tate stopped looking at her phone and without turning, tried to see if she could spot him from the corner of her eye. But he was completely out of her vision.

“Not trying to be attitudey. Just telling you how I feel. And I don't feel like partying,” she continued, her voice low.

“I don't give two fucks how you feel.”

“Sounds like a personal problem.”

He smacked her on the ass and she trapped her bottom lip between her teeth.

Someone is definitely in the mood to play. I must not be the only one who finds this party boring.

“Why couldn't you just come find me and ask me to end the party? Why do you always hide away?” he demanded, his hand moving back and forth across her skirt.

“Oh, right, like that would work,” she laughed, then gasped when he spanked her again.

“There's that attitude.”

“Jameson,” she breathed.

“Hmmm?”

“You have forty people in the next room, all here at your request. You have to go back out there,” she told him.

“Telling me what to do, Tate?”

“Wouldn't dream of it, sir.”

Spank.

“Fucking attitude. Fuck, Tate. I fly you half way around the world, and half the time all I've gotten in return is your goddamn attitude,” he hissed.

“Oh, c'mon, more like a third of the -,”

Spank.

“Shut the fuck up.”

“You better be willing to finish what you start,” Tate panted.

Suddenly, his hand was on her back, shoving her down. Her arms went out from underneath her and she dropped her phone as she was held down

flat against the dresser.

Rusty who?

“What the fuck did you say to me?” his voice was deadly soft. She felt his fingers brushing against the back of her thigh, barely a touch. Then her skirt was moving. He pushed it up and over her ass, letting the material bunch around her hips.

“Maybe I changed my mind. Maybe I do want to go back to the party,” she whispered, biting back a smile.

“Too late for that, baby girl. You did this on purpose, you know I love these,” Jameson sighed, and she felt his finger run along the top edge of her stocking.

“Not everything is about you. They went with the outfit,” she replied.

“Did underwear not match your outfit? Because you aren't wearing any.”

“Well, couldn't have any lines. That skirt is really tight. I don't want to be tacky.”

“What you want is to be fucked.”

Tate kept her mouth shut, humming softly as his fingers ran up and down the inside of her legs. She stayed silent until his fingers were pushing inside of her. Then she gasped.

“Jameson. There's a lot of people out there,” she breathed, turning her head to the side, trying to see him. Because of his hand on her back, she couldn't lift herself at all, so she couldn't see anything. It was kind of a strange sensation, to be touched, but not see the touch-er. All the fun of being blindfolded, without the pesky blindfold.

“Does that bother you?” he asked, hooking his fingers inside of her. She swallowed a moan.

“No. I just ..., know how you are with new people,” she whispered. The hand on her back moved into her hair, pulling sharply.

“Please, Tate, enlighten me. How am I with '*new people*'?” Jameson hissed, forcing her to bend backwards.

“You like to put on a good face. The deviant tycoon usually doesn't come out till later,” she explained, then cried out when he pulled hard enough that she had to look straight up.

“*Deviant*? And keep it down, wouldn't want to ruin the '*good face*' I've put on so far,” he told her.

"I didn't come in here so you'd follow me," she suddenly blurted out. She wasn't looking for a pity fuck, not even from Jameson.

"Too bad, cause I did. Stop talking," he snapped. She groaned, moving a hand to the one he had in her hair, trying to loosen his hold.

"Can't stop, sorry," she replied. He took his fingers away and she moaned at the loss. But then he was pressing against her, pinning her legs against the dresser.

"Goddammit, Tate. I said shut the fuck up. Why can't you ever fucking listen?" he growled.

"Why can't you fucking learn that I don't like to listen?" she managed a laugh.

He didn't respond. Tate heard a drawer open and she tried to turn her head to look, but he held her firmly in place. There was a soft rustling sound, like he was digging through some kind of material, then the drawer slammed shut.

"What are you -,"

Tate couldn't finish her question, because something was shoved into her mouth. It took her a second to figure it out. Her tongue was against something soft. Almost cool feeling. Smooth. Satin.

He just shoved a pair of panties in my mouth.

"You never fucking do as you're told, so I'll just have to *make you*," he informed her, then he was shoving her down flat again.

Her hands weren't bound together, he wasn't holding her in place. She could pull the material out of her mouth at any point. But she didn't. Tate pressed her palms flat against the dresser and groaned loudly as she felt his cock pressing inside of her. She dragged her fingernails across the wood, shuddering when he was pressed up against her, filling her to the brim.

She had come into the room to escape the party. To escape that uncomfortable feeling of being in a room full of people she didn't know. Now, she was getting fucked in a room *next to* that room full of people she didn't know.

And she didn't find it one bit strange that she finally felt comfortable again.

She shrieked and cried out as he began pounding into her. The underwear wasn't doing too terribly good a job of muffling the sounds, but she supposed it was better than nothing. His hand found its way back into

her hair, yanking at the roots, but not pulling her up. His other hand was gripping onto her hip, pulling her back against his thrusts.

"Fuck, Tate, it's been too long," he moaned from behind her. She managed a nod.

"Mmmm hmmm," she agreed, not able to manage real words.

"If you weren't so busy being a bitch half the time, we could be doing this more often," he informed her.

"*Hmuck hoff*," she snapped back.

"What was that?"

He pulled the underwear from her mouth and she gasped in air.

"I think ..., you understood me ...," she panted. He let go of her hip and spanked her, eliciting another groan.

"*Watch your fucking mouth.*"

"God, you're so eager today. Did your Brazilian get you all heated up?" Tate taunted him, wanting more from him. More hands, more words, more *everything*.

"She's pretty fucking hot, but I couldn't seal the deal," Jameson replied, almost pulling out of her entirely. Tate held her breath while he slowly slid back in, then *wham*, he was slamming against her. She shrieked and he repeated the action.

"Too old to land them anymore?" she managed to ask, then bit down on her own finger as he slammed home once again.

"She's too busy blowing *Angier* in the bathroom. Maybe I'll get next go around."

"*Lucky girl.*"

He pulled away abruptly and yanked her back around to face him. She was gulping in air when he forced her head up to face his own, his mouth covering hers. It was an angry kiss, full of clashing teeth and aggressive tongues. He walked them backwards, around the bed, and then he sat down on the side of it, pulling her on top of him.

"You want to be the one sucking his dick right now?" Jameson asked, helping her as she struggled to unbutton his shirt.

"It has been a while," Tate taunted. He shoved her hands away before just pulling the shirt apart, popping off the buttons.

"*Whore.*"

"Only for you."

"If it's only for me, why are you talking about blowing him?"

“You're the one talking about Ang's dick. If you're so curious, I'm sure we could -,”

His fingers wrapped around her neck, squeezing so tight, he froze the words in her throat.

“Don't ruin this by making me ill, Tatum,” he snapped.

She wanted to respond. Come up with a retort that would really make him mad. But he was pulling up on her throat, forcing her up onto her knees. Then his free hand was between them, guiding her back onto his dick. She sighed, settling herself on his lap.

“This is so much better than your party,” she whispered, nibbling on the edge of his ear.

“No shit.”

“Better than Ang.”

“It had better be.”

“Better than a Brazilian.”

“Let's not get crazy.”

“You can fuck yourself.”

Tate went to pull away, disgusted, but his arm wrapped around her waist. The shift was lightning quick – first, she was straddling him. Then, she was underneath him, and he was plowing into her like it was a race.

“*Watch how you fucking speak to me*, and keep it the fuck down. Goddamn, Tate, I know you love being a whore, but not everyone needs to hear it,” he cursed.

“Then stop fucking me,” she challenged, her breathing starting to hitch. He leaned back, pulling himself up onto his knees.

“Oh, I always finish what I start.”

“Really? I can remember a couple times -,”

He slapped her across the face, then his hand was back on her throat. She began to cry out in time to his thrusts.

“Why do you make me do that!?” he demanded.

“Because ... I love it,” she whispered, her eyes rolling back in her head.

“Apparent-fucking-ly. Such a stupid *cunt*, couldn't wait a couple fucking hours. We could be doing this with you bent over the railing on the balcony, but no. You had to throw a fucking pity party, hide in here. Ruin the night for everyone,” he growled at her.

“Doesn't seem like it's ending so bad for you,” she pointed out. He let go of her throat, grabbed one of her legs instead. Pushed it up so her knee was almost touching her chest. He was so deep inside her that she was seeing spots with every thrust.

Just how I like it.

“That's what you think. If I wanted a lousy fuck, I would've stuck with Isadora.”

“Funny, I had the same thought the other day about Ang.”

That earned her another slap.

“Shut the fuck up, you love everything I give you.”

“Jameson, I can't ... please ... I want ...,” Tate couldn't form a coherent sentence. Couldn't form a coherent thought. The orgasm that was approaching was starting in her chest, making her breasts tighten; making it hard to breathe.

“I know what you want,” he whispered, letting go of her leg and leaning down close to her. She met him halfway, kissing him hard.

His fingernails digging into the back of her thigh started it, and when she cried out, he bit down on her bottom lip. That finished it. She came immediately, her whole body going into a spasm before it locked down on him. He groaned, pressing his forehead to her chest while he waited out her orgasm. It took a while.

“Fuck. *Fuck*,” she panted, rubbing her lips together.

“We're going to kill each other someday, while we're doing this,” Jameson breathed as well.

“Totally.”

“*Get up.*”

Tate barely had the feeling back in her legs and Jameson was rolling off of her. She sat up, but before she could even ask what he had in mind, his hand was in her hair, pulling it. Pushing her. Forcing her down his length. She didn't even hesitate, just wrapped her lips around the head of his shaft and began bobbing away. She had barely gotten three good pumps in, still trying to catch her breath and find her rhythm, when Jameson groaned and pushed down hard on the back of her head. Dick met back of throat and Tate swallowed against her gag reflex, forcing herself to take it.

Cause I'm a fucking champion.

One of Jameson's favorite things about her were her legendary blowjob skills, so she always tried to put on a show for him. She found her stride

after that, shifting and moving on the bed so she was bent over him, a hand on his thigh. Her fingernails scratching into his skin.

“God, you're so good at that, baby girl,” Jameson groaned, and she felt the hand on the back of her head relax. “*So fucking good.*”

“Better than a Brazilian?” she asked, coming up for air. He chuckled and forced her head down again.

After a couple minutes, she could tell he wouldn't last much longer. She could feel him literally throbbing. But by that point, she'd been working at it for a while, and the whole scenario had gotten her heated up again. Her fingers found their way between her legs, and suddenly her attention was divided in two.

“Tate ... *fuck*, I'm gonna come in your mouth,” Jameson warned. Tate pulled away and he actually growled, but she moved fast, swinging her leg over his hips.

“Not today,” she breathed, lowering herself onto him.

“Did I fucking say you could -,” he started to snap, but was cut off when she tightened all of her muscles around him. Both of them gasped and his hands went to her thighs, gripping hard enough that she knew there would be bruises. She began rotating her hips against his.

It didn't take long. Jameson actually came before she did, a rarity for them, but his orgasm set off her own and she practically screamed, collapsing on his chest. She shook and panted, clenching her fingers against his rib cage.

“Holy shit. *Holy fuck*,” she gasped for air.

“What the fuck was that? A second wind?” Jameson asked, breathing hard as well. Tate slid to the side, moving off of him till she was laying flat on the mattress.

“Something like that,” she agreed, swallowing thickly. She felt his hand against her back.

“Feel better?”

“Immensely. Thank you.”

“Good,” he said, then lurched upright. He stood up and she could hear his belt buckle jangling. “Now get the fuck up and get back out there.”

“Can't. My bones don't exist anymore,” she chuckled. He smacked her on the butt, then pulled her skirt back into place. Grabbed her hips and rolled her till she was on her back.

“Tough. I rewarded your pouting. You owe me,” he said. One of her stockings had come completely loose, just a bunched up mess around her ankle. Jameson took her shoe off and pulled the hosiery free. Straightened it out.

“I don't owe you shit. If anything, I just gave *you* a reward,” she challenged him, stretching her arms above her head. He moved over her, his knees on either side of her hips.

“I *just* fucked you, and you're already getting attitudey again? Do you ever learn?” he asked, and she suddenly felt his hands near her throat. Silk against her skin. She realized he was wrapping the stocking around her neck, and she opened her eyes.

“Apparently not,” she said, her voice husky. He knotted the material and pulled it tight enough for her to feel it pinch.

“We could have a lot of fun with this,” he murmured, coiling the excess silk around his fists. One jerk, and Tate wouldn't be friends with oxygen anymore.

“A lot more fun than some boring party,” she whispered back.

“You're such a fucking whore. I love it. I'm going to -,” Jameson started pulling tighter on the stocking, when suddenly the bedroom door opened.

“Hey, can I borrow your -,” Ang's voice began blurting out, then he stopped. Tate tilted her head back, smiling up at him. Ang stared down at them, a grin spreading across his face. Jameson just glared.

“What's up?” Tate asked casually.

“You could fucking knock, you know,” Jameson pointed out.

“Thank god I didn't, I would've missed all the fun!” Ang joked, sliding in the door and shutting it behind him.

“What the hell do you think you're doing?” Jameson demanded.

“Enjoying the show. God, I feel like it's been forever since I've seen your tits, Tate,” Ang almost whined. Tate burst out laughing and looked down. She still had her bra on, but some how during their little tête à tête, Jameson had ripped open her blouse.

“What do you want, *Angier*?” Jameson sighed, letting go of the stocking and crawling backwards off of Tate. Once he was standing, he grabbed her hand and pulled her into a sitting position.

“Oh. Yeah. Can I crash in your guest bedroom?” Ang asked. Tate pulled the stocking away from her throat and stood up as well.

“What's wrong with your room?” she questioned, turning to face him as she attempted to close her shirt.

“My room doesn't have the same ..., *amenities* as yours,” he answered, but he was speaking slowly, choosing his words carefully. She stared at him.

“What *kind* of amenities?”

“Well, your room has a naked Brazilian model in it, so ...,”

“Jesus,” Jameson growled. “I introduced the two of you so could go off and fuck on your own time. Not in *my* hotel room.”

“I'm just glad she's not fucking *you* in *your* hotel room,” Tate snickered. He glared at her.

“The night's still young.”

“*Pleeeeeease?* If I make her get dressed, it'll ruin the mood,” Ang begged.

“How did she wind up naked in the guest bedroom, anyway?” Tate was curious.

“Well, she was going down on me in the bathroom – you might want to call for housekeeping, by the way – and then she just pretty much dropped all her clothes and spread herself out. Frankly, you should be happy I even thought to ask,” Ang pointed out. Jameson snorted.

“I don't have to -,”

“He's right,” Tate interrupted, laying her hand against Jameson's arm. “It's pretty amazing. Normally we wouldn't find out till we heard the sex noises. Just let them be.”

“God. *Fine.*”

“Speaking of sex noises, most of your party guests left after monkey noises started coming out of here. You guys need to learn how to shut the fuck up,” Ang cackled, then dashed out the door before Jameson could throw something at him.

“See, I told you, you never shut up.”

“He was talking to both of us.”

“*Shut up.*”

Tate went into the bathroom and cleaned herself up, pulled off the other stocking and straightened out her skirt. When she went back into the bedroom, Jameson was changing into a whole new suit. She crept up behind him, wrapped her arms around him and nibbled on his shoulder while he tried to button a vest.

“Thank you,” she whispered, fiddling with his tie.

“For what?” he asked, turning his head towards her.

“For understanding me.”

“Always, *Liebe*.”

They went back to the party. Ang hadn't been lying, there weren't a whole lot of people left, and the few that had stuck around looked pretty uncomfortable. Probably because even crazier sex noises were coming from the other bedroom. Grossly inappropriate.

I love it.

Sanders and Jameson managed to salvage what was left of the party, laughing and chatting it up. Tate got to talking with the wife of a real estate attorney, and actually enjoyed herself.

But she kept one eye on her boys. Jameson would catch her eye every now and then. Wink at her. Sanders played it cool. Actually made eye contact with people, even laughed a couple times.

He's changed so much.

Over the years, he'd actually filled out a little. He'd always be somewhat trim, but he was no longer “skinny”. When he'd first moved to Russia, he'd had a lot of free time. Apparently he'd filled most of it with exercising. His body showed it. His shoulders were broader, his arms thicker. It made Tate proud. She'd always thought he was handsome, since the first time she'd seen him. Now it felt like he was finally seeing his own potential, and actually cared.

Thinking about all that also made her sad, though. She knew he'd be leaving them again. His home was in Moscow now, his life was there. It broke her heart. She didn't want him to go. Sometimes, just sometimes, she longed for the old days. Before she had her own business. Before Sanders left home. Before her and Jameson played the break-up-make-up game. Back to when they'd all first met, and she and Sanders were free to run around all day. She and Jameson were free to play around all night.

Why can't things stay the same?

“Okay, so what's the plan today?”

“No plan.”

“But it's just us.”

“Just us, Porn God.”

“I like that. That's my name today, I'll only answer to it.”

“Got it.”

“And why is it just us?”

“Jameson is meeting with that lawyer, *finally*.”

“And that takes all day?”

“If you wanna go hump your Brazilian girlfriend, it's fine. Go.”

Ang laughed and yanked on a lock of Tate's hair.

It had been a week since the failed hotel room party. Isadora the Brazilian hoochie-slash-model had given up on wooing Jameson – apparently Ang more than fulfilled her needs. That left Tate and Jameson and Sanders with a lot of together time, which was nice. For a week, she got to pretend like it was old times again.

But that morning, Jameson informed her that his lawyer had finally flown into town. Sooner than expected. Wasn't Tate happy about that? She could finally get back to her precious Boston and her precious bar. She gave him a wet-willy as he walked out the door, which earned her a slap and a threat of retribution.

Good times.

Jameson took Sanders with him, so that left Tate alone in the hotel room. Which she promptly left to invade Ang's room. He was spooning with Isadora, or possibly having half-asleep sex, Tate wasn't sure, but she burst into his room anyway, all but dragging him out of bed. Like a true friend, he ditched his skank and hit the town with Tate.

“I've humped her enough. It's already boring. So are we going to do this all day?” he asked, looking around him. They were on a bright red, double decker tour bus. The top floor didn't have a roof and they sat up there, watching the sites roll by them.

“No. But I figured this would be a cheap, easy way to see the city,” she explained, turning to look as they rolled by the famous Peninsula Hotel.

Jameson had told her he normally stayed there when he visited, but had decided on a larger, “brand name” hotel for her this time.

“Cheap? Do you actually have to worry about stuff like that anymore? Big Daddy Kane won't give you access to his funds?” Ang teased. She rolled her eyes.

“That's boring. I can whip out the black American Express card easy peezy, but then we wouldn't get to see it like this,” she pointed out.

“He gave you a black American Express card!?”

“I am not buying you stuff.”

“Oh, yes, you are.”

They actually did go shopping after that, near the water front there were a lot of shops. Tate was a sucker when it came to Urban Outfitters, in any country. Sometimes, a person just *needed* a clock that looked like it was melting. Or at least, she did. They laughed at their purchases as they headed to the Sky 100 deck, inside the seventh tallest building in the world. They had tea service while over looking Victoria Harbor.

“He's calling me,” Tate mumbled, glancing down at her phone. Before she could answer, Ang yanked it away from her.

“This'll be good, trust me,” he said quickly, then answered the call, making moaning sounds.

“*We are in public!*” Tate hissed, smacking him with her napkin. Ang waved her away and pressed the phone to his ear.

“Sorry, sorry about that, you know how Tate's mouth is. God, she's even better than I remembered – glad you haven't ruined all the years of hard work I put into her,” Ang said quickly, sounding breathless. Tate couldn't hear Jameson's response, but she could guess.

“You're such a dick,” she grumbled, throwing the balled up napkin at Ang's face. He was silent for a while, then glanced at her before turning away.

“No. Yeah. Yeah, sure. Gotcha. Do you want to talk -, okay. On it. Too late, Satan, you said whatever it takes,” Ang's voice was teasing towards the end.

What the fuck are they talking about?

But before Tate could ask that question out loud, Ang hung up the phone. Didn't even offer for her to say hello or goodbye.

“What was that!? I wanted to talk to him!” Tate snapped.

“Just some man talk. His meetings are running late, he told me to entertain you, so c'mon. Get naked,” Ang instructed. She snorted.

“Fuck off. What did he say?” she asked.

“Just that – he's gonna be with his lawyer for a while, that's why he was calling you. Said that we could hang out and do whatever we want tonight. So let's make it good, god knows when we'll get a chance like this again,” Ang said, slowly standing out of his chair.

“I'm not having sex with you.”

“You're so boring now.”

Tate wanted to go back to the hotel to change, but Ang pitched a fit. He wanted to go to the Avenue of the Stars, take a picture next to the Bruce Lee statue. And once they were down there, he wanted to stay so they could watch the “symphony of lights” - when several of the city's larger buildings would put on a light show, set to music. So another couple hours were spent milling around till that happened.

Despite her continued complaining about wanting to change out of her sweaty clothing, Ang dragged her to a nightclub. Tate had to admit, it was pretty good fun. He plied her with alcohol. Copious amounts of alcohol. After a certain point, she stopped caring that she was wearing sweaty clothing. Stopped caring about almost everything.

“We should do this more often!” Tate yelled, hopping around to the heavy bass.

“If you could convince Satan to move to L.A., we could!” Ang yelled back, dancing around her in a circle.

“He does have that condo there,” Tate said, trying to sip at her drink while still hopping.

“Use your magic snatch to talk him into it,” Ang suggested, poking at her crotch. She spit out her mouthful of liquor, laughing.

“Magic snatch, that's the best.”

Tate had no clue what time it was when they finally left the club. Late enough that the stifling heat had abated somewhat, a breeze blowing through the streets. Ang caught them a cab, managed to get them back to the hotel. She was somewhat aware of the fact that he wasn't nearly as drunk as she was; in fact, he didn't seem drunk at all. But she was too tipsy to care. She laid back in the taxi, sticking her feet in his face.

When they got to the hotel, Tate tried to take out her cell phone so she could call Jameson, see if he was home. If he was, he probably wouldn't be

happy – it was after two in the morning. But as she felt around her shorts, she didn't feel the familiar lump of her phone.

“Wait,” she said, grabbing Ang's arm as they walked through the lobby.

“Huh?” he mumbled, chowing down on some sort of meat-on-a-stick he'd bought from a street vendor.

“My phone. I lost my phone, we have to go back,” she said, shoving her hands down the front of her shirt, checking to make sure her cell wasn't stashed in her bra.

“Nah, I've got it,” he told her, continuing on towards the elevators. She jogged after him, straightening out her top.

“Why!? When? Give it to me,” she demanded. He took it out of his back pocket and she snatched it from his hand. The screen lit up – eight missed text messages and three missed phone calls. Oh god. She unlocked the phone.

Home now.

By me saying I'm home, that means I want you home.

Where the fuck are you?

Pick up your phone.

If you fuck Angier, I will beat the shit out of him.

You better not be fucking Angier.

I am going to kill Angier.

Please text or call.

The last text actually made her the most nervous. Angry, cursing Jameson was normal. Soft, gentle Jameson was a completely different beast. It was the calm before the storm. It usually meant trouble, and not always the sexy kind.

She didn't like hurting his feelings, even if it was on accident.

“Why didn't you tell me!? He's been texting for the last two hours!” Tate snapped, following Ang onto the elevator and smacking him in the arm. He shoved her away and hit the button for their floor.

“Hey, he said we could do whatever we wanted. I wanted to spend the evening alone with my bestie. It used to be just the two of us, remember? Us against the world. Now we're lucky if we see each other every other month,” Ang pointed out. Tate swallowed her sarcastic remark. Two men, two guilt trips. Not fair. At least with Jameson, she could seduce him into submission. Ang was shit out of luck.

“I'm sorry. You're right. And I had a great time,” Tate said, stumbling into the wall as the elevator stopped at a floor. The doors slid open and Ang grabbed her hand, yanking her close as a large group of young guys got on the elevator. They looked to be in their early-twenties, and from either America or Canada.

“Hey, bro, 'sup,” one guy said, doing the head nod thing at Ang.

“Hey,” he responded, smiling down at them. Tate hiccuped and tried not to laugh. One of the guys kept staring at Ang, though. Looked away. Then looked back. Then looked away. Then turned towards him.

“This is gonna sound crazy,” he started, “but you look just like -,”

“I am,” Ang answered, cutting him off.

“No way!”

“Way.”

“Dudes! This is that guy, from the movie last night!”

Tate really started laughing. Ang just rolled his eyes, managed a wave as the younger guys all guffawed and high-fived.

“Yeah, that's me,” he said, his smile strained.

“Can I get a picture with you!?”

“I don't think that's -,”

FLASH.

Tate was just drunk enough to roll with it, so she organized everyone into a pile in a corner, so one of the guys could take a selfie of all of them. Then they all took turns taking individual pictures with Ang, who was looking less and less pleased with the adoration. Tate egged them all on, getting a thrill out of seeing him so uncomfortable.

“Get in here!” one of the guys suddenly demanded, waving his arm at Tate.

“Me!? No, no, you don't want a pic of me, I'm nobody,” Tate laughed. Ang gasped.

“Nobody!? How could you say that, after all those awards you just won!?” he asked. She blinked at him.

“Huh?”

“Guys, you know who this is, right?” Ang asked, grabbing her arm and pulling her into him.

“She, uh, she looks kinda familiar?” one of the dudes said, but it sounded more like he was guessing.

“This chick right here just won *FOUR* awards at the AVNs, for her anal scenes! She's the best in the business!” Ang went on.

“What!?” Tate shrieked.

Maybe teased him too much.

“Oh, that's probably why we don't recognize her.”

“Yeah, usually the camera is pointed a little lower on this one. C'mon, get in here, one more selfie!” Ang offered, wrapping his arm tightly around Tate so she couldn't get away.

Mother fucker.

Another round of pictures was taken. The elevator had long since stopped at a floor, where the boys had originally planned on getting off. But they kept laughing and taking pictures, holding the doors open.

“You guys wanna party with us!?” one of the guys asked, gesturing down the hallway.

“Oh, no way, we've gotta practice for a shoot tomorrow,” Ang explained with a heavy sigh, wrapping his arm around her hips. She punched him in the chest.

“No we -,”

“Oh man! Like a porn shoot!?” their new friends practically shouted, beside themselves with excitement.

“What other kind? Have a good night, guys,” Ang winked at them, lowering his head towards Tate.

“Get it on, man! Can't wait to see this movie!”

“Ang,” Tate warned, “don't you do it. I will kick you in the -,”

His lips entirely covered her own, his tongue thrusting into her mouth. Tate hadn't kissed Ang in a *long* time, she'd forgotten how much tongue he liked. The boys in the hall hooted and hollered, shouting words of encouragement to Ang. She snorted, pushing against his shoulders. He just

moved them across the elevator, pushing her up against the far wall. This earned another round of hollering, and then the elevator doors slid shut.

But Ang didn't let up. It took a real shove to get him off of her.

"What the fuck was that!? *Award for anal!?*" she demanded, wiggling against his hold.

"Hey, you started it, making them take all those pictures. And it wasn't too far from the truth, you love anal," he pointed out.

"*Love*' is a stretch. What are you doing? Get off of me," Tate grumbled, yanking at his arm. When he still didn't let go, she glared up at him. He was staring down at her, a very serious look on his face. An almost sad look. She stopped moving.

"Tate," Ang sighed her name, moving one arm so he could trace a finger down the side of her cheek.

Oh god. I'm not drunk enough for this. Please don't let him say something weird.

"What's wrong?" she asked, her voice soft.

"I just ..., miss you. You know?" he said with a laugh, twisting some of her hair around his finger.

"I miss you, too, Ang, but that doesn't mean you get to make out with me in an elevator," Tate tried to joke, grabbing his free hand and linking their fingers.

"That's not what this is," he said quietly, his eyes wandering over her face. "I just know that it's going to be a long time before we see each other again. A long time before we have a day to just be us, together. Maybe never."

Ridiculously, Tate felt like crying.

"Why are you saying that? We still have the rest of this trip, and I can come visit you, and we can -,"

He kissed her again, and this time Tate allowed it. It was different. It was soft, and it was sad. It was like he was saying goodbye, the only way he really knew how. She held onto his hand even tighter, pressing it to her chest.

"You were always my fave, Tater tot," he breathed, pressing his forehead against hers.

"Ang, *what is going on?*" Tate whispered, staring up at him.

He didn't answer her. Just then, the elevator dinged and the doors slid open, startling her. They were on their floor. Even more startling was

Jameson, standing in front of the doors, his arms crossed over his chest. One of his eyebrows cocked up as he took in the scene, Ang holding Tate, pressing her up against a wall.

“Interesting,” Jameson murmured. Ang took a deep breath, then smiled. Turned to face the door.

“Hey, Satan, you said do whatever we want,” he teased, then dipped Tate, practically licking the inside of her mouth. She made gagging noises.

“Very funny, *Angier*.”

Ang finally let her go, but not before slapping her on the ass hard enough to send her stumbling into Jameson. He saluted them and said goodnight, then strolled down the hall towards his room, whistling a little tune. Tate stared after him with her jaw hanging open.

What the hell is going on!?

“What the hell was that?” Jameson's words mimicked her thoughts.

“I swear, I have no idea. One minute, we're riding in the elevator with a bunch of his groupies. Next thing I know, he's kissing me like he's gonna die tomorrow,” Tate tried to explain.

“Ah.”

And that was it. Jameson turned and started walking back towards the room. Tate's mind was blown. Jameson hated it when Ang touched her. Hated it when Ang so much as breathed in her direction. She had just told him that Ang had kissed her, and he didn't care!?

“Is there something I'm missing!?” Tate called out, stumbling after him. Jameson held the door open to their room and let her go inside ahead of him.

“What do you mean?” he asked, taking her purse from her and tossing it onto a counter.

“Ang was being all weird, and you're not mad, and ... and ... I can't get this off,” Tate grumbled, hopping around on one leg as she tried to pull her sandal off. It finally came free and she chucked it over her shoulder.

“You want me to be mad?” Jameson asked, slowly moving to stand in front of her.

“You're always mad, it's one of the things I love most about you,” Tate laughed, and got her other shoe free. She threw that one, as well.

“Hmmm, one of the things. And what do you love *the* most about me?” he questioned in a slow voice.

"It's a toss up," Tate answered, yawning while she swept her hair up into a ponytail.

"Between what and what?"

"Your dick and your mouth."

"Jesus."

"Well, by mouth, I mean words. How you talk."

"Not much better."

She snickered and moved out onto the balcony. The breeze was stronger that high up, lifting and moving her hair around. She sighed and pressed her forearms against the railing, leaned over it. Jameson came out and copied her stance, leaning against the railing as well.

"You know I don't mean that," Tate said in a soft voice.

"Excuse me?"

"The thing I love most about you *is* you," Tate tried to explain, then hiccuped. He laughed and moved behind her, putting his hands on the railing on either side of her.

"That would be much sweeter if you weren't drunk," he pointed out.

"I'm not drunk. Just ..., tipsy," she offered. He laughed again, but it was a dark sound, and then she felt his teeth against her shoulder.

"Tipsy enough to let *Angier* put his tongue in your mouth," he growled.

"Aha, I knew it, you *are* angry," she teased, then yelped when his teeth nipped particularly hard.

"According to you, I'm always angry. Did you have a good time tonight?" he asked, moving back from her a little.

"I did," she answered honestly, shivering as she felt his fingers run through her ponytail.

"Did *Angier* get anything else inside you?"

"Wouldn't you like to know," she joked, then gasped as he yanked back hard on her hair.

"You wouldn't appreciate finding me with my tongue down Isadora's throat," he hissed.

"No, I wouldn't."

He let go of her hair and turned her around, so she was facing him.

"Did you like it?" he demanded. She barked out a laugh.

"What kind of question is that? It was a kiss, of course I liked it. Kissing is fun," she replied. He glared at her.

"Stop being a smart ass."

"I didn't ask him to kiss me, I didn't want him to, I tried to get him to stop. Jesus, when did you become Mr. Insecurity?" Tate questioned.

"Right around when I caught my girlfriend deep throating another man's tongue," he snapped back.

"Oh, for fuck's sake. You know, I was actually having a good time, so if you're gonna keep acting like a bitch, then I'd rather finish the night somewhere else," she warned him.

"Watch it," he countered.

"No. I didn't do anything wrong, and you're throwing a hissy fit!"

"A what?"

"A hissy fit, you know – that thing little girls do when they don't get their way."

When his hand wrapped around her throat, Tate wondered if maybe she'd pushed him too far.

Or not far enough ...

"Does *this* feel like something a little girl does?" he asked, his voice deadly soft. She took a deep breath through her nose.

"Feels like something a bitch does," she replied.

His fingernails dug in as he squeezed and air became difficult to come by.

"How come *Angier* gets to maul you in an elevator, but I try to have a conversation, and I get back talk and arguments?" Jameson growled. She smiled.

"Because it's so much funner," she teased, her voice little more than a breath.

"Shut the fuck up."

"Alright."

Angier may have gotten to maul her in an elevator, but Jameson got to strip her bare on a balcony. Ate her out like he was starving for her. Then bent her over that railing and fucked her so hard, security came to the door to investigate all the screaming and cursing.

Best night ever.

~10~

Sometimes Jameson tried to pinpoint the exact moment he fell in love with Tate. Sure, from the first moment he'd seen her, she'd managed to steal a small piece of his heart. But when he'd been unequivocally **in love** with Tatum O'Shea, that was harder to peg down.

When he'd hurt her feelings by calling her stupid, back when they'd first started sleeping together, that's when he'd first realized he cared about her. Thought of her as more than just sex. Then at her parent's house, when Robert had hit her. That was the first moment when he thought of her as truly belonging to him, as something no one else was worthy of touching. Only him.

When he was in Berlin and he had seen newspapers proclaiming that she was dating Nick Castille, the first baseman for the Boston Red Sox. That's when he knew he had a problem. He'd been hurt. He'd forgotten what that felt like; Tatum O'Shea had reminded him.

Seeing her in the hospital, that had hurt his soul. Her yelling at him that she wished he didn't exist, that had killed him inside. Her not trusting him, not believing him while they were in Spain, that had hurt his heart.

But the pearls.

She had kept it together for a lot of Spain. Sure, they fought, she yelled at him. But she didn't ask him **why**. Never really questioned why he'd done what he'd done. Jameson was a selfish, self-centered asshole, he knew this, so he never thought to question her **lack of** questioning.

But the pearls.

She had a melt down in an alley in Paris. Crying in a way he'd never seen before; not from Tate. No, Tatum O'Shea was too strong for tears, **real** tears. But there they were, as she sobbed and screamed. Demanded to know how he could do something like that to her, why did he do something like that to her?

How could I have done that to her?

Jameson would later tell Tate that was the moment when he realized she was in love with him.

What he never told her was that was the moment he fully realized that he was in love with her, too.

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"I can't see you," Tate whined.

"How about now?"

"I see nostrils and chin."

"At least they're sexy nostrils."

"No such thing."

"Okay, how about now?"

"Yes!" she exclaimed. "Yes, there's that beautiful smile."

Nick Castille laughed, raking his hand through his hair. It was midnight in Tucson, Arizona. Which equaled ten in the morning in Hong Kong. Nick had texted her, asking her to make some time to Skype with him. He wanted to see her, he said. It had been a long time. So he agreed to stay up late if she got up early.

They had kept in touch. She would always have a special place in her heart for Nick. Sure, in a way, he had tried to subtly come between her and Jameson – as Jameson was fond of pointing out. But Nick had also been ridiculously understanding, beyond forgiving, and he'd always allowed her to do her thing, with no questions and no judgement. When she had picked Jameson over him, Nick hadn't even gotten that upset. He had wished them well.

Over the course of the last two years, they had managed to see each other. When he was in Boston for the baseball season, sometimes they would all go out for lunch. When Sanders had lived at home, she would drag him to baseball games. Jameson wasn't exactly in love with Nick, but he wasn't threatened by him, either. Still, the devil didn't take kindly to men who had tried to steal his succubus, so it would be a long time before Nick was welcome in the Weston house. Most of Tate's interactions with Nick were limited to online.

"So how are you?" he asked, sipping at something in a coffee mug.

"Good, good. It's been fun here," she assured him.

"That's good. When do you think you'll be coming home?" he continued.

"I don't know, probably soon. Jameson came here to see his lawyer, who was actually in another city. They got together yesterday – Jameson's

actually with him right now,” Tate explained. “So I guess as soon as they're done doing whatever it is they're doing, we'll head home.”

“Awesome. Sounds good. How's Ang?”

Tate snorted, resting her chin on her hands. She was laying on her stomach on the floor, in the middle of the suite's living room. She had a laptop opened in front of her, within arms reach.

“Good. Kinda weird, actually. We went out last night, and before I got back to my room, he got all, like, emotional, or something. I thought he was gonna tell me he had cancer,” she recapped.

“Nah, he's probably just glad to be back with his buddy again. You're a hard person to miss,” Nick assured her.

“Pfffft. You don't miss me,” she teased.

“I miss your jokes.”

“My jokes are horrible.”

“Yeah, they make mine look better in comparison.”

“Speaking of better looking, is there any chance I can get a peek?” she asked, smiling big, hoping that would butter him up.

“Tate, it's midnight here,” Nick pointed out, but he had trouble holding back his smile. He had a horrible poker face.

“I know, I know, but you know I love it,” she begged, pouting her lips.

“Yeah, yeah, you only talk to me for one reason anymore,” he grumbled as he leaned out of the camera's view.

“At least it's a good reason!” she laughed. The Skype's feed blurred with the movement of Nick's arm. Just pixels filled with dark and light. Then a shape moving behind Nick. Another blurry shape coming into focus as it was held in front of him.

“Hold on, watch this,” Nick's voice said, and then the camera cleared.

“Dadda.”

Tate squealed and waved her hands at the plump baby that was looking back at her. The little boy had his daddy's big brown eyes and mop of thick brown hair. The little tyke said the word several more times before Nick pulled baby Jake back from the camera and sat him on his lap.

“Is that his first word!?” Tate exclaimed.

“Yeah. Clearly a smart boy,” Nick explained.

“I don't know where he gets it from, I must've said '*mama*' a million times to him!” the blur behind Nick laughed. Then it leaned over his shoulder, came into the light and focus of the lens.

“He's a boy, there's no accounting for taste,” Tate assured Nick's wife, Laura. The other woman laughed.

“Very true. I guess I should just be thrilled – he's only ten months old, pretty soon to be saying anything. Maybe he'll be a genius,” Laura said, smoothing her fingers over the baby's hair.

“As long as he knows how to throw a ball, I don't care how smart he is,” Nick added. Tate and Laura snorted in unison.

Two years ago, when Tate had left Nick in Tucson, she never would've guessed that a year later he would meet the woman he was going to marry. Or that they would immediately get pregnant and have a baby. It had been quick, but it was clear that the two really loved each other. And Tate got along great with Laura – another reason why she wished she could visit Nick more often. His family felt like an extension of herself. Laura was almost like the sister Tate wished she would've had, and baby Jake was her nephew. She loved them.

“When are you going to have a little Kane running around?” Laura teased. Tate made a gagging sound.

“God, can you imagine Jameson with a baby? It would shi-, er, ahhhh, need a diaper change, and Jameson would pass out. Or try to sell it for a clean one,” Tate joked.

“I bet he'd surprise you. But speaking of dirty diapers,” Nick said, holding Jake away from his lap. Laura groaned.

“Does it ever end? Good seeing you, Tate, come visit us soon!” she called out as she carried the baby away from the camera.

“I'll try! Give him kisses for me!” Tate yelled. Nick laughed.

“Seriously, I bet he'd be great with kids,” Nick went back to what they'd been talking about.

“Jameson? Have you ever seen him around kids? He looks like he wants to puke,” Tate pointed out.

“What about you? Do *you* want kids?”

“Well, yeah, someday.”

“Then he'll want kids.”

“You sound so sure.”

“Tate, the man lives to see you happy. The moment you're ready to have kids, he'll step up to the plate,” Nick assured her. She smiled.

“Thanks for having faith in him,” she said softly.

“You're very welcome.”

“Why did you want me to call you?” she asked. Nick shrugged.

“Just missed your face. Sometimes it feels like time is moving so fast, and next thing I know, something else big has happened. I just ..., didn't want to miss anything,” he tried to explain. Tate frowned.

“What would you miss with me? Still the same ol' Tate and Jameson over here,” she pointed out. He nodded.

“I know. But like I said, sometimes things move fast,” he repeated himself.

Tate wanted to question him further, but she was interrupted by the door to the suite opening. She propped herself up on her hands and by the time she looked over her shoulder, Jameson was halfway across the room, taking his jacket off.

“Where were you all morning?” she asked.

“Who are you talking to?” he ignored her question and asked his own.

“Oh, Nick wanted me to call him, say hi,” she said, lowering herself and rolling to the side so Jameson could see the computer screen.

“Oh god,” he groaned.

“Hi, Jameson!” Nick's voice called out. “Still a little ray of sunshine, I see!”

Jameson gave him the finger.

“You boys,” Tate said in a teasing voice, rolling back so she was in front of the screen again.

“I'll let you go. I just wanted to say hi, really. Have a good trip, and be nice to him,” Nick instructed. Tate guffawed.

“Are you joking? I'm *always* nice to him,” she said.

“*Lies*,” Jameson called out from behind her.

“I know how you are, so stop bitching all the time and just appreciate the good stuff,” Nick told her. She gasped.

“I take back every nasty thing I said about you,” Jameson added, and Nick laughed.

“Okay, yeah, this conversation needs to end before something weird happens, like you two becoming friends,” Tate grumbled.

“It was good talking to you. Keep in touch,” Nick said. She nodded.

“Always. Give my love to Laura, and big sloppy kisses to Jake,” she told him.

“Give my love to Laura, too!” Jameson yelled. Nick snorted.

“I'll talk to you later.”

Tate blew him a kiss, then the screen went dark. She sighed and closed the laptop. Laid her cheek against her hands. She hummed to herself, lazily kicking her feet in the air while she thought about their conversation.

"Sometimes things move fast," he'd said – but why? Why was everyone being so weird?

"He just wanted to say hi?" Jameson asked from behind her.

"Mmmm hmmm," she replied.

"That's nice. I guess."

"What've you been up to?" she asked with a yawn.

"Picking up these contracts from my lawyer. What we came here for," he told her.

"Does this mean we're going home?" she guessed.

"Not quite yet."

Tate was about to question him further when something landed against her lower back. She lifted herself onto her elbows, trying to look over her shoulder. Out of the corner of her eye, she could see a dark green folder laying on top of her. She could also see Jameson walking away from her, heading back into the kitchen.

"What is this?" she grumbled, reaching back behind her and trying to get ahold of the folder.

"Something you need to look over, before tonight," he said as she swung around into a sitting position, crossing her legs. She glanced at him. He was standing in the kitchen area, drinking from a bottle of Perrier.

"Your contract stuff? Why do you want me to look over it?" Tate asked with a laugh, opening the folder and flipping through the pages. A couple words jumped out at her and she stopped laughing. Stopped flipping. Moved back to the first page.

"Because, we need to talk about it. It's the reason why we came here," he told her simply. Tate's eyes flew over the words.

"But ..., you said you had to talk to your lawyer ..., about a merger. Your will," she reminded him. Reminded herself. She was so confused. She skipped to the next page.

"I did. My will is over here, you can look at it next," he promised. She swallowed thickly and slowly stood up, her hands starting to shake.

"Jameson," she said his name slowly as she flipped to the last page.

"Yes?"

"Is this what I think it is?"

“That depends.”

“On what?”

“On what you think it is. Your brain is one of the weirdest fucking places I've ever been, I have no clue what you're thinking,” he laughed.

It wasn't funny.

“What the fuck is this!?” she demanded, skipping back to the middle of the document. Terms like “*property division*” and “*life style*” and “*mutual assets*” leapt out at her. Swam around in her vision.

“I told you, it's what we came here for,” he repeated himself. She stared at him.

“Jameson, this is a goddamn prenup.”

“I know.”

“Why do you have a prenup?”

“Because I'm not fucking stupid.”

“Yeah, but why are you handing it to me right now!?”

“Did you wake up stupid? Why are we even having this conversation? Oh, you need a pen. Here, you can sign at the bottom, on the back,” Jameson informed her, walking towards her with a pen in his outstretched hand. She slapped the Mont Blanc away.

“Are you fucking shitting me!? Who are you marrying? Cause it sure as shit isn't me,” she snapped. He rolled his eyes.

“Okay, before you flip out, just let me talk to yo-,”

“You flew me all the way to Hong Kong so your lawyer could draw up a prenuptial agreement? *That's* your idea of marriage!?” Tate demanded. She was breathing so hard, she felt like she was going to hyperventilate.

“No, that's my idea of what's necessary *before* marriage. A marriage involves other documents, which are in the folder with my will. It also requires a certified officiant and witnesses, so sign the fucking prenup so we can meet up with them and get this bullshit over with,” Jameson growled.

“Oh my god. This is really your idea of a proposal, isn't it?” she gasped. “Is this a fucking joke?”

“You're certainly turning it into one.”

“I can't believe you! Two fucking years, and you just hand me a contract? Sign here, then let's go sign another piece of paper!? *Is this a fucking joke!?*” Tate was almost shrieking.

“Calm the fuck down.”

“You calm down! Jesus, Jameson, am I just another business deal to you!? A 'merger'!?” she hissed at him. He glared down the length of his nose at her.

“More like a hostile takeover,” he corrected her.

“You did this because you thought I wouldn't go for it,” she suddenly blurted out.

“Excuse me?”

“You thought up the absolute worst way possible to propose, the most dickheadish way possible, so I'd say no, didn't you!?” she demanded. He laughed.

“You give me too much credit.”

“Get fucked.”

“That's *your* job.”

“You know what, *fuck you*. You think you can pull some shit like this!?” Tate started shouting, searching around for the pen he'd offered. She spied it on the floor and scooped it up. “I am gonna sign this stupid thing. I'll sign your fucking contract, complete your fucking merger.”

“Nobody's twisting your fucking arm, Tate. Wouldn't want to put you out,” he said in his scary soft voice.

“Nope. Too late,” she said in a sing song voice as she placed the prenup on a table and leaned over it, signing it with a flourish. “Can't take it back now, asshole. A fucking prenup. Not even a '*good morning*'.” She was mostly grumbling to herself as she stomped around the suite.

“What the fuck are you doing?” he asked. She grabbed her sandals, hopped around as she slipped them on.

“Getting ready,” she growled.

“Ready to do what?”

“Shopping.”

“What the fuck are you talking about?”

“You want to get *merged*? Then one of my *contractual stipulations* is that I need a fucking expensive white dress,” Tate informed him, struggling to pull on her jacket.

“Tate, just calm down and talk to me, we need to talk about this,” he sighed, rubbing a hand over his face.

“Too late for that! You had all this time to talk to me, but apparently making a fucking deal and drawing up a fucking contract was more

important. So when is this magical merger going to take place?" she asked, throwing her purse strap over her head.

"We need to be there at six o'clock," he told her, glancing at his watch. She gaped at him. He was really serious.

"Eight hours. You gave me a contract and eight hours," she said softly. He reached for her.

"If you'd just let me finish tell-," he began to say, but she yanked away.

"And a ring!" she suddenly yelled, heading for the door.

"What the fuck are you talking about now!?" he called out from behind her as she stepped into the hallway.

"I'm going to buy a white fucking dress, and a big goddamn diamond ring, *you asshole!*" she shrieked at him before slamming the door shut.

A contract. Two years. A contract. A fucking contract. Two fucking years.

Tate stormed down the hall, took a turn, then stopped in front of another door. She knocked on it till the occupant opened up.

"Is everything alright?" Sanders asked, looking startled.

"C'mon, let's go!" she yelled, walking back down the hall.

"Excuse me?" he replied. She heard the door shut, then he was right beside her.

"You knew, didn't you!?" she demanded, hitting the down button once they got to the elevator.

"Knew what? What's happened?" Sanders sounded flabbergasted. The doors slid open and they went inside.

"Knew what he was doing," she said.

"What was he doing?" Sanders continued, looking bewildered.

"His lawyer! Those stupid contracts he went on about! '*Mergers*'! How could you not tell me!?" Tate asked, turning on him as the elevator started its descent. Sanders winced.

"I'm terribly sorry, he asked me not to," was his answer. She let out a frustrated shriek, making a choking gesture at his throat.

"Are you kidding me!? How many times have I told you, told *both of you*, that I fucking hate that shit!?" Tate yelled at him.

"You have mentioned, several times, that you -,"

"Shut up. Just shut up. Talk about a bad fucking idea. A contract!? Did he think I'd say no, is that why he did it? Well, fuck that noise, he wants to

pull some bullshit like that, I *will* marry him, just to piss him off,” Tate threatened, striding out into the lobby when the elevator opened up.

“Um, okay,” was Sanders' only response.

Valet brought the car around. Tate sat in the backseat, wanting to keep distance between herself and Sanders. She still had the urge to strangle him. She instructed him to take her to the nearest, nicest, shopping center.

They shopped around for quite a while. Tate didn't buy just one wedding dress – she bought *three*. She also bought a diamond encrusted necklace and a tiara. *A tiara*. She forced Sanders to sit in a lingerie shop while she picked out corsets and bustiers and stockings and garters.

“Are you having several weddings?” he asked. She glared at him.

“I wouldn't know, would I? No one asked my opinion,” she snapped back, then spent even more money.

“Where to now?” Sanders sighed, loading her purchases into the trunk of the car.

“I want you to find the most expensive jewelry store in all of Hong Kong,” she ordered him.

“Of course.”

They drove for a while. Tate stewed in the back seat, glaring out the window. Fucking Sanders. *Fucking Jameson*. She just couldn't get over it. When she'd been a little girl and had imagined getting married, had imagined a man proposing to her, it certainly hadn't been like how Jameson had done it. She pictured someone proposing with a ring, not a with a prenup. Proposing down on one knee, not by dropping a contract on her. Proposing with poetic prose, not legal jargon. Proposing with ...,

Jameson proposed to me. It was fucked up and all kinds of wrong. But he proposed. Jameson Kane just proposed to me. Jameson Kane wants to marry me. Jameson Kane wants to spend the rest of his life with me.

Jameson Kane just proposed to me.

“Sanders, pull over,” she breathed.

“Excuse me?” he asked.

“Pull over,” she said it louder.

“Tatum, we are on a freeway, I can't just -,”

“Pull over, or I'm gonna puke in this back seat.”

Sanders pulled over, putting on the hazard lights as he sidled the car into an emergency lane. Tate scooted across the seat to the passenger side

and rolled down the window, stuck her head outside. She kept her mouth wide open and took deep breaths, her eyes squeezed tightly closed.

"Are you alright?" Sanders called out. She waved a hand at him and slowly sat back down.

"I will be," she panted, rolling up the window.

"Are you car sick?"

"No," she answered.

"May I ask what the problem is?"

Tate opened her eyes. Stared at the roof of the car. Blinked back tears.

"Did he really propose to me?" she whispered.

"Yes. Yes, he did," Sanders assured her.

"Is it real? Are we really supposed to get married today?" she kept on with the questions.

"Yes. In three hours, actually," he told her, glancing at his watch.

Tate started to cry.

"I'm sorry," she sobbed. Sanders sighed and started to crawl over the front seat. She actually started laughing – she'd never seen him do something so awkward. But by the time he was sitting next to her, the laughter had died away.

"Do you not want to get married?" he asked, taking her hand when she held it out to him.

"No. I mean, *I do*, I do want to get married. I just didn't know it was happening today. I had no idea he wanted to get married," she sniffled, turning in her seat and swinging her legs up, covering his lap with them.

"You've been together for quite a long time, surely it had to be somewhere in the back of your mind that this might happen," he pointed out, wrapping his arm around her shoulders and scooting her closer.

"Well, yeah, in *my* mind. Jameson's mind is a little different. I thought *I* would have to propose," she explained, chuckling a little.

"He would never allow that," Sanders told her. She sighed and rested her head on his shoulder.

"I just ..., can't believe it. All these years, Sandy, and I still can't believe he'd want to be with someone like me," she said, pressing her forehead against his neck.

"That's silly, if you'll pardon me saying. Most people would ask how you are able to stay with him," he pointed out. She shook her head.

"I don't know if I can handle this. It's too much, Sanders. He's just so much," she whispered.

They were silent for a while. She clenched and unclenched her fingers around his, praying for him to say the right thing. To say something that would calm her down. To say something she needed to hear.

He didn't disappoint.

"You know what I think?" Sanders finally spoke.

"What?"

"Maybe ... maybe being in love is like staring at the sun. Exactly where you want to be and too much, all at once," he said in a soft voice.

Like staring at the sun. Jameson Kane, just the center of my universe, that's all.

"You're always right, Sanders," she breathed. He chuckled.

"Time doesn't change some things."

Tate laughed as well, then lifted her head and kissed him.

She and Sanders had a very different kind of relationship. They had never been romantically involved, had never been in love, yet they had been very intimate and were close in ways she had never been with anyone else. She never knew how to explain it. Sanders said they were soulmates, and it made sense to her.

So when she kissed him, it wasn't a sexual act. At least not to them. It was very natural. And he kissed her back, his hand squeezing her own. She smiled against his lips and pulled away a little.

"Do you think he'll still let us do that, after he marries me?" she asked, rubbing her nose.

"Well, what Jameson doesn't know, won't hurt him," Sanders suggested. Tate burst out laughing.

"Why, Mr. Dashkevich, you have become very naughty in your old age," she teased.

"Forgive me, Ms. O'Shea, but if I am 'naughty', then it is because you made me this way."

"Flirt."

Sanders eventually crawled back into the front seat. Tate took some more deep breaths, wiping at her eyes. Okay. Jameson had proposed. A lot of things made sense now – that must be the reason for bringing in Ang. He would be her maid of honor, so-to-speak. That's why the night before, Ang had kissed her like it would be the last chance he got to do so. That's why

Jameson had arranged dinner with her parents. That's why Nick had wanted to talk to her. Everyone but Tate had known what Jameson was planning. He had organized everything very carefully, very secretively.

“Where to now?” Sanders asked, looking at her in the rear view mirror. Tate let out a sigh, ran her hands through her hair.

“To the mall. Let's go back to a mall,” she said.

“You need *more* stuff?” he questioned. She smiled.

“Just a couple things.”

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~12~

Jameson Kane was nervous. Very, very, nervous.

It was six-thirty, and no Tate.

He had known he was taking a risk. When Jameson had called his lawyer about drawing up the prenuptial agreement, he had figured on giving it to Tate in Boston. She could just come down to the office and the lawyer could explain everything. A conversation could actually take place.

But then it turned out Jameson's lawyer was dealing with another client in Singapore. Once Jameson got his mind set on something, though, it was hard to turn it off. He didn't want to go to Singapore, but he was willing to go to Hong Kong. His lawyer agreed to start on the paperwork, then they could go over it together when it was finished.

Jameson didn't know what Tate expected from him. Did she honestly think he would get down on one knee? Sing her a song or something? Fuck that noise. It hadn't even occurred to him.

The only thing that had been going through Jameson's head was that this was the woman he wanted to spend the rest of his life with, and he wanted that to start as soon as possible. *Immediately*. So if that meant flying them halfway around the world, then so be it. Whatever it took.

Apparently Tatum didn't feel the same way.

"Don't worry, man," Ang mumbled, then Jameson felt his hand on his shoulder. "She'll be here."

"This isn't exactly how I pictured this all going. You're supposed to be here for *her*, not me," Jameson sighed.

"Consider it a bonding opportunity," Ang suggested.

"Don't make me ill."

In all honesty, Jameson was grateful for Ang's presence. The younger man had an upbeat, jovial personality. Somewhat of a glass-half-full kind of outlook. So while Jameson felt like he was slowly drowning, waiting to see if she would show up, waiting for some sort of text or phone call, at least from Sanders, it was nice having Ang there, trying to cheer him up.

Though "*trying*" was the keyword.

"Maybe they got caught in traffic?" Ang offered.

"Please stop talking now," Jameson groaned, then looked at his watch again. Six-forty-five.

"I do have another engagement," the minister Jameson had hired piped up.

"Just give it some time," Jameson snapped.

But fifteen minutes later, there was still no sign of them. The sun had almost set and a strong breeze was rolling in off the ocean. A beach wedding had seemed like a romantic idea. Now it was just depressing.

Maybe she and Sanders ran away together. Would fucking figure.

"I'm very sorry," the minister apologized. Jameson sighed and turned towards him.

"No, I'm sorry for wasting your time. Thank you for waiting," he said, shaking the man's hand.

"Of course. And please, don't worry. I'm sure there's -,"

"We're here! We're here!"

Jameson turned around. Tate was running down the beach, Sanders jogging somewhat behind her. She was waving something in the air, trying to signal them. He took a deep breath, let his eyes fall shut.

"Thank god," he murmured.

"I'm sorry, I'm so sorry. I had to return a bunch of stuff, and we lost track of time, and then traffic was a bitch, and I'm just so sorry," she sounded out of breath as she reached them.

Jameson opened his eyes and looked down at Tate. Her dress was simple – a short, strapless, cream colored number. She didn't have any shoes on, or any accessories, except for a random batch of white flowers that she was clutching in her right hand. They looked liked they had been plucked from a garden. Her hair was up in a high, messy ponytail. Her eye makeup was dark and smudgy, and she wore pale pink lip gloss.

She looked *exactly* like the woman he had first met, catering that party so many years ago.

I am so fucking in love with this girl ...

"I thought you were standing me up," he said. She rolled her eyes.

"Please. I had Sanders stop by the hotel, I saw your will – very generous, Mr. Kane. I'm not going anywhere," she teased him.

"God, I knew this was a bad idea."

"Shut up."

"You shut up."

"I'm sorry," the minister interrupted, "would you still like to do this?"

It was short and simple, just how Jameson had been hoping. Sanders and Ang acted as witnesses. Tate said “*I do*”, which was like a weight off. No going back, now. When it came time to exchange rings, she tried to wave the man away.

“We don't have those, it's okay,” she told him. Jameson held up his hand.

“Maybe *you* don't, but I do,” he said, digging in his pocket.

“You got me a ring?” she asked.

“I *already had* a ring,” he corrected her.

“You had a ring, and instead of giving me that, you gave me that prenup!?” she snapped, putting her hands on her hips.

“I was going to give it to you after you looked at the prenup, but you were too busy having a fucking fit. Now shut up and hold out your hand,” he ordered. She did as she was told and he slid the large diamond onto her ring finger, happy that it fit well. He'd had it sized based on one of her other rings.

“Oh my god,” she breathed, bringing her hand to her face. “This is beautiful. Jesus, Jameson, where did you get it?”

“Harry Winston.”

“Pardon?”

“Harry Winston. I had it made in New York. It took a while, I worked with a lot of designers. If it was going to sit on your finger, then it had to be perfect. No one else will have that ring. Just you.”

Tate stared at him for a second, tears filling her eyes. He hated it when she cried, but he was glad that she remembered. Glad she remembered as well as he did.

“There will never be a ring from Harry Winston. I will never ask you to marry me. I don't want those things, I never did ... I don't want to put stars in your eyes, I'm not that guy. I'm the devil, and I don't have any plans to change ...”

*I am so fucking stupid. I take back everything I said – I should've gotten her this ring in the beginning. We should have been together from the start. I am **that** guy, and I do want to see those stars in her eyes. Want to know I'm the only one to put them there.*

Luckily, before Tate's tears could spill over, she practically jumped on him, kissing him in a way that made the minister blush.

"Excuse me. *Excuse me!*" the man cleared his throat. "I haven't gotten to that part yet."

"I think they're there, dude," Ang's voice laughed.

They broke apart long enough to hear the rest of the minister's speech and thank him. Jameson gave him a huge tip before waving goodbye. Then he shook hands with Ang and thanked him for being there, thanked him for his calm demeanor. Ang laughed at him, then actually hugged him.

Jameson managed to keep his dinner down.

Tate threw the bouquet in Ang's face before giving him a quick kiss goodbye, thanking him profusely and promising to wake him up early the next morning so she could yell at him for keeping everything a secret. Then she kissed Sanders, but there wasn't anything quick about it. She practically dipped him, shoving her tongue into his mouth.

"Alright, alright," Jameson snapped. She pulled away laughing.

"Told you," she snickered, winking at Sanders. Jameson had no clue what that meant and chose to ignore it, walking a little ways back with Sanders.

"Thank you, for doing all this. I know it makes you uncomfortable," Jameson said, resting his hand on Sanders' shoulder.

"It's not so bad, when I know the outcome will be a good one," the other man replied.

"You had more faith than I did. She was so angry at the hotel, and then that was a *loooooong* hour wait," Jameson told him.

"Yes. She had somewhat of a break down in the car. Sometimes it takes her a while to realize what is good for her," Sanders explained.

"Sometimes I think I'll never understand her as well as you do," Jameson sighed.

"A little mystery is good for a relationship."

Jameson barked out a laugh and stopped walking, pulled Sanders into a hug.

"I'm so glad you came. There's no one else I would want by my side at this moment," he whispered. Sanders nodded, hugging him back.

"Not half as glad as I, sir. I wouldn't have missed it for the world."

They pulled away, clearing their throats and blinking their eyes. They made plans for the next day, then Jameson said goodbye before turning and

heading back to Tate.

"I almost thought you were going to go home with him," she laughed. Jameson rolled his eyes.

"You have to obey me now, you took an oath, so shut the fuck up," he ordered. She snorted.

"Yeah, good luck with that."

"What do you want to do now, baby girl?" he asked, looking down at her as they strolled along the beach. She shrugged.

"I don't know. This is your party. You didn't plan anything beyond this?" Tate asked.

"Not really."

"You suck at this."

"Tate?"

"What?"

"Shut up now."

"You know," she ignored him, "if you had done this like a normal human being, there'd be a reception. A party, with people, things to do."

"Ah. A normal human being. And what else would happen at a normal human being wedding?" Jameson questioned.

"Stuff. You'd throw the garter, I'd throw my bouquet, we'd do stupid dances, then you'd carry me over a thresh hold," Tate prattled stuff off. Jameson sighed and stopped walking. He wrapped his arm around her waist, then yanked her legs up, cradling her in his arms.

"There's no thresh hold, so this will have to do. Where's your garter?" he asked, heading up the beach, towards a parking lot.

"I'm not wearing one."

"Damn. Give me your panties, we'll throw those instead."

"Not wearing those, either."

"You, Mrs. Kane, are a very, very bad girl," Jameson said in a low voice. She smiled up at him.

"That I am, Mr. Kane. You should probably punish me," she suggested.

"Oh, I intend to."

Jameson carried her up to the parking lot, but what he saw when they got there caused him to set her back down.

"What? What is it?" she asked, straightening out her dress. He didn't answer and she followed his scowl.

A group of guys was standing by the car Jameson had rented for himself. Most of them had large cameras hanging around their necks. How they'd found out what was going on, Jameson had no clue, but clearly, the secret was out.

"I didn't want to have to deal with this," he grumbled, and right then, one of the camera guys spotted them. They all began moving and shouting at once.

"Kane! Kane! Is it true you planned a secret wedding?"

Flash. Flash.

"Kane! Is it true that when Mathias O'Shea opposed the wedding, you blocked all his shares!?"

Flash.

"Kane! Why did you get married in Hong Kong!?"

Flash.

"Guys, if you don't want to get arrested, I suggest you leave, now," Jameson growled.

"Tell us about the wedding! Was Sanders there!?"

Flash.

"Give us a kiss! C'mon!"

Flash.

"Did I fucking stutter? I asked you to leave," Jameson repeated himself.

Flash.

"Kiss her!"

Flash. Flash.

"Is it true you had a porn star as a best man!?"

Flash.

"If you take another picture, I'm gonna break that camera over your head," Jameson threatened.

"Kiss her!"

Flash. Flash.

"Mrs. Kane! Why the secrecy? Didn't you want a big wedding!?"

Flash.

"That's it, you're gonna -," Jameson started, but Tate grabbed his arm. When he looked down at her, he was shocked to see that she was smiling.

"What did you just call me?" she asked the paparazzi that was closet to her. He looked flabbergasted for a minute.

“Um, I asked if you wanted to have a big wedding, Mrs. Kane,” he repeated himself. Her smile got even bigger.

“I like that. Okay, you boys get one picture before I turn *Mr.* Kane loose on you,” Tate offered. Jameson groaned.

“Give us a kiss! Kiss her!” All the paparazzi were shouting at once. Tate laughed and stood on her toes, wrapping her arm around Jameson's shoulders.

“Just give them what they want,” she suggested.

“You better not get used to getting what *you* want,” he warned her, sliding his arm around her waist.

“Why not? I usually do, anyway.”

“Shut up, Mrs. Kane.”

Then he put on a good show, dipping her almost in half and kissing her soundly.

~13~

“Shall we look?” Tate asked, propping herself up.

“No,” Jameson moaned. “Sleep. Please, for the love of god, woman, let me sleep.”

“Did you really think I was going to let you sleep on our wedding night?” she asked, then bit him on the chest. He jerked away.

“One of these days, you really are going to give me a heart attack,” he warned her.

“Good thing I inherit everything,” she pointed out.

“Hey, Sanders gets half.”

“Yeah, but I'll just marry him after you're gone, so same diff.”

“Shut up and go to sleep.”

“C'mon, let's go look,” her voice lowered to a hiss as she wiggled her body next to his.

“Why do you like to look at that shit?” Jameson asked.

“Because it's fun.”

“*Fun*’? Tate, it nearly destroyed us on not one, but *two* occasions,” he reminded her. She shrugged.

“It's different now.”

“How so?”

“I'm your wife. I'm undestroyable now.”

Jameson couldn't argue with that.

“Fine. Get the computer.”

Tate scampered off of the bed, ran out of the room naked. Then she came back in and jumped on the mattress, holding the laptop. He took it from her and opened it, resting it on his stomach.

“Go here,” Tate instructed, tilting the machine towards her so she could type in the Google search bar.

“You owe me for this,” Jameson warned her, working his hand into the hair on the back of her head.

“What!? It's just an article, barely anything. How can I owe you for that?” she asked, ignoring him while she scrolled through web pages.

“Because I said so,” he replied, fisting his hand.

“*Pffft*, like that matters,” she snorted. He pulled sharply.

“Hey. Watch your fucking mouth.”

“You watch it.”

“I think having my last name has given you a new set of balls,” he told her.

“Oooohhh, then you must be extra excited about being married to me,” she joked.

Play time's over.

Jameson rolled over quickly, causing her to shriek and the computer to fly off the bed. He pinned her down to the mattress.

“What the fuck did you just say to me?” he growled. She smiled up at him, but there wasn't anything sweet about it.

“I think you heard me,” she purred.

“What the fuck is wrong with you? Why do you always want to piss me off?” he snapped, driving his knee up between her legs, forcing them apart.

“Cause I think it's fun,” she breathed, then gasped when his hand gripped her thigh roughly, yanking her leg up so it was next to his hip.

“You're not gonna think it's fun in a minute,” he warned her, moving so he was kneeling between her legs.

“I'm sure I will.”

Jameson didn't care that they were both exhausted from having sex all night. Didn't care whether or not she was ready. Didn't care about anything but being inside her. He held onto his cock with one hand, pushing all the way inside her in one go, slamming his hips to hers.

“Fuck, Tate, you wake up wet for me,” he groaned. She managed a laugh in between her gasps.

“Only for you,” she breathed.

He pulled away from her and she moaned. He forced her onto her stomach, slapping her on the ass before pounding into her again.

Sex between them had always been different, *special*, because of the innate trust they had in each other. Jameson liked rough sex, liked to have heavy hands and heavier words. He wasn't practicing some “art form” or “lifestyle”, he just got off on calling a woman a cunt and grabbing her throat. Tatum wasn't looking for a “master” or a “sexual advisor”, she just got pleasure out of being called a cunt and someone grabbing her throat.

For some people, sex was about leading a certain lifestyle, or almost a kind of performance art, and that was completely fine. Jameson believed people should do whatever worked for them, but it wasn't what he and Tate

were doing. They were just two people screwing. Fuck safe words – they didn't need them, because it wasn't a game for them. Jameson would never hurt her, and Tate knew that. It was trust. It was sex.

It was making love.

“Oh my god, we should get married again if this is how you're going to act the next day,” Tate moaned. Jameson slapped her on the ass again.

“What the fuck does it take to shut you up?” he demanded, hiking her hips up higher and pumping as hard as he could. She groaned, pressing her hands flat against the headboard and pushing herself back into him.

“Not sure. Maybe you should keep trying,” she panted. He grabbed her hair and yanked, forcing her upwards. She moved her hands to grip the top of the headboard.

“I gave you a fucking wedding. I gave you a fucking ring. *I gave you my fucking name.* The least you can give me is what I want,” he snapped at her.

“I *always* give you what you want,” she moaned.

“*Always*,” he agreed, letting go of her hair and sliding his hand around to her jaw. She turned her head towards him, taking his index finger into her mouth. He groaned as she sucked on it, working her tongue around it like it was his dick.

“*Fuck*, Jameson,” she cried out as he moved his hand to her throat. Circled his fingers around it and squeezed.

“*Jameson, Jameson*,” he mocked her. “Now she says my name. Remember when you tried to call me Kane? Now that you share the name, you won't say it.”

“Because it sounds good on me,” she chuckled.

“Fuck you. I made this name, it doesn't mean anything on you, you stupid slut.”

“You may have made it, but I'll make it better.”

Jameson let go of her throat and put his hand in the middle of her back, forcing her down so her face was flat on the mattress. Then he reached around her, forcing his fingers in and around all of her warm heat.

“It's time for you to shut the fuck up and come.”

For once, Tate didn't have any smart ass comeback – she complied. Tate was a full-body orgasm-er, he could watch it take hold of almost every inch of her. Watch as a blush spread across her shoulder blades, just like he knew it would be spreading across her chest. She cried out, dragging her

nails down the headboard, and he felt her pussy lock down on him. He growled, dragging his nails down her back, and her whole body shuddered.

When all her muscles had relaxed and she was panting and gasping for air, her head half buried under the pillows, Jameson pulled away. She mewled in protest, moving her face so she could look at him.

“What are you doing, why didn't you finish?” she breathed.

“Oh, don't worry Mrs. Kane, I plan on it.”

Another thing Jameson thought was beautiful about being in a completely open, loving, *trusting*, sexual relationship – he could come whenever, *wherever*, he wanted to on Tate.

It's the little things in life.

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Tate rolled over and looked at Jameson. Smiled. He was asleep.

They had spent all day in bed. *All day*. Well, there was a trip to the shower, and another adventure on the balcony, so not technically all day in bed. But they did stay naked all day, which was pretty awesome.

She held her hand up, looking at her wedding ring in the moonlight. It was a gorgeous ring. Almost old fashioned looking, it had a large pear-shaped stone that was surrounded by lots of little diamonds, and it was all set on a thin, platinum band. But that didn't really matter to her – she had married him thinking that there wasn't any ring.

No, what she loved about the ring was what it symbolized. He had told her that he would never get her that ring, yet there it was; he had asked her to marry him. He had changed. He had given her everything she'd ever wanted. *More*.

Tate moved onto her side, ready to scratch Jameson awake, when something dinged behind her. She rolled over and saw that the laptop, which was still on the floor, had pinged to life, for whatever reason. The screen was ridiculously bright in the dark room. Jameson grumbled in his sleep and shifted onto his stomach. Trying to keep quiet, Tate slid sideways out of bed, then crawled on hands and knees to the computer.

She was just going to shut it, but the screen caught her attention. She'd totally forgotten about what she'd been trying to look up. She almost burst out laughing, had to cover her mouth with her hand. She glanced back at the bed before pulling the computer closer, scrolling down the screen.

There was a picture of her and Jameson at the top, walking out of a subway station in New York. He was holding her hand and his free hand was held up, blocking the camera flash. There were a couple pictures farther down, of them just two weeks ago, outside of the night club in New York. Tate wearing his jacket, giving the paparazzi the bird. That made her snicker even more. Then of course the oldie but goodie, Jameson and her standing in the rain, him holding an umbrella over her and kissing her.

But her new favorite picture was at the very bottom. It was the only picture she had of them on their wedding day. Jameson bending her into a dip, kissing her deeply. One arm wrapped around her waist, his other hand cupping her jaw. He was wearing one of his expensive, custom made suits.

She was wearing a tube dress she bought at Forever21 for twenty bucks. So like them. So perfect.

Everything is so perfect.

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~News Flash~

Financier Jameson Kane Keeps Girlfriend in the Dark, Ruins In-Laws

Late last night, thirty-three year old financial mogul Jameson Kane married long-time girlfriend, twenty-eight year old Tatum O'Shea, in a secret beach side wedding in Hong Kong. Speculators have long wondered when – or even if – the nuptials would ever take place. No engagement was ever announced, and the wedding itself seemed to have been spur of the moment.

Mathias O'Shea, father of the bride, and his wife were also spotted in Hong Kong, having dinner with the couple, but it is assumed they weren't invited to the wedding. Shortly after their visit, O'Shea was forced out of his position on the board at J.P. Morgan, and shares in several of his companies began dropping. The O'Sheas are also being audited, and thus far the IRS has discovered several years worth of unpaid taxes and unclaimed income. As of yesterday, it is rumored that O'Shea is putting his family home on the market, to pay off some of their debts. It is unknown if the O'Sheas even know of their daughter's wedding.

Sources close to the event claim that it almost **didn't** happen, with Ms. O'Shea showing up to her own wedding an hour late. But the vows were exchanged, and there is officially a Mrs. Kane, something most people thought would never happen.

Women the world over are weeping as the man known affectionately as “Satan” is officially off the market.

Congratulations, Mr. and Mrs. Kane. And if you have a wedding stateside, please send an invitation our way.

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Acknowledgements

I promise, there are deleted scenes and bonus material after this!

As always, to the ladies on the street team. Everything you do. All of it. Every single word, picture, post, everything.

I have a lot of trouble talking to certain people – blogs, reviewers, other authors. I get nervous, I psych myself out, blah blah blah. On Goodreads, I had noticed a reviewer had added my books to her TBR shelf. She is a top reviewer and followed by a lot of people. I noticed that she read similar books to the ones I read, and to the ones I wrote, and I loved her reviews that she had done for other people. But sending your book out to someone with that much attention and “power” as it were is nerve wracking. So I made myself a drink and sent a letter to SueBee-“Bring Me an Alpha!”. I expected a polite response, accepting the review request, but most likely no guarantee for when she could read it, as top ranked reviewers are inundated with requests. But it turned out she was excited to read my books, and was actually able to start them pretty quickly. And even better – she liked them! PHEW!

It also turns out we have similar tastes and interests, so a sort of friendship was born out of it. After she read Reparation, she mentioned that she wished there was more, that she hoped there would be an epilogue at some point. I mentioned that I had actually started one a long time ago, but it had gotten out of control, too big, so I didn't really plan on attaching it to the end of Reparation. I was just going to keep it as a story for myself. She recommended publishing it as a novella. And here we are! So many thanks, SueBee.

Again, thanks to everyone who read. Thanks to everyone who felt what Jameson was feeling, what he was putting out there. Thanks to everyone who supported Tate, with her ups and downs and all-over-the-places. Thanks to everyone who fell in love with Sanders – a.k.a. most of you. He is truly a phenomenon, and the outpouring of love and support for him has absolutely blown me away.

I am beyond sad this is over. But I am beyond excited for what's next. Thank you.

Soundtrack

On my Facebook page, I asked people to tell me songs that made them think of this series. They were all amazing choices, but I picked a couple of the ones that really resonated with me. So this is a Reader Made Soundtrack! Enjoy and if you participated, read on to see if one of your suggestions made the list.

1. Figured You Out – Nickleback – picked by Sandra Godinez
2. Love Hate Relationship – Trapt – picked by Sandra Godinez
3. Heart Wants What It Wants – Selena Gomez – picked by Leah B Towery
4. Our Time – Yeah Yeah Yeahs – picked by Sunny Borek
5. The Funeral – Band of Horses – picked by Sunny Borek
6. Poison & Wine – The Civil Wars – picked by Leah B Towery
7. Just Breathe – Pearl Jam – picked by Jolene Rocha
8. Sober – Pink – picked by Brandi Swendt
9. 37 Stitches – Drowning Pool – picked by Leah B Towery
10. Desire – Meg Myers – picked by Tiffani Towery
11. Pain – Three Days Grace – picked by Ange Hall
12. Scars – Papa Roach – picked by Ange Hall
13. Dark Horse – Katy Perry – picked by Brandi Swendt
14. The River – Audra Mae – picked by Amanda Sheila
15. Monster – Imagine Dragons – picked by Sierra McBride
16. Beggin for Thread – Banks – picked by Sierra McBride
17. Arsonist's Lullaby – Hozier – picked by Sierra McBride
18. Whore – In This Moment – picked by Brit Nichole Lane
19. Leaving Tonight – The Neighbourhood – picked by Molly al-Jawad

DELETED SCENES

Author's Note: This scene was written at the request of a reviewer – she asked me very specifically how I thought Jameson would handle it, if he were to find out through other people that Tate would like to have a baby. This is literally straight from my brain and into an e-mail I sent her. None of this has been edited or beta-read or proofed.

Jameson walked into the kitchen.

Time to cut the shit.

"Tatum," he barked out.

She was sitting at the island, reading a magazine, and glanced up at him. Smiled briefly before going back to her reading. He scowled. Once upon a time, that tone of voice would've set her on edge. Now she just smiled at it? Not good.

"What's up?" she asked, yawning and flipping a page.

"I've been talking to Sanders," he started, leaning on the opposite side of the island.

"Awesome. Don't you talk to him every day?" she chuckled, before picking up a glass of water and taking a drink. He glared at her.

"Yes, but usually when we speak, there's not quite as much talk about how many fucking babies you apparently want."

Tate spit out her water. All over him. They stared at each other for a second, her with water dripping off her chin. Him with water dripping off of ... everywhere.

"I'm sorry ... what?" she squeaked out. He leaned back and grabbed a dish towel.

"I think you heard me." He mopped the water from his face, then tossed the towel to her.

"Why would he tell you about that!?" she demanded, cleaning up the mess on her chin and then on the counter.

"The question is, why are you talking to him about it? I think if you wanna have kids, the key person you should be talking to is the one you're fucking," Jameson pointed out.

"Well, you're not exactly easy to talk to!" she snapped.

"That's a shitty excuse."

"See!? This moment, right here, is why I didn't talk to you about it! You're being a dick. Why can you just be a normal human being?" she demanded, before hopping off her stool and stomping over to the sink, refilling her water glass.

"Because someone has caused me permanent brain damage with all her mindless chatter. Now. Babies. You want them," he said it as a statement.

She stayed silent.

Jameson wasn't gonna lie, the idea of kids terrified him. He knew what kind of person he was, was very aware of his disposition. Knew that people described him as "scary", and was usually proud of that fact. But he didn't want to scare his own children. Didn't know if that was something that could be avoided.

And Tate? As a mother!? It was almost laughable.

"Someday," she finally started speaking again as she turned to face him. "Yeah, someday I want kids. Did you see Ellie's son last time he was here? He's adorable."

"It's not a puppy, Tate. Babies don't stay babies forever," he reminded her. She threw the dish towel at him.

"I know how kids work, Jameson. And I'm not saying I want them right now, this second. But I do want them, and it freaks me the fuck out cause I know you're not exactly keen on the idea," she snapped.

They glared at each other for a second, and Jameson let his eyes wander over her features. Let his mind wander over the past. She was a very loving person. A very forgiving person. She was loyal and giving and kind. She laughed a lot, and wasn't scared of anything. And best of all, she loved him. Only him.

If those aren't top qualifications for being a mother, I don't know what are.

"I'll make you a deal," he started, making his way over to her. She watched him warily.

"Oh god. What kind of deal?" she asked, folding her arms in front of her chest. He stopped right in front of her.

"I'll let you have my babies if -,"

"Oh, you'll let me? How magnanimous of your, sir."

"- *if*, you can promise me that they'll have your smile."

"Huh?"

She blinked up at him, clearly caught off guard.

"Your smile. It's one of my favorite things about you," he told her, tracing a finger along her jaw.

"You want our kids to have my smile?" she asked in a soft voice.

"Yes. But my brains. You're shit with money," he added. She managed a laugh, though her eyes were tearing up.

"Okay. I think I can handle that," she sniffled.

"Good."

He leaned forward and grabbed her around the waist. She let out a shriek as he threw her over his shoulder before stomping out of the kitchen.

"What the fuck are you doing!?" she demanded.

"You said you wanted kids," he reminded her, starting up the stairs.

"I know that! But what are you doing!?"

"Taking you to give you what you want."

She laughed all the way to the bedroom.

*

Author's Note: This is an interview between Beauty and Her Beastly Books blog and Jameson and Tate. I thought it was funny and had a fun time doing it. None of this has been edited from the original blog's posting. Thanks to Carol for the interview, and for allowing me to share it here.

It's such a pleasure to have both of you here in Beauty and the Beastly Books! And by Beastly I'm not even referring to you, Jameson. *winks*

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** So, you're here, together. And we all know what it took for this to happen. Do you think you'll both settle and become one of those boring, accommodated couples?

Jameson: Well, I'm not sure what you mean, Tate's already boring.

Tate: HEY! Truth, I don't think we'll ever be boring – ONE OF US has a flair for the dramatics (hint, it isn't me). And you can call me boring all you want, Satan, because I'm damn accommodating.

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Tate, I particularly have NO problems with the way Jameson talks to you or treats you, because coming

from him that is a sign of love (sorry, Jameson) and you obviously gets a kick out of it too...But is there anything you won't do for him? And is there a name you don't like and won't have him call you?

Tate: Hmmm, it kinda depends. Calling me "stupid" in bed is different, we're playing, it's not real. If we were at the store, and he was like "hey, stupid bitch, what kind of cheese should we get?" I'd probably punch him in the balls. But in bed ... no, I can't think of anything I wouldn't do for him or a name he can't call me. Except I wouldn't do a threesome with Pet. That's disgusting.

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** I have to agree with that, Tate. Pet should just die, I mean, disappear. *winks* Jameson, what is a thing you'd never ask of Tate (in and out of bed)?

Jameson: I would never ask her to let me hurt her if she didn't want it. I would never ask her to hurt herself. But that's about. Asking permission isn't really my thing.

(Is it my impression or it's suddenly hot in here?? *fans herself*)

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Is there a Jameson/ Sanders threesome in your future, Tate? *looks at Jameson apologizing* Please don't kick me, Jameson!

Jameson: That question just made me physically ill.

Tate: Oooohhhh, my birthday is right around the corner! What a good idea! hahaha, no, even as freaky as I am, that might get a little weird. Maybe for my birthday I'll ask for a weekend where I get to do whatever I want to Sandy, we could go-

Jameson: NO.

(Ooops, I better change the subject *thinks to herself*)

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Jameson, what do you say about all these ladies having their panties melting because of you? *looks to the side and checks out underwear number 2 to see if it's still holding*

Jameson: I'd say it's more of the same, and clearly they have excellent taste. They should just stop wearing panties all together. Very bothersome article of clothing.

(In that case, let me go out just for a minutes. *thinks to herself, but refrains from getting up from the chair*)

Tate: Now I'M physically ill.

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Tate, a lot of ladies compare Jameson's looks with Nick Bateman and David Gandy's. I particularly think he's a younger looking Gandy but with a better cock I like to think...Which of the two do you think resembles him more? (Actually could you also tell us if he's a potato like Gandy or a cucumber like Bateman?) *tries guessing looking at Jameson's penis. I mean, PANTS*

Tate: I don't see the Bateman at all – too scrawny. Do you see this broad-shouldered-beast sitting next to me!? Much more like Gandy, but ... meaner? HAHAHA And there ain't no potato hiding in those pants.

Jameson: Jesus, if we're going to spend the majority of the time talking about my dick, I could just take my pants off.

Tate: No one likes a show-off.

(I DO!! *raises hand*)

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Tate, can you tell us what this cheap "pearl" necklace means to you? We all saw it/ read about it, but I'm sure there's more people than me wanting to know more about what it means to you?

Tate: Oh, my precious. It actually sits in the safe at home, now. To me ... it was a sign. I don't know if you've noticed, but doesn't it kinda seem like not a whole lot gets through that thick head of his? He's got an amazing poker face, I always think he's not listening to me, or doesn't care about what I'm saying. That necklace showed me that he hears everything, every word I've ever said, and remembers them. It tells me that he loves me

enough to do something against his nature, against his inclination, against what HE wants to do. Jameson rarely does something he doesn't want to do. It just ... it meant a lot. It meant everything.

Jameson: I swear to god, if you start crying, I'm leaving.

Tate: You're such a dick.

(But he is a hot dick.*sighs*)

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Jameson, what about you? We know you'd love to replace it with a real, expensive pearl necklace, but it's so touching and swoon-worthy that you chose to give her a cheap one! What were you aiming for? Being sweet and romantic or just staking your claim?

Jameson: I was aiming for a reaction. A good one. I don't know shit about being sweet or romantic, but Tate kept saying that I never listened to her. I wanted to show her that I hear everything. She said if a gift was given with love, she would see the true value, not the price tag. So I got her a piece of shit and prayed that she would see the value. Women are so fucking strange.

(Hey, I'm proud to be strange!)

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Tate, now for real and without embarrassing Sanders, because I absolutely LOVE him...What's up with asking to take his virginity? Would you really do it? And Jameson, what would be your reaction to that?

Tate: Hey, I was in a bad place! I wasn't thinking very straight. And totally honest ..., at the time, yeah, I would have. Sanders is special to me. The idea of him doing it with some random girl, who wouldn't take the time to make him feel good, or maybe would just be using him for his money or something, god. I'd have to kill the chick. I swear, any and all future girlfriends will have to get through me, first. I should start sending out applications. The woman who gets to be with Sanders ... she'll have to be beyond perfection. I don't think there's one worthy of him – including me. I just think I could make it really fun for him, hahaha

Jameson: Remember that whole “*physically ill*” statement earlier?

Tate: just answer the question.

Jameson: I wouldn't allow it.

Tate: Jameson

looks back and forth

Jameson: I would kill both of you.

Tate: Jameson! Shut up and be honest.

Jameson: I wouldn't like it. It would make me ... *uncomfortable*. I don't like to be uncomfortable. But I care about both of them, and if they both honestly thought it was the best solution to his "problem" I would think about it. But I wouldn't like it.

Tate: That wasn't so hard, was it?

Jameson: Shut the fuck up.

le sigh

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** This is for the both of you...Tell me in your opinion Jameson, which are Tate's best and worst qualities? The same for you, Tate, which are Jameson's?

Jameson: Finally, my kind of questions – her best quality is how she fucks. Worst is that she snores.

Tate: I am never sleeping with you again. Jameson's best quality is that despite all appearances, he's actually very forgiving. He talks a big game, but he lets me get away with murder. He lets me be me, he lets everyone around him be who they want to be. His worst quality is that he almost completely lacks empathy.

high fives Tate

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Also for both of you, if you'd have to describe each other in one word, what word would you choose? Satan and bitch aren't allowed! *winks*

Tate: HAHAAHAHA, dammit ... uh, dick? No ... asshole? No, we can do better, um ..., rude? Arrogant? Bossy? Controlling? Domi-

Jameson: We're going to be here all night if you don't shut her up.
One word for Tate – loving.

Tate: One word for Jameson – taboo.

(Ohhh I've always loved the word "taboo"!!!)

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Jameson, what is something about Tate that you don't know, but would love to? And please refrain from fighting in here...*although the make-up would be hot, cough, cough, interesting to watch*

Jameson: Something I don't know? God, that's hard – she never shuts up, I'm pretty sure I've heard her life story about a million times. Hmmm ... I guess I'd like to know exactly what she thought she'd get out of life with Nick that she thought she couldn't have had with me.

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Tate, what is something you know about Jameson, but wish you didn't. *please don't say he is actually small, it'd ruin my visual*

Tate: HAHAHA, no, Jameson is gorgeous all over. Just ask him, he'll tell you. Something I wish I didn't know ... it's kind of selfish. I wish I didn't know how badly I hurt him, when I went to Arizona. We've talked about it a lot. A while ago, he said he hadn't known the kind of power he had, that he could hurt me as badly as he did, with Pet. Well, I had no clue I could do it back. And I did. I don't know how if I'll be able to really forgive myself.

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Jameson, how does it feel to be Satan?

Jameson: Have you seen the car I drive? The clothes I wear? The woman I sleep with at night? It feels fucking fantastic.

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Tate, you have a bit of Satan in you, so how did it feel to be in Jameson's shoes for a while?

Tate: Shitty. He pulls it off much better than I do, he can keep the title for himself.

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Tate, if you had Jameson kids, what traits of him would you want them to have (let's say you have a boy and a girl). *pictures a mini Jameson and a mini Tate running around* And Jameson, what about Tate's traits, what would you choose for your kids?

Tate: EEEEEPPP!! Tiny Jamesons! Wouldn't that be ADORABLE!? I'd want them both to have his eyes, and his strength and intelligence, his backbone.

Jameson: Oh god. I'd want ... Tate makes, AND KEEPS, friends easily. She may screw up a lot, but she has good intentions, and the best heart of anyone I've ever met. I'd want them to have all of that.

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Jameson, do you even want kids? And what names would you choose for boy and girl? *maybe Carol in homage to that greatest one-night stand you had after that interview* Oops, did I say that out loud?

Jameson: Someday, maybe, it would be nice to have kids. In the far, far, distant future. Someone to carry on my name, our legacy. And why does it have to be just one night? I'm in town for the rest of the week.

faints for a minute and blushes

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Now the big question...Jameson, when is the wedding? Will I be invited to the ceremony? Or maybe the bachelor party? *looks hopefully at Jameson*

Jameson: Don't say the "W" word around Tate, I think she's "nesting", or something. I've heard a rumor there's some sort of tell all book about us coming out soon, maybe it'll say. And I am completely fine with you hosting a bachelor party for me, wedding or no.

makes a mental list of things to do and to remember to clean the house Oops, again, I better get back to this interview

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Now, sorry for putting you on the spotlight there, Jameson...I have a tradition here on my blog that everytime I do a interview with awesome characters, I mean, people, like you two, I do a quickfire back and forth Q&A with them...Ready? *looks down at Jameson and see that he is indeed ready*

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Daytime or Nighttime?

Jameson: Anytime.

Tate: Anytime.

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Favorite position

Tate: Missionary

Jameson: Her bent over whatever object is nearest

Who said I was talking about sex???

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Lights on or Lights off?

Tate: On

Jameson: On

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Favorite color?

Tate: Gold

Jameson: Black

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Favorite book?

Jameson: Divina Commedia by Dante Alighieri

(I love that book too!! *jumps up and down excitedly*)

Tate: *cough*poser*cough* The Five People You Meet in Heaven by Mitch Albom

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Wine or Beer?

Tate: Beer

Jameson: Wine

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Casual or Chic?

Tate: Casual

Jameson: Chic

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Favorite Food?

Tate: Chinese

Jameson: French

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Food or Sex?

Tate: AH! CAN'T DECIDE! BOTH!? EW! BUT I CAN'T!

Jameson: Sex

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Favorite song? Maybe the wedding song? I'm just kidding, Jameson, don't need to look at me like that!

Jameson: I am only controlling my temper because you're good looking. Favorite song is the third movement in Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata.

(OHHHHH HE SAID I'M PRETTY!! *writes in her diary "This is the best day ever!! Jameson said I'm pretty!!" then looks back to them embarrassed*)

Tate: Hmmm ... ug, right now, I'd say it's Taylor Swift "Shake It Off", but it changes.

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Pepsi or Coke?

Tate: Coke

Jameson: Neither

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Cats or dogs?

Tate: Dogs

Jameson: Cats

(Of course, Satan would be a cat person!!)

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Cuddling or Round 2? If there's even anything like cuddling when it comes to Jameson.

Jameson: There's being in the ring, or passed the fuck out, I don't know this "*cuddling*" you speak of.

blushes

Tate: And people wonder why I sneak into Sandy's room to cuddle

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Bed or Sofa?

Jameson: whichever is closest

Tate: Bed

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Underwear or Commando?

Tate: Underwear

Jameson: Commando

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Prince Charming or Satan?

Tate: Both rolled into one

Jameson: Is this a real question?

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** Fast or Slow? (Take your minds out of the gutter, it could be anything!)

Jameson: I like everything fast. Women, cars, money, sex.

Tate: Yeah, I'd have to agree with him on that.

***Beauty and the Beastly Books:** And finally, Boxers or Briefs?
(*hopes Jameson would show her and Tate won't kill her*)

Jameson: depends on the clothing. Suits, I wear briefs. Jeans, I wear boxers. At home, nothing. If you'd just get my buckle, I can show -,

Tate: This would be much easier if we weren't in an interview room. Just sayin'

(Well, we can go to my apartment, it's quite close actually...DID I SAY THAT OUT LOUD AGAIN???)

Thank you so much for coming (I sure did enjoy seeing Jameson so close! *looks at Tate, did I say that out loud again?* Jesus, did anyone spill something on my drink?!) I had the best time! I hope you come back soon and bring Sandy! *slips Jameson her number*

Jameson: I'm changing one of my answers.

Tate: The interview is over, Jameson, you can't just decide -

Jameson: Tate's worst quality is that she's too hard on herself, and takes what people say to heart too easily, particularly things that aren't even true. Her best quality is that when she loves someone, she loves everything about them, even their faults. Even if they're the devil.

Tate: Oh my god, Jameson, that was really sweet. Why can't you be like that all the time!? Why couldn't you have just -,

Jameson: Tatum.

Tate: What?

Jameson: Shut the fuck up. The interview is over.

*

***Author's Note: A love note from Jameson to Tate for Valentine's Day
– part of a project with the lovely True Story Book Blog.***

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From: The Offices of Jameson Kane, CEO and Founder,
kane.jameson@kane.net

To: Tatum O'Shea, sluttymcgee@yahoo.com

Time Stamp: February 14, 2015, 16:32

RE: This Day

Baby Girl -

I have been informed – multiple times – by Sanders that today is a day where I'm supposed to send you a romantic card, professing my love and adoration.

This seems fucking stupid to me. You know I love you, “adore” is a stretch, and I don't even know what “romantic” means.

But since he won't leave me alone and is reading this over my shoulder, I will tell you that I am grateful for every day that I get to wake up next to you, and even more grateful for every day that I get to come home to you. Thank you for being the best part of my life.

You may show your gratitude for me (which is overwhelming, I'm sure) by waiting in the library and being naked when I get home (this is not a request).

Respectfully,
Jameson

p/s – change your fucking e-mail address

*

Author's Note: This is a memo “war” that grew to epic proportions on my Facebook wall. After the last memo, it turning into a text conversation “war” between Jameson and Tate, complete with screen shots of the actual text message.

FROM: The Offices of Jameson S. Kane

MEMO: Friday the 13th and Valentine's Day

RECIPIENT: O'Shea, Tatum

Forgot to mention - won't be home Friday and Saturday. Have a weekend engagement apparently. Sanders never tells me about these things till the last fucking minute. On the bright side, it seems like I'll be surrounded by women all weekend. Can't be a total loss. Wanted to give you a heads up so you can make plans of your own.

NO ANGIERS.

Cheers,
Jameson

FROM: Your Mom's House

MEMO: Why can't you call like a normal human being!?

RECIPIENT: The Devil

Seriously. A memo!? Two second phone call, that's all it would've taken. I'm not one of your office drones. And Valetine's Day!? Not cool. I had plans for us! And if you're gonna ditch me, then I am DEFINITELY gonna have Ang over. Have him anyway I want. Cause I'll be all aloney on my own, HA!

Sincerely,
Tate, a.k.a. Pissed Off Bitch

FROM: The Offices of Jameson S. Kane

MEMO: Friday the 13th and Valentine's Day

RECIPIENT: O'Shea, Tatum

I sent a memo because A) I'm a fucking adult and I'm at work, and B) if I called you, I'd never get off the phone, you never shut the fuck up. And please don't compare yourself to my employees - at least they earn their keep. What, exactly, is it you do to earn yours?

Go ahead. Invite Angier over. Let's see how mad I can really get. Been a long time since we played a game.

Cheers,
Jameson

FROM: Land of Pissed Off Girlfriend

MEMO: Go Fuck Yourself

RECIPIENT: Lord Poopy-Pants McBitch-Face

What, exactly, I do for you is anything and everything - feel like giving yourself head? Go ahead, I'll watch. Cause you sure as shit aren't getting it from me anymore.

Please stop bothering me, I'm having a very important Skype conversation with my darling Ang, discussing our Valentine's plans.

I wonder if that sex club downtown is still open ...

Your loving drone,
Tate

FROM: The Offices of Jameson S. Kane

MEMO: Friday the 13th and Valentine's Day

RECIPIENT: O'Shea, Tatum

Keep talking, I love seeing your ass painted red. I hope you don't have any plans for the rest of the week, because by the time I get through with you, you won't be able to walk right. Better cancel your plans with Angier.

DO NOT message me again, I am a very busy man and am sick of your distractions. Don't make me come home to explain this in person. You won't like it.

Cheers,
Jameson

FROM: HAHAAHAHAHAHA

MEMO: I'll believe it when I see it

RECIPIENT: Satan (not to be confused with a bag of hot air)

Big talk. Promises promises. I'll see your threat, and raise you a BULLSHIT.

You want me to stop messaging?

MAKE ME.

Your move,

Tate

FROM: The Offices of Jameson S. Kane

MEMO: Automated Response Activated

RECIPIENT: O'Shea, Tatum

We regret to inform you that Jameson Kane has left the office for the day. If this is an emergency, please contact Sanders Dashkevich.

Mr. Kane will be back in the office tomorrow morning, eight o'clock.

DO NOT REPLY TO THIS ADDRESS

*

Author's Note: This was the original epilogue I wrote to Reparation, way back in ... May 2014? Back then, the final chapter was also very different – in the original version, Jameson never said the L-word, because I simply couldn't picture him saying it, at the time. Obviously, a lot changed. None of this has been edited or beta-read or proofed or checked for language accuracy.

~Epilogue~

“God, it's nice out.”

“Uh uh! German! You have to talk to me in German.”

“*Es ist sehr schon aus.*”

“Es ..., ist sehr ..,” Tate tried to sound out the words.

“*Schon.*”

“Schon ... house?” she laughed.

“You should've taken Spanish.”

She crawled up Jameson's body, laid on top of him. He didn't take off his sunglasses or move his head to look down at her, but his arm came around her.

“School doesn't start for another month or two, I could switch,” she said, folding her hands on his chest and resting her chin on them.

“I would highly recommend it. Your German accent is shit,” he told her. She laughed.

“I have a shitty teacher. Now you have to say everything to me in Spanish,” she warned him.

“*Hoy me voy a tomar toda la ropa de -*,” he started speaking rapid fire.

“Hey! Hey, I don't speak it yet!” she laughed, slapping him on the chest. He chuckled and his other arm came around her.

They were on the top deck of his yacht. He'd had it brought to America and they were docked in Miami. It was July, so it was stifling hot, but she pretty much lived in her bikini, so it wasn't too bad. Bonus, he spent almost all of his time in a bathing suit as well. She would never get tired of his body.

Sanders was going to MIT in the fall. Engineering. He was going to learn how to design cars. Who knew? Tatum was also going to school in the fall, but not MIT. Not even Harvard. She was starting small, at a community college, just to take some general education classes and see if business was something she really wanted to do.

Since it seemed everyone would be busy come fall, Jameson had the idea of them getting away for part of the summer. They had cruised down the east coast, from Boston all the way to South Beach. Now they were spending the rest of the summer in Florida and the Keys. She had even talked him into bringing Ang. Life was as near perfect as it could possibly get.

Petrushka had only been a problem once. Calling the house, repeatedly, despite the restraining order. Tatum finally picked up the phone and threatened her – pregnant or not, Tate would kick that supermodel's ass if she kept trying to contact Jameson. Tatum was the only woman in his life, and Pet had better fucking get used to it.

She never called again.

Nick also came back to Boston, though he wasn't a problem. Sometimes, she caught him looking at her a little wistfully, but then he would smile his puppy-dog-smile, and continue on with whatever he was doing. He and Jameson even spent an evening together, playing poker in the library. She wasn't sure what happened, but by the end of the night Nick had

a black eye, Jameson had split knuckles, and they were talking and laughing like they were the best of friends.

Boys are so fucking weird.

“Did I tell you,” Jameson suddenly started. “We got an invitation.”

“We did?”

“I did,” he corrected himself.

“To what?” she asked.

“I am cordially invited to the wedding of a Mr. Wenseworth Dunn and a Ms. Petrushka Ivanovic,” he prattled out. Tate burst out laughing.

“You're shitting me. They didn't,” she gasped.

“Oh, they did. It has a plus one. I thought of inviting Sanders, but I think you look better in a dress,” he told her.

“Probably. I'll only go on one condtion,” she said.

“And what is that?”

“We get to have sex, as loudly as possible, in a bathroom during the service,” she told him.

“You're so filthy, baby girl. I love it,” he chuckled, his arms getting tighter around her.

“Where does '*baby girl*' come from? Did you call Pet that?” she asked. He scrunched up his nose.

“You've always just been that, it's *your name*. Since the first time I saw you. Pet had her own nickname, after I got to know her,” he replied. She pushed herself up so she was straddling his waist.

“Oooohh, I want to know,” she breathed.

“*Fotze.*”

“Meaning?”

“*Cunt.*”

She laughed again.

“I'm almost jealous. Are we going?” she asked, sweeping her eyes across the harbor.

“I'll think about it,” he said, sighing and resting his hands on his chest where her hands had been a moment ago.

She looked down at them and smiled. He had a scar on the side of his hand, running from just under his pinky knuckle to the top of his wrist. When he had punched out the window on the Jag, the cut had gone deep. Sanders had stitched it up. Apparently, he wasn't as good at sutures as he was at everything else. But she actually liked it. She had scarred Jameson.

It was only fair.

“Where is Sanders? I thought we had plans to go to lunch. He's always bailing on me,” she complained. Jameson laughed.

“He's scared of you. Ever since you got him so wasted on his birthday that he couldn't even see straight, he doesn't trust you,” Jameson reminded her. She laughed.

“Oh, he was fine.”

“I have never seen a grown man puke that much.”

“Shut up. Where's Ang, then? It is suspiciously quiet around here,” she looked around her, realizing it for the first time. Jameson's hands moved to her thighs.

“It's probably because I asked everyone to stay away,” he told her. She raised her eyebrows.

“You asked everyone to stay away?” she clarified.

“Well, I *told them* to stay away. In very graphic language. They are staying in a hotel for the weekend,” he said.

“Why?”

He sat up suddenly and she laughed, holding onto his shoulders so she didn't lose her balance. He secured her legs around his waist and then stood up, carrying her to the stairs. She glanced around them, wondering what was going on.

“Because I have plans for us tonight,” he told her, going down to the upper deck. He had finally replaced the furniture that the angry maid had thrown overboard. But he walked past it all, carrying her to lower deck.

“Oh really? And what kind of plans, Mr. Kane?” she asked.

“Very devious ones,” he said. She laughed.

“How devious? You just got back from L.A. yesterday – I thought you'd be worn out,” she teased.

“I am never too worn out for you, Tate. You always get the final bite,” he assured her, carrying her into the depths of the boat.

“Damn straight.”

He took her into their bedroom, laid her out on the bed. Covered her body with his own. Kissed his way from her chin to her knees, and then back up again. She sighed, smiling against his mouth, wrapping her arms around him.

Sometimes, he was so sweet, she thought her heart was going to burst. The way he looked at her, sometimes, just killed her. Like she was the only

woman he ever wanted to look at ever again. She thought maybe he had been looking at her that way for quite some time, and she had just never noticed.

Stupid girl.

Other times, he was so evil, it made her feel alive. Like she was on fire. Just the other day, they had gotten into a “*discussion*”. She threw a dinner plate at his head, calling him retarded. He shoved her under the freezing cold shower, calling her a hot head. She told him to go fuck himself. He told her she was so much better at it. They didn't even make it to the bedroom. He used her t-shirt to tie her hands together and she got burns on her knees from the rug in the hallway. Ang walked in on them on his way to his room. He claimed he was going to need counseling.

The absolute best time of my life.

“Tatum,” he murmured against her skin.

“Hmmm?” she replied.

“You still owe me something,” he said softly, then leaned away from her. She opened her eyes.

“Excuse me?” she asked, a little lost. She glanced at him. He was leaning halfway off the bed, rooting around for something on the floor.

“I hope you haven't forgotten. I haven't,” he said, then came back up, holding something in his hand. An empty bottle of Jameson, with a handwritten note on the label. She laughed, taking it from him.

“Oh, Jesus, I *had* forgotten. This is why you made everyone leave?” she asked, re-reading her promise to do *anything* for him.

“Oh yes. Tonight is going to be very interesting, baby girl,” he chuckled, sounding evil as he crawled off of her and walked towards the bathroom.

“Oh god – is the sexy secretary locked in there!?” she exclaimed, propping herself up. He laughed.

“No, but the night is still young,” he pointed out, disappearing into the other room. He came back out, carrying a duffel bag. He dropped it at the foot of the bed and it landed with a loud *THUD*. Multiple somethings clattered and clanked around inside the bag. Her eyes got wide.

“Oh my god,” she blurted out. He laughed again and crawled back on top of her.

“Scared?” he breathed, dragging his teeth over her hip bone.

“Terrified,” she nodded.

“Good. I like you scared.”

“Makes sense. You *are* Satan.”

“Yes. Please don't ever forget that.”

“Never could.”

“Say it again, before we get started,” he whispered, pushing her bikini top out of the way.

“For a man with a huge ego, you sure need a lot of affirmation,” she groaned as his hands swept up to cup her breasts.

“Say it,” he ordered, squeezing.

“I love you.”

“Again, please,” he breathed, and then bit down hard on her shoulder. She gasped.

“I love you, *so fucking much*.”

“Ah, thank you, baby girl. I love you, too.”

His mouth moved back to hers, forcing her lips apart. Tonight would most definitely not be a night of sweetness.

Abso-fuckin-lutely love it.

“Jameson,” she breathed, struggling to take off his shirt.

“What?” he growled, tearing at her bikini bottoms.

“When I said anything -,” she started.

“Tate,” he warned. She laughed, until two of his fingers shoved their way inside of her.

“I didn't literally mean anything, I meant -,” she continued, not hiding her smile very well.

“Tate,” his voice was sharp. Almost as sharp as the nails on her throat.

“I get to choose, and then *you* have to do anything *I* want, cause really, I'm the one who has to -,” she began again with a laugh.

“*Tatum*.”

“Hmmm?”

“Please, for the love of god, just this once, I am begging you, *shut the fuck up*.”