



EVERY KING
NEEDS A
QUEEN

FIERCE

KING

L.A Ruthless: Book 1

SADIE KINCAID

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FIERCE KING
.....

SADIE KINCAID



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'Gabriel Sullivan rocked my world'

'Omg this book is hot!!!'

'OMG, I've never read a book in a day I couldn't put it down what a fantastic love story.'

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'Dark Angel is a dark romance and has everything, hot steamy sex & passion, brilliant storyline & gritty.'

'Gabe and Sam are everything. So so hot'

'Devoured this Dark and steamy read in one sitting.'

'I LOVE Sam and Gabe! This story has it all, suspense, angst and most of all plenty of heat!!'

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Chapter One

ALANA

I STOOD AT THE FRONT OF THE SMALL CHAPEL AND TOOK A DEEP BREATH. MY heart fluttered in my chest like a butterfly trapped in a glass jar.

I turned and looked at my husband to be, Alejandro Montoya, the heir to the Montoya Corporation and the legitimate face of the family *business*. And he looked every inch the respectable businessman standing there in his exquisitely tailored suit, which was perfectly fitted to the contours of his body.

There was no doubt that he was one of the most handsome men I had ever seen in my life. A fine dusting of stubble covered his strong jawline and his thick dark hair was the perfect length – not too short, but not long enough to reach his collar. In fact, it was just long enough to grab a handful of.

I looked down at my own dress. It was understated and elegant. Made of the finest Chinese silk and the color of white lilies – my favorite flowers. I had dreamed about this day since I was a little girl. I had been saving myself for this day since I was old enough to date boys.

Now, I was standing in this beautiful little chapel. Twenty-five years old and about to say I do to a man that most women would give everything they owned to spend even a night with. Wherever he went, women flocked to him like moths to a flame.

To the few people who were witness to this union, it must have looked like a fairy-tale.

But it was far from it.

This was no dream come true.

This was my nightmare.

Alejandro Montoya was no Prince Charming. He was the king of the LA

underworld and he was making me his bride because it was good for business, and because he wanted me to give him an heir. And if I wanted to stop my father from going to prison for the rest of his life, I had no choice but to go along with the whole charade.

We had barely said 'I do' when I was being escorted out of the chapel by a team of armed guards. There was no cheer of congratulations. No kissing the bride – not that I'd have allowed him to.

I'd just about had enough time to kiss my parents goodbye before I was shepherded outside to the fleet of waiting cars. My father had hugged me tightly with a solemn look on his face, while my mother had smiled widely. As far as she was concerned, this was my big shot at happiness. Marrying me off to some handsome billionaire was beyond her wildest dreams. She had told me once she was worried I'd end up a spinster in an apartment full of cats.

My father and I had decided not to tell her the truth about my hasty marriage. She was far too delicate a creature to be burdened with such knowledge.

Alejandro loosened his tie and walked to the car at the front of the convoy. 'Take her to the house,' he barked to one of his minions without giving me even a cursory glance.

I blinked in the heat of the midday sun as I felt the sob welling in my throat. I swallowed it down and took a deep breath. None of these men would ever have the pleasure of seeing me cry.

I felt a strong hand grasp my elbow as I was frog-marched to another car. The door was opened for me and I climbed inside before two giant bodyguards got in behind me. They sat either side of me so I was sandwiched uncomfortably between them.

'The Boss says to take her home,' the biggest one said to the driver who simply nodded in response and started the engine.

Home? That would be laughable if it wasn't so depressing. The place we were driving to wasn't my home and it never would be. My home was my tiny little apartment back in New York, close to my parents and my best friend.

I choked down another sob as it threatened to escape my throat. I consoled myself with the fact that at least Alejandro wasn't coming to back the house with me. His reputation as a player was well documented. If reports were to be believed, he had a different woman for every night of the week.

Our marriage was one of convenience and business, and I hoped that he would continue to fulfil any of his carnal needs with his mistresses rather than with me – at least until he wanted his heir.

An hour later, the car pulled up outside a beautiful gated mansion deep in the hills of Bel Air. The Spanish influence was obvious from the minute we drove through the gates and despite not wanting to be there, I had to admit it was a beautiful property.

But its beauty brought me little comfort.

A gilded cage was still a cage.

Chapter Two

ALANA

I WANDERED AROUND THE HUGE HOUSE WONDERING HOW THE HELL I WOULD ever learn to treat this place like a home. It was certainly beautiful, there was no doubt about that. Beautifully manicured, sprawling gardens full of brightly coloured flowers, and with a huge pool at its center.

Inside was just as dazzling. Tastefully decorated in palettes of cream, grey and gold. A huge sweeping marble staircase dominated the entrance hallway leading up to seven bedrooms and six bathrooms. It also boasted a games room, a gym and the biggest kitchen I had ever seen in my life.

But the place was so quiet – soulless even. There were staff in the house, Magda, the housekeeper and cook, and Jacob, the man who operated the gate and was also a driver, not to mention, dozens of armed guards. But they all seemed to live in the shadows, and every time I walked by, they avoided my gaze or slipped into another room.

It was as far removed from my tiny apartment back in New York as a place could be.

I loved living in the city. I loved the constant noise and the activity. I adored the hordes of people. No matter what time of the day or night it was, you were never alone in New York city.

My things had been delivered to the house earlier in the day, not that I had much – just some clothes, books, toiletries and a few personal belongings. I'd donated my furniture to goodwill. I'd had an idea that my eclectic, hand-me-down pieces wouldn't exactly fit in an L.A mansion, and I hadn't been wrong.

Every piece of furniture here seemed to fit perfectly, and it was all so elegant and beautiful. I found myself wondering if Alejandro had chosen any

of the pieces himself, or whether he'd hired a fancy designer to choose them for him. I imagined it was the latter.

Without anyone to ask where I was supposed to sleep, I chose one of the spare bedrooms overlooking the pool. Once I'd put my things in there, it felt slightly more comforting. But I couldn't help feeling like I was on a vacation rather than starting a whole new life.

I had always dreamed about the day I'd get married, or the day I'd move into a new place with my husband, or boyfriend. In my head they had been exciting and happy occasions, and nothing like today. All I felt was a deep sadness and a crushing sense of loneliness. There was an emptiness in my heart that I wasn't sure I would ever fill here.

I found myself wandering through the tasteful gardens, but the place was so big and quiet, that it made me feel even more lonely. So, I made my way back to my newly acquired bedroom. Magda had told me that she'd prepared dinner and it was in the refrigerator whenever I was ready, but, unusually for me, I couldn't face eating.

An hour later, I was lying on the bed reading a book when the door burst open and Alejandro stormed into the room.

'What the fuck do you think you're doing in here?' he shouted.

I looked up at him, blinking in shock. Oh crap! Did this room belong to someone else? 'I'm sorry, I didn't know ...' I stammered.

'Does this look like the fucking master bedroom to you?' he snarled.

'What?'

'You are my fucking wife, and you'll sleep in the master suite,' he hissed as he stalked towards me.

I threw my book onto the bed and jumped up. 'Just because I'm your wife, doesn't mean I have to sleep with you!' I spat. 'And if you're expecting sex from me, then think again. I don't even like you.'

He laughed out loud, not a friendly laugh, but a cruel, mocking one. 'God, you are such a fucking child.'

I glared at him. I was only eight years younger than he was. Arrogant asshole!

'You think you have to like someone to have sex with them? Listen, princess, you may be used to getting whatever you want when you snap your pretty little fingers, but that doesn't work with me. And as for sex, I've never

forced myself on a woman in my life, and I don't intend to start now. There are plenty of women who would be more than happy to share my bed and I intend to take frequent advantage of them all.'

He stepped closer to me, until his body was only inches from mine and I felt the anger radiating from him in waves. He was a good foot taller than me and he towered over me.

'But you are my fucking wife, and you *will* share my bed. Fortunately for you, I won't be in it tonight, but when I get back to this house tomorrow, you and your things will be in the master bedroom where they belong. I will not have my staff fucking whispering about my new wife sleeping in one of the spare rooms. Do you understand me?' he snarled at me, his teeth bared like some sort of rabid dog.

I felt my legs trembling, both with fear and something else that I couldn't quite work out.

'Okay,' I whispered.

He glared at me, his dark brown eyes narrowed, and I felt like I might melt under the intensity of his gaze. I took a deep breath in through my nose and immediately regretted the decision because he smelled incredible. What the hell was that cologne he was wearing?

I felt my breath catch in my throat and made a faint, but very audible, choking noise. That seemed to satisfy him as his lips curled into a cruel smile. Then he turned on his heel and marched out of the door, leaving me a trembling mess in his wake.

As soon as he was out of the room I collapsed back onto the bed and sucked in a lungful of air.

I blinked back the tears as I thought about my old life in New York. My lovely neighbors, Jake and Gary on my left, and Mr. and Mrs. Polanski on my right. My best friend, Kelsey. My hair stylist, Jermaine, who always knew exactly how to tame my frizzy mop of curly hair.

I missed them all so much.

What the hell had I done?

Chapter Three

ALEJANDRO

I Poured myself a generous measure of scotch and downed it in one before walking to the window of my hotel suite. I had a beautiful house in Bel Air but I rarely spent any time there. I preferred being here to my quiet house that had too many rooms and not enough people to fill them.

I owned this hotel. I worked here. I fucked women here – and plenty of them.

I'd considered going to the hotel bar and striking up a conversation with one of the many women who frequented the place on a regular basis. It would have taken less than half an hour to get one of them up here to my suite. I had no time for small talk or the art of seduction. Most of the time, much like tonight, all I wanted was to fuck someone.

Uncomplicated, no strings, fucking was my favorite way to unwind, and the women that I did that with understood the rules of the game.

But, this was my wedding night, wasn't it? I was supposed to be at home seeing to my new bride rather than trawling my bar looking for a hook up. And I had to make this marriage seem at least halfway believable.

I felt my cell vibrating in my pocket, Taking it out, I looked at the screen and saw a text from Jackson Decker, better known as Jax. He was my second in command, my most trusted soldier and my best buddy.

I've sent you a wedding gift, amigo. Enjoy!

I frowned at the screen wondering what he could possibly mean by that. Jax was one of the few people who knew that my marriage to Alana Carmichael was a business arrangement and nothing more.

Before I could text him back, there was a knock at the door.

I walked over and opened it to my gift. Tall, blonde, long legs, big tits

and the tiniest dress I had ever seen. I smiled at her. Jax knew me too well.

‘Come in,’ I said as I held the door wider.

She strutted into the room in her high heels. ‘Mr. Decker thought you might be lonely up here on your own,’ she purred. ‘So, he’s sent me to take care of you.’

‘How thoughtful of him,’ I said as I closed the door behind us. ‘And you are?’

She looked at me, her lips pulled into a pout. ‘Princess,’ she said with a flutter of her eyelashes.

‘Princess?’ I couldn’t help but laugh at the irony. If I couldn’t have a spoiled New York princess tonight, then a different type of princess would have to do.

I sat in the armchair with a glass of Scotch in my hand as Princess slipped off her skimpy dress and stood before me wearing only a pink G-string.

She had a decent body. Tanned skin and long blonde hair. She was tall and thin and her huge tits were obviously fake. I preferred the real deal, but I wasn’t going to object. She was fuckable enough and that was all that mattered to me.

‘What can I do for you tonight, Mr. Montoya?’ she purred as she walked closer to me.

‘Take off the panties and come here,’ I ordered.

She obeyed immediately. That was the thing I liked about paying for sex, or in this case, having my buddy pay for it for me. The women did exactly what they were told to do, when they were told to do it. There were no expectations. No complaints.

Princess slipped her G-string over her hips and down her long legs until it lay in a tiny pool at her feet. She stepped out of it and walked towards me, stopping directly in front of me. She was so close that I could smell her cream and it made my cock throb.

‘Turn around and bend over so I can see what my buddy is paying for,’ I growled and she obeyed, bending over until her waxed pussy was only inches from my face.

‘Do you like what you see, Mr. Montoya?’ she asked in a low, husky voice.

I ignored her question. I didn’t give compliments. ‘It looks like you’re

already dripping wet for me, Princess? Do you enjoy being paid to let men fuck you?’

‘I enjoy being paid to let you fuck me, Sir. In fact, I’d let you do me for free,’ she giggled.

I wrapped my hand around my cock and squeezed it through my trousers. It was rock hard. Why wouldn’t it be? I had a naked woman bending over in front of me with her pussy in my face.

‘What are you waiting for? From what I’ve heard, you’re not usually so shy,’ she purred.

What was I waiting for? Why was I sitting looking at her instead of burying my cock, my tongue, or my fingers inside her?

‘Get dressed, Princess,’ I said with a sigh as I downed my Scotch.

She stood up and turned around, blinking at me. ‘Have I done something wrong, Mr. Montoya?’ she asked, her voice trembling as though she was fighting back the tears.

‘No.’ I growled. ‘I’m just not in the mood.’

‘Well, I could get you in the mood?’ she offered. ‘I don’t mind whatever you want to do?’

I shook my head. What the fuck was wrong with me? My cock was throbbing so hard it was painful, but I couldn’t bring myself to touch her.

‘Just get dressed and go.’

She nodded as she picked up her clothes from the floor and dressed quickly. Then a few seconds later, she was gone.

I sat back in my chair and sighed. It was my wedding night and I was sitting alone in a hotel room while my wife was on the other side of the city. Not that I thought I’d care about that fact.

I didn’t particularly like Alana Carmichael. She was certainly fuckable, with her long curly hair, her thick thighs and curvy ass, but she was far too much like hard work. Not to mention, she was a spoiled brat.

So, why was I thinking about her instead of fucking Princess? A woman who would know exactly what I wanted and how I wanted it.

Despite Alana being my wife in name alone, for some inexplicable reason, I couldn’t bring myself to cheat on her on our wedding night.

I threw my empty glass at the wall and watched as it shattered into pieces.

Damn my catholic upbringing!

And fuck Alana Carmichael!

Chapter Four

ALANA

IT HAD BEEN TWO WEEKS SINCE OUR CHARADE OF A WEDDING, AND FOR THE most part, Alejandro stayed out of my way, and that was exactly the way I liked it. He'd slept in the house only twice in those two weeks, and on both occasions he'd insisted on sleeping completely naked.

The first time he had stayed, I had been terrified to go to sleep in case he'd tried to take advantage of me. But, after a few hours of me lying there watching him, it had become perfectly clear that he had absolutely no intention of doing so.

I wasn't exactly his type, was I!

Once I realized that, I hadn't been able to help myself from lifting the covers for a sneak peek while he'd been asleep.

And sweet Jesus, I hadn't been disappointed. He may have been the devil incarnate, but he had the body of a god. And his morning wood was a sight to behold. I could understand why half of the women in L.A were after him – although they obviously didn't realize what an arrogant, evil asshole he was.

Alejandro had slept at home the previous night too, and I'd woken in the early hours of the morning with my hand on his chest. My cheeks had burned with embarrassment. Could he feel my hand on his cool skin?

Did he even care?

Oh, God, did he think that I wanted him?

I should have moved it and then scooted back over to my side of the bed, but all I could think about was how firm his muscles were as his chest rose and fell beneath my fingertips. I wondered if the muscles in his stomach were as deliciously perfect and contemplated sliding my hand down further to check out for myself.

As I lay there watching him and touching his skin, I felt a stirring between my thighs that started to turn into a painful throbbing. I decided that I needed to stop touching his incredible body and go back to sleep.

But, of course, I hadn't been able to get back to sleep after that. My body was alive with nervous, sexual energy, and I'd been terrified that I'd wake up with my whole body draped over him instead of just my hand. I could just imagine the arrogant look on his face if that had happened. So, I got up early and watched TV in the den.

I was in the kitchen, having just made a fresh pot of coffee when he sauntered into the room in just his boxer briefs. My eyes were drawn to his groin area of their own volition and I saw the hint of a smirk on his face.

I turned away to avoid looking at him.

Asshole!

'Buenos días, princesa,' he said, his voice low and gravelly.

I rolled my eyes and then I turned back to face him. He'd taken to calling me princess because he thought it annoyed me, which it did, but I wasn't going to let him know that.

'Morning. There's fresh coffee if you're interested?' I forced a smile.

'You made coffee?' he flashed an eyebrow at me. 'I thought Magda took care of that?'

'Well, sometimes she does,' I said with a shrug. 'But I was up first.'

He eyed me suspiciously and I felt my skin prickle in annoyance. What the hell was wrong with him? Did he think I'd poisoned his coffee or something?

'My mama is visiting today,' he said as he poured himself a mug of the hot, dark liquid. 'She's just got back from her cruise and she's keen to meet my wife.'

I looked at him over the rim of my coffee mug. 'Oh?'

He crossed the kitchen in two strides until he was standing so close to me, I could smell his cologne from the previous evening, and it made my insides melt like warm butter.

'I hope it goes without saying that I expect you to be on your best behavior while she's here,' he growled.

I looked up at him. His dark brown eyes blazed with fire and he had a light dusting of dark stubble across his jawline.

Damn! Why did he always have to look so bloody hot? I placed my hand on the back of my neck to try and cool my flushed skin but it did nothing.

‘Of course,’ I said with a flutter of my eyelashes. ‘Best behavior.’

‘I’m not playing, Alana. My mother thinks that this marriage is a for real. She thinks that we’re in love and it would break her heart if she were to discover the truth.’

I blinked at him. Did the King of L.A have a weak spot?

‘Understand me?’ he said, his voice as smooth as chocolate.

‘Yes. Okay,’ I said quietly.

Suddenly, the devil seemed a little more human than he had before.

Chapter Five

ALANA

I SMOOTHED MY DRESS OVER MY THIGHS AS I STOOD AWKWARDLY IN THE doorway waiting for Alejandro's mom. I was surprised I was feeling so nervous. Meeting people and being charming had become kind of my thing in New York. I was accustomed to working on my father's campaign and he often wheeled me out for interviews and PR events.

I had no idea why I should be so bothered about impressing Alejandro's mom. It wasn't as though I even liked him. But, I knew from the change in his demeanor these past few hours that she obviously meant the world to him, and he was keen to protect her and make her happy.

From what he'd told me earlier, she believed we'd had a whirlwind romance and got married because we were madly in love.

She had been on a month-long cruise with her sister, which had been orchestrated by Alejandro's father, Mateo, to ensure his wife was out of the way when her only child got married. This was in case she became suspicious and asked too many awkward questions about our relationship. But, now that Alejandro and I were married, there wasn't much that she could do about it.

I wondered how we'd manage to convince her that we were happily married newlyweds, when we had barely said a dozen civil words to each other in the past two weeks. But, I was willing to give it a try, and maybe I could even have a little fun while I was doing it?

I watched as Alejandro walked up the driveway with his mom, her arm linked through his and a wide smile on her face.

Maria Montoya was a stunningly beautiful woman. I knew that she was in her fifties, but she could have easily passed for a woman ten years younger. Her dark hair was swept up into an elegant chignon and she wore a simple,

yet clearly expensive dress.

I looked down at my own attire. I'd chosen a simple pink wrap dress that suited my skin tone and emphasized my curvier figure.

I swallowed as they drew nearer. What if she hated me? What if she was one of those mothers who never thought anyone was good enough for her son?

Why the hell did I even care?

'Mama, this is Alana,' Alejandro said when they reached me.

I stepped out into the driveway. 'Hello, Mrs. Montoya, I'm delighted to meet you,' I said with a smile.

She looked me up and down and I took a deep breath, bracing myself for a potential onslaught. 'So, you're the woman who has captured my son's heart?' she said and her face broke into a huge smile before she held out her arms and beckoned me to her.

I stepped forward and was enveloped in a cloud of her sweet perfume as she kissed each of my cheeks in turn.

Then she stepped back and took another look at me. 'Please, call me Maria,' she said before she smiled again, and I was sure that I saw tears in her eyes.

'Maria,' I said, returning her smile. 'Come on inside, I've just brewed a fresh pot of coffee and there are cookies in the oven.'

'Sounds delicious,' she said as she linked her arm through mine.

I looked up at Alejandro and he gave me a nod of appreciation before we all walked into the house.

A few hours later, the three of us were sitting on the patio. We'd eaten a beautiful lunch and Maria had regaled me with dozens of stories of Alejandro as a child. He had rolled his eyes throughout and admonished her for the more embarrassing ones, but she had simply laughed and told him not to be so grumpy.

I saw a completely different side to him when she was around, and it was a side of him I could learn to like.

For our part, Alejandro and I had played the adoring couple, and I took the opportunity to flirt outrageously with him every chance I got.

He went into the house and brought out a fresh jug of lemonade. When he set it on the table, I placed my hand on his forearm and rubbed my thumb

over his warm skin. I felt him stiffen at my touch and I bit back a giggle.

I smiled up at him. 'Thank you, darling,' I purred.

He flashed me a quick scowl before plastering a fake smile on his face.

'Oh, you two are just perfect for each other,' Maria said as she clasped her hands together and looked between the two of us. 'So much so, that I have almost forgiven you for depriving your mother of her only child's wedding,' she said to Alejandro with a scowl.

'I said I'm sorry, Mama,' he replied.

As soon as we'd got into the house earlier, Maria had spent a full half hour grilling her son about our relationship and subsequent wedding, and admonishing him for marrying in secret. It had been a sight to behold and I'd had to bite the inside of my cheek to stop myself from smiling throughout.

'So am I, Maria,' I added. 'But we just couldn't bear to wait a moment longer. Could we, darling?' I looked up and gazed at him adoringly.

I saw the wicked grin spreading across his lips and wondered what was going through his mind.

'No. I couldn't wait to make this woman my wife,' he said and then he bent his head low and kissed me. His soft lips pressing lightly against mine at first before he licked across my lips, forcing them open and allowing his tongue to slip into my mouth. And what could I do? I had to play along, didn't I?

So, I melted into his kiss, letting him devour my mouth with his expert tongue as his hand slid down my back and onto my ass. I felt a jolt of pleasure shoot through my body as he squeezed it hard, knowing that his mom wouldn't be able to see.

I should have been annoyed. But all I could think about was how good his hand and his mouth felt on me. When he pulled back, I gasped.

I wanted more.

So much more.

Then I remembered his mom was sitting right there and I blushed, tucking a strand of hair behind my ear self-consciously before I turned to face her.

She laughed softly. 'Montoya men are very passionate,' she said with a shrug and a knowing smile.

'Lo siento, Mama,' Alejandro said as he took a seat.

'No need to apologize. Your Alana is a beautiful woman, son. I'm glad that you've finally found someone to share your life with. I was starting to worry about you.'

He took her hand and kissed it softly. 'You never have to worry about me, Mama.'

Maria placed her free hand over mine. 'Well, now that you have Alana to love you, I will certainly worry less.'

I smiled at her, although I felt a pang of guilt for lying to this lovely woman who clearly adored her son. But, I supposed her believing that he was happy and in love brought her some comfort when she lived so far away from him.

'I'll look after him, Maria. I promise,' I said and in that moment, I meant it too.

Chapter Six

ALEJANDRO

I KISSED MY MOTHER ON THE CHEEK BEFORE CLOSING THE CAR DOOR BEHIND her and watching as her driver turned out of my driveway. I'd suggested that she spend the night, but she wanted to visit her old friend while she was in L.A. She also made it clear that she was keen not to intrude on the newlyweds.

The irony of that wasn't lost on me. The fact was, Alana and I got along much better when my mother was around – even if it was all only for her benefit.

I walked back into the house and looked for Alana. Whatever I thought about her, she had managed to convince my mother that this thing between the two of us was real, and for that I was grateful. I wondered what, or how much it might cost me, to repay that particular favor.

I found her in the kitchen helping Magda clear the dishes from our late lunch. They were laughing at something but stopped when they saw me walking into the room, and I couldn't help but wonder what they'd found so funny.

Perhaps my mother's tales of my misspent youth? Magda had worked for my family since I was a child, so they weren't new to her. But, I had seen how much delight Alana had taken in listening to my mother's stories.

'I'll just go and fetch the glasses from the garden,' Magda said and excused herself, leaving Alana and I alone.

I walked towards her and she looked up at me with those huge brown eyes of hers.

'Thank you for today,' I said quietly.

'Pardon?' she said, cupping her hand to her ear in an exaggerated fashion.

I frowned at her. Could she not make anything easy? She was getting much bolder around me and I couldn't work out if that was a good or a bad thing. 'You heard me,' I growled. 'You have my mama fooled anyway. She loves you.'

'Well, I'm actually very lovable,' she said with a grin. 'Your mom obviously has very good taste.'

I snorted and stuffed my hands in my pockets.

Alana tilted her head and looked at me for a few seconds before she spoke again. 'Well, she is lovely,' she finally said. 'I really liked her being here. It's a shame she had to leave so soon.' Then she turned to look out of the window and I thought I saw tears in her eyes, but she blinked them away.

'Are you okay?' I asked.

'Yes,' she sniffed as she wiped her eyes quickly. 'Being with your mom today just reminded me how lonely I am here,' she said softly. Then she shrugged and turned back to the dishes.

I stood watching her and felt something for her that I couldn't quite work out.

A pang of guilt, perhaps?

Despite my general apathy towards her, she had made my mom a very happy woman today. It was easy to forget that she had given up her whole life to move here.

'Well, what would it take to make you feel less lonely?' I asked her.

She turned to face me. 'I don't know. Friends?' she said with a shrug. 'But I'm not that great at making them. What do the women around here do to occupy their time if they don't work?'

I rubbed my hand across my jawline and shook my head. 'I don't know.'

'What do your friends wives do?'

I frowned. I didn't have many friends and the ones I did have didn't have wives. But I knew what the wives of other rich men around here did. They had plenty of liquid lunches, spent their husbands money and justified it by raising a few bucks for charity once a year. I'd bet that would be just her kind of deal.

'There's a group of wives who run a charity committee. I think they meet a few days, a week,' I suggested.

I saw her eyes light up as she confirmed my suspicion. 'Oh, that sounds perfect. Can I just show up? Or do you need to introduce me or something?'

'Amelia Grant is the chair. I'll have a word with her and tell her to expect

you ... when?’

‘Tomorrow?’ she said, all bright-eyed and shiny.

I nodded. ‘Tomorrow.’

‘Great. Thank you,’ she said with a smile.

‘You’ll need to take Hank with you,’ I said to her and her smile turned to a scowl.

‘What?’ I snapped.

‘Hank hates me,’ she pouted.

‘Hank hates everyone.’

‘Couldn’t I go alone? Please?’

‘No,’ I barked at her, a little sharper than I’d intended. ‘This isn’t New York. You can’t just wander around here without protection. Not now that you’re my wife, Alana.’

She bit her lip and nodded. ‘But Hank, though? Isn’t there anyone else who could come with me? I know you have some female security staff?’

‘No,’ I shook my head. ‘If you are in danger, a man is stronger and faster and better able to protect you.’

‘That’s sexist!’ she snapped.

‘That’s genetics, princess.’

She glared at me and I knew she was biting back a retort. I could see the skin on her chest and neck turning pink as she struggled to keep a lid on her temper.

I tried not to smile. She was kind of hot when she was angry.

I expected an epic temper tantrum to follow – wasn’t that what spoiled little princesses did when they couldn’t get their own way? But, instead, she took a deep breath and leaned back against the counter.

‘Okay,’ she said softly. ‘If it has to be Hank, then so be it.’

I frowned at her. That had been far too easy. I could hardly blame her for not wanting to spend too much time in Hank’s company. He was a miserable bastard on his best days, but he was good at his job and that was why he was assigned to her.

‘How about I pick a few of my best men and send them over here tomorrow and you can interview them yourself?’ I offered. ‘Then you can choose your own personal bodyguard.’

She looked up at me again, her eyes shining. ‘Yes. But, you won’t choose a load of Hank-alikes, will you?’

I laughed. ‘No,’ I said with a shake of my head.

‘Then that sounds great. Thank you, Alejandro,’ she purred like a kitten and the sound vibrated through my whole body and headed straight to my cock.

She seemed so fucking grateful for such a small gesture. Was she just fucking with me?

For some reason, the memory of our kiss earlier and the feeling of her round, juicy ass in the palm of my hand forced themselves into the forefront of my mind.

I walked over to her until we were standing just a few inches apart. She looked up at me, her breathing fast and shallow as her eyes searched my face. I contemplated lifting her onto the kitchen counter and seeing what she was wearing under that sexy fitted dress she was wearing, when Magda walked back into the room.

Alana looked at my housekeeper in surprise, making me wonder whether just what had been going through her mind, and whether it was anything like the filthy thoughts that were running through mine.

I shook my head to clear it. It was probably better that I didn’t know.

‘I’ll send the candidates here tomorrow at nine am,’ I said and then I walked out of the kitchen with the twitch in my cock turning into a raging hard on.

I put my sunglasses on, shielding my eyes from the glare of the evening sun as I leaned back against the soft leather seat of my car while my driver took us to my hotel. I brushed the pad of my thumb against the platinum band on my finger. It still felt entirely alien to me and I wondered if I would ever get used to it.

How the fuck had I ended up married?

I frowned as I stared out of the window and thought about how three months earlier, my father had presented me with a proposal, and because I respected him, and I knew that it was good for business, I’d agreed.

The Montoya Corporation was a huge national organization, and we had plenty of legitimate businesses, but we had made our money in the illegitimate kind.

My father was keen to clean the up the family name and add some semblance of legitimacy to the Montoya brand. He was the son of Immigrant parents who had come to the US from Spain in the 1960’s, and I knew that

despite all of his success, he could never quite shake that feeling that he didn't belong here.

His grand plan for me, his only son and heir, was to marry into a wealthy and powerful, political family, and ensure that our family became undisputed US royalty. He had chosen three potential candidates, all of whom had fathers with enough ambition or plain old greed, to be willing to marry their daughters off to further their own careers.

Two of the women he'd chosen were even up for the deal, but Alana Carmichael had needed to be persuaded, and that was part of the reason I'd chosen her.

The other reason was that she was a spoiled Manhattan brat who I knew I could never even like, let alone love. But, I'd thought that I would certainly enjoy taming her.

'You okay, amigo?' Jax asked me as he sat back in the seat next to me, chewing on his nicotine gum.

'I'll be better once I've had a drink,' I replied with a sigh.

We had picked him up on the way to the hotel. I figured that maybe a night of drinking with my best buddy was exactly what I needed.

Jax and I had met on a basketball court at the age of fourteen and had been inseparable ever since. I trusted him with my life. He was also one of the few people who knew the truth about my marriage to Alana. Even my own mother didn't know, and she had been heartbroken when she'd discovered she had missed her only child's wedding. I'd felt guilty for lying to her, but seeing how happy she had been today had eased my conscience.

Despite being a spoiled little princess, Alana had come through for me today.

Chapter Seven

ALANA

ALEJANDRO HAD LEFT AFTER HIS MOM'S VISIT AND HAD STAYED THE NIGHT AT the hotel, which wasn't unusual for him. He'd been true to his word about sending me some candidates though and I'd already interviewed four of his security personnel.

Well, I say interviewed, but it was more like me asking them completely random questions and them giving me monosyllabic answers while looking very uncomfortable. They were all very Hank-like, and I wondered if Alejandro employed anyone apart from Magda and Jacob, with any actual personality.

I checked my watch as I waited for the final candidate. It was almost 11am and I'd already spent my entire morning interviewing. I was due to meet the charity ladies for lunch at one and I needed to choose my outfit. I wanted to impress them, but I didn't want to look like I was trying too hard either.

I hoped that some of these women might become my friends and make my time here in L.A more bearable – not to mention doing something useful for charity too, which would give me some purpose even if I didn't make any friends.

I looked up as the fifth candidate walked into the room and my breath caught in my throat. He was much younger than the previous interviewees by a good twenty years, and I guessed was closer to my age. He had the brightest blue eyes I'd ever seen and the cutest dimples beneath his stubble, which were obvious because he was smiling as he walked in.

And that was what set him apart the most – he actually looked like he wanted to be there.

‘Hi,’ I stuttered.

‘Buenos días, Mrs Montoya,’ he said as he extended his hand in greeting.

I stood and shook it, noting how huge his hands and forearms were. He wore a suit, like all of Alejandro’s security did, but his muscles looked like they were about to burst out of it.

‘Please call me Alana,’ I said as I took a seat, fixing my skirt as I sat down. ‘You must be Hugo?’

‘Yep, that’s me, ma’am,’ he replied as he took a seat opposite me.

I couldn’t help but laugh at the formality.

‘Sorry,’ he laughed too. ‘Hard to shake the ma’am, it’s been drilled into me.’

‘You were in the forces?’

‘Yes, ma’am, I mean, Alana,’ he quickly corrected himself. ‘Navy SEAL for ten years.’

I smiled at him. ‘My grandpa served in the Marine Corps.’

‘He did?’

‘Yep. For almost thirty years. I used to love to listen to his stories. He was my hero.’

Hugo nodded. ‘Fourth generation of service for me.’

‘Why did you leave?’ I asked him.

He blushed and I wondered if I’d overstepped. ‘Sorry, that’s too personal.’

‘No, it’s fine,’ he said as he leaned back in his chair. ‘On my last tour over in Afghanistan, I took a bullet to the shoulder. I was a sniper, and my aim was never the same after that. I was medically discharged and I got into private security instead.’

‘That must have been tough?’

‘Well, we’re kind of trained to handle tough.’

‘Did my husband force you to come here and apply for this babysitting job or were you given a choice?’ I asked with a flash of my eyebrows.

He laughed out loud at that. ‘The Boss told me to come here this morning and I do as I’m told. He definitely didn’t sell it as a babysitting job though.’

‘Oh? What did he tell you it was.’

Hugo narrowed his eyes at me. ‘He told me I was being given the opportunity to be his wife’s personal bodyguard. This is most definitely a promotion for me and the other four men who were in here before me, Alana. I don’t like to toot my own horn, but he chose his best men for this. This is

most definitely no babysitting job, ma'am.'

I felt my skin flush pink. 'I didn't mean to belittle what you do,' I stammered.

'I know,' he said as he smiled again. 'But don't underestimate your importance to the boss, is all I'm trying to say.'

I nodded. 'What happens now then? Do you start straight away?'

'I got the job?' he asked.

'Yes,' I smiled.

'Then yes, orders were to start immediately.'

'Good. I have a lunch at one. Is that okay?'

'Of course. Wherever you need to go, I'll take you. That's the deal.'

'So, how does this work. Do you work seven days a week?'

'I usually have Wednesdays and every other Sunday off. I'll be needing your schedule, but I'm also on standby whenever you need to leave the house, without Mr. Montoya obviously.'

'So, who guards me when I'm with him?' I asked.

He looked at me as though I had just asked him the stupidest question in the world. 'He does, of course.'

Hugo held open the door of his car and I climbed into the back seat. I'd have preferred to sit in the front, but I didn't know what the correct protocol was for having my own personal bodyguard.

On the one occasion I'd left the house since my fateful wedding day, I'd been in the back of a limousine with Hank and another man with a gun.

Hugo climbed into the front seat and started the engine. 'Safer in the back,' he said as though reading my mind. 'The driver is always the first target. Although most of Mr. Montoya's cars are bulletproof, so we're pretty safe,' he said with a flash of his eyebrows in the rear-view mirror.

'I'm just happy to be out,' I said as I leaned back against the seat and smiled.

A short time later, Hugo pulled his car up outside the exclusive yacht club. He got out first, checking up and down the street before he opened the door and reached for my hand. He remained hyper-vigilant as he escorted me

through the club and to the room where the ladies of the charity committee were meeting.

‘I’ll have to come inside, but I’ll wait near the exit,’ he said quietly in my ear. ‘It will be like I’m not even here.’

I nodded and took a deep breath as I walked into the room with Hugo close behind me. Everyone in the room looked up as I entered, and I smiled widely.

‘Alana, dear,’ a blonde-haired woman, who I guessed was in her mid-forties, shouted and then she walked over to me and gave me two dramatic air kisses. ‘Ladies,’ she said as she took hold of my arm by the elbow and turned to address the room. ‘This is Alana Montoya, and she has come to join us in our work for good causes. I know you’ll all give her a warm welcome.’

The dozen women in the room all smiled as they looked me up and down, some of them barely able to hide their disdain. I noted the bottles of expensive champagne on the table. Perhaps this was a celebration?

‘I hope I’m not intruding,’ I said quietly, suddenly feeling very self-conscious as I stood there in my simple wrap dress. There were enough designer labels in this room to feed a small community for a year.

‘No, we meet here every Monday, Wednesday and Friday,’ the blonde woman replied as she ushered me towards the table. ‘My name is Amelia, by the way. My husband is one of Alejandro’s investors.’

‘A pleasure to meet you,’ I replied as I took a seat.

Amelia sat on my right, but I didn’t have a chance to speak to her any further because the woman on my left grabbed my hand and started examining my ring finger.

‘I’d have expected a bigger rock than that from the King of L.A,’ she snorted.

I pulled my hand away. ‘It was my grandmother’s ring,’ I replied defensively.

‘Your grandmother’s?’ one of the other women squealed. ‘How quaint,’ she said and a few of them broke into laughter.

‘Take no notice of them, dear,’ Amelia said as she patted my thigh. ‘They’ve had far too much to drink already.’

I smiled at her and then listened as she gave me a rundown of everyone at the table. It seemed that I was fortunate enough to be in the company of the L.A elite. These women were the wives of the wealthiest men in L.A. If you wanted into a party, onto a list, or to be someone of any note at all, then this

was the crowd you needed to win over. At least that was the way Amelia sold them to me.

I wasn't so sure she was right. I listened to their conversation and didn't think I had anything in common with any of them. When there was a gap in the chatter, I decided to ask about their charity work. At least that would be something I felt like we could talk about.

'Oh, we've already chosen our charity for this year. We'll be hosting a fundraising event in the fall, so we'll start planning in the next few weeks. There's no rush,' Amelia replied.

'What's the charity?' I asked.

'The school needs a new wing. Their sports hall isn't fit for purpose now that they have so many new pupils.'

'Oh, okay. Which school is that?' I asked.

'Montlake Academy,' Amelia replied dismissively, as though my questions were starting to bother her.

'Oh,' I said as I leaned back in my chair. Montlake Academy was the private school nearby. I bet that most of their children went to that same school. Their school fees were astronomical. That was the charity project they'd chosen?

I looked around the room and realized that I didn't belong here at all. Suddenly, I felt that sense of aching loneliness again. Was there any place in L.A where I might fit in?

I checked my watch and stood up. 'I'm sorry, ladies, but I have another appointment to get to. It was lovely to meet you all,' I said, forcing a smile.

'Oh, no. Really?' Amelia said. 'You'll come back, next week though, won't you? It's quite the coup having the new Mrs. Montoya in our midst. The donors will love it,' she giggled.

'I'd love to, if my schedule allows,' I lied. 'Bye ladies.'

I walked towards the door and Hugo stepped out of the shadows and was at my side before I reached it. He held it open for me.

'Everything okay?' he asked.

I waited until we were outside before I answered. 'Yes. That just wasn't what I was expecting, that's all. I was hoping to do something meaningful, but I don't think I'm going to find it in here.'

Hugo nodded absent-mindedly as he checked up and down the street before leading me to the car and opening the door.

I climbed inside, leaning my head against the headrest with a sigh.

I didn't realize Hugo was already in the car when he spoke. 'Where to now?' he asked.

I opened my eyes and suddenly remembered the article I'd read about the women's shelter downtown that was about to lose its funding. That seemed like a place where I might be needed and somewhere my fundraising skills might be useful.

'Do you know the shelter downtown on the corner of Maple and Fifth?' I asked.

'Yes, but I'm not sure Mr. Montoya would want you going there.'

'But you work for me now, yes? And that's where I'd like to go. And what Mr. Montoya doesn't know, won't hurt him.'

'You want me to lie to the boss?' he asked with a flash of his eyebrows.

'No. If he asks you, tell him the truth. But he probably won't ask. That's all I'm saying.'

'Hmm,' Hugo said with a laugh as he pulled the car away from the sidewalk. 'We'll see.'

It was almost six pm by the time I got home. The women's and children's shelter had been exactly what I was looking for and they were in desperate need of a new fundraising coordinator.

I'd spent most of the afternoon with a lady by the name of Kristen O'Malley, who had set up the shelter eighteen years earlier after she had fled her own abusive marriage and found support from a similar organization. Once she'd been back on her feet, she had wanted to give something back and the Maggie O'Malley Center had been born. Kristen had named it after her mother, who had passed while the center was being established.

It seemed that Kristen worked tirelessly to help all of the women and children who came through their doors, but it was also apparent that she was desperately short staffed and that the center's already limited funds were dwindling. Not to mention, the lease on their building was up for renewal and the landlord didn't seem to be a very charitable person at all.

When I'd offered to help fundraise, she had accepted gratefully, but it was only when I told her my name that she really paid attention.

She didn't recognize me as Alana Montoya though, but as Alana Carmichael, and that gave me a sense of pride like I couldn't describe.

For a moment, I felt like me again. I'd promised I'd do everything I could

to help and she had given me the warmest hug I'd had in months.

I smiled to myself as I walked through the house to the kitchen to see Magda busy near the stove.

'Oh, Mrs. Montoya, I'm so glad you're home,' she said as she wiped her hands on her apron.

'Magda, would you please call me Alana?' I asked her for what I thought must be the hundredth time since I'd first walked into this house. 'Mrs. Montoya makes me feel really old.'

She gave a slight grimace but then she nodded. 'Alana,' she said with a half-smile.

'Thank you.'

She cleared her throat. 'Mr. Montoya will be home for dinner —'

'Really?' I interrupted her. He hadn't been home for dinner in the almost three weeks we'd been married so far.

'Yes. So, what shall I cook? What is your favorite dish?'

I shrugged. 'Whatever he likes is fine by me.'

She smiled at me. 'But he has instructed me to cook your favorite meal. So?'

'I don't think he'll appreciate my tastes,' I replied with a laugh.

She held out her hands. 'That may be, but those are my orders.'

I chewed on my bottom lip. I supposed I could pretend that my favorite dish was something exotic and cultured. Or, I could just go with the truth? 'Okay then. My favorite meal is a bacon cheeseburger and fries.'

Madga blinked at me and I wondered if she had ever made that meal before in her life.

'I can cook if you'd like though? I like cooking,' I said with a shrug.

'No,' she shook her head. 'There is no dish that Magda Hernandez cannot cook,' she said as she patted her chest with pride. 'You need to go and clean up for dinner. It will be ready at eight.'

'If you're sure?'

'I'm sure. Now go. Out of my kitchen,' she said, swatting her hand in my direction.

I didn't know what came over me, but perhaps it was my happiness at finally feeling like I might have something to do in this city. Or perhaps Kristen's earlier embrace had melted the wall of ice I'd built around myself these past few weeks, but I ran over to Magda instead and gave her a huge hug.

She remained as stiff as a board and I wondered if I had crossed a line. Magda and I had become closer in these past three weeks. She was the only person I really spoke to and I didn't want to make her feel uncomfortable.

But just as I was about to pull back, she placed her hand on my back and patted me gently.

'Dulce niña,' she said. I didn't know what that meant, but it sounded nice and when I looked at her face she was smiling.

Chapter Eight

ALEJANDRO

IT WAS JUST BEFORE EIGHT PM WHEN I ARRIVED HOME - JUST IN TIME FOR dinner. I made my way to the dining room and wondered if I was going to regret my decision to eat dinner with my new wife, and whether I would regret even more allowing her to choose the meal.

I imagined some pretentious dish sitting on my plate when I got into the room.

Oh, fuck, what if she was a vegan? I had no clue if she was into that. It seemed a new fashionable lifestyle choice. Not that I had anything against vegans, but I was a carnivore and a meal wasn't a meal in my opinion, unless it contained meat.

I walked into the dining room and Alana was already seated. She looked different. Her cheeks were glowing and I realized it was because she was smiling. She wasn't smiling at me, she hadn't even noticed me walk into the room. She was just sitting there – smiling to herself.

Maybe her lunch had gone well?

Maybe she'd indulged in too many afternoon cocktails?

I certainly hoped it wasn't due to anything else. The fact that she had chosen Hugo to be her bodyguard out of the five men I'd sent her, hadn't escaped my attention. I wondered if I'd made a mistake picking him as one of my choices, but he was undeniably one of my best soldiers, and he would take a bullet for her, or me, without question.

'Buenas noches, princesa,' I said as I took a seat.

She looked up at me. 'Evening,' she said, her smile still firmly in place.

'Did you have a good day?' I asked her.

'Yes,' she nodded. 'Yes, I did.'

‘Good,’ I said as Magda walked into the room carrying dinner. She placed my plate in front of me and I wondered if I’d walked into the wrong house. I looked at Alana’s plate and noticed she had the same.

‘Can I get you anything else?’ Magda asked.

I shook my head.

‘No thank you, Magda. This looks delicious,’ Alana replied.

Magda nodded and then disappeared out of the room.

‘Coca Cola?’ Alana asked, as she held up the glass decanter filled with dark brown liquid.

‘You decanted the cola?’ I asked with a flash of my eyebrows.

She shrugged. ‘Seemed classier, somehow?’

I nodded and held out my glass as she poured. ‘So, this is your favorite meal? Cheeseburger and fries?’

‘*Bacon* cheeseburger and fries,’ she said with a smile. ‘And yes, it is. I’m sorry if you were hoping for something a little fancier. But Magda insisted that I choose my favorite, and this is it.’

She placed a napkin on her lap and then she picked up the giant greasy burger with both hands and took a huge bite.

I couldn’t help but smile as I watched the look of satisfaction on her face as she chewed that first mouthful. She wasn’t playing with me – this really was her favorite food.

Suddenly, she stopped chewing and looked at me and I realized I was staring. She self-consciously wiped her mouth with the back of her hand. ‘Sorry,’ she mumbled.

‘What for?’ I replied as I picked up my own burger and took a bite. ‘There’s no other way to eat a burger,’ I grinned at her and she grinned back as she carried on eating.

When we’d eaten our burgers, and finished our decanted Coca Cola, Magda brought me a glass of Scotch before clearing the dishes.

I stared at Alana as she sipped her water and stared into space, and I couldn’t help but wonder what was on her mind.

After a few moments silence, she turned to me. ‘Why did you ask Magda to cook my favorite meal?’

I shrugged. ‘Maybe, I wanted to get to know something about you?’

‘Okay,’ she replied, eyeing me suspiciously.

‘So, how was Hugo today?’ I asked her, suddenly feeling a tightening in my chest that I couldn’t explain.

‘He was great. Thank you for allowing me to choose my own bodyguard. I appreciate it.’

‘Why did you choose him?’ I asked as I sipped my Scotch.

She chewed her lip as though she was deep in thought. ‘He was the best candidate,’ she finally offered.

‘The fact that he was the youngest and best looking didn’t factor into your decision at all then?’ I asked with a frown as my chest grew tighter.

‘You think Hugo is good looking?’ she replied with a grin.

My frown turned to a scowl. ‘Answer the question.’

She rolled her eyes so hard that I felt like bending her over the dining table and spanking her ass right there, but I knew there was only one way that would end, and I didn’t want to fuck her.

Except that I did. I wanted to fuck her real bad, but I couldn’t go there with her. I couldn’t let her in.

Not yet.

So, I let the eye roll go.

‘I chose him because he was the only one who actually spoke to me,’ she said.

‘The others were mute then?’

‘No. But they may as well have been. One word answers and absolutely no personality. Hugo answered my questions and we actually talked. So, he could have been eighty years old and looked like Freddie Kruger, and I’d still have given him the job. Satisfied?’ she snapped.

I glared at her. She was getting far too feisty for her own good. ‘He’s not supposed to talk to you.’

‘Why not?’ she asked, her chin tilted in defiance.

‘Because he’s there to protect you. Talking to you is distracting. Jesus, Alana, you’re distracting!’ I snapped and wished I could take back those last few words.

‘You think I’m distracting?’ she blinked at me, all of the anger in her face disappearing.

I closed my eyes and took a breath. ‘Fuck! I didn’t mean like that ...’

‘Oh,’ she said quietly and then we sat in silence for a few seconds. ‘If you don’t mind, I’m going to finish reading my book.’

I nodded as I heard her chair being pushed back. When I opened my eyes

again, she was gone.

Later that night, I crawled into bed beside her, waiting until I was sure she'd be asleep. She slept on her side, facing the window and away from me. But, as she seemed to have an aversion to covers and slept in the tiniest of panties and a tank top, I had a great view of her beautiful round ass.

I lay on my back, staring at the ceiling, but my eyes were drawn to her over and over again. My cock was rock hard. I reached down, wrapping my hand around it and squeezing tightly, hoping for some relief, but it offered me none.

All I could think about was how easy it would be for me to roll onto my side, pull those tiny panties of hers aside and slide myself into her. If I fucked her just one time, maybe I could get her out of my head?

I squeezed my eyes shut, trying to force the images from my brain because my cock was weeping for her. I contemplated getting myself off but the thought of her waking up and catching me jerking off over her wasn't something I relished. I could just see the look on her spoiled face if she did.

So, I lay there, with a throbbing cock and a throbbing head and wondered why I hadn't gone to the hotel like I usually did.

I got up at six am the following morning having barely slept at all. I looked at Alana's sleeping form and had a vague memory of her hand on my chest in the night. Her warm soft skin resting lightly on my own. And then I had a memory of her hand squeezing my hard cock – but I knew I must have dreamt that.

I pulled on my shorts and running shoes. A long run would take my mind off her and her curves. Then I'd shower in my gym and go straight to the hotel. I turned and looked at her again as I reached the door. Something she'd said about her feeling lonely and this place not being her own came back to me.

I frowned because I didn't know what else I could do about that, or why I even cared.

Chapter Nine

ALEJANDRO

IT HAD BEEN A LITTLE OVER THREE WEEKS SINCE MY MOM'S VISIT AND THINGS between Alana and I were less strained. Hugo was working out well as her personal bodyguard, and it made me feel more at ease to know that she never left the house without him.

I didn't spend much time around the house, but when I was there, I noticed that she appeared happier. We seemed to have come to an unspoken arrangement whereby we could be civil to each other when we were in the same room.

She went out almost every day with the charity ladies and I supposed chugging champagne and cocktails every afternoon was a pretty good way for a spoiled princess to pass the time.

I'd started to think she was finally content, until I'd overheard her and Magda talking earlier that morning. I'd heard her say she felt like a prisoner, always surrounded by armed guards, and how much she missed her place in New York.

Ordinarily, I wouldn't have cared. She had chosen this life and she needed to learn to make the best of it. Except, there was something about the way she said it, that made me feel sorry for her. It hadn't sounded like she was complaining, more like she was confiding in the one person she had gotten close to here. And while there wasn't a lot I was prepared to do about the armed guards, I knew there was a potential way to make her feel more at home in my house – even if I wasn't that happy about doing it.

I walked into the hotel reception and nodded a greeting to the concierge as I passed. I saw my men assembled in the corner and watched as they greeted our guest.

Today, I had a meeting with the current head of our Chicago operations, Richie Burnett, and he didn't like to be kept waiting.

But, Richie was a prick.

I intended to make him wait.

I reached into my pocket and took out my cell phone before dialing Jacob's number. I'd left Alana my credit card that morning, and while I'd told her that I didn't care how much of my money she spent, I did want to know exactly what I might be walking into later.

I dreaded to think what awful, tacky shit this New York princess would have bought to make my tasteful villa more like home to her?

'Is everything okay, Boss?' Jacob asked when he answered.

'Did Mrs. Montoya enjoy her shopping trip today?'

'Yes, Sir. I think so.'

'How much of my money did she spend?' I asked with a sigh as I kept my eye on Richie.

'Hang on, let me check,' he replied and I heard the rustling of the paper receipts as he counted up her purchases.

'Ninety-seven dollars and seventy-four cents,' he replied.

'What?'

'Ninety-seven-' he started to repeat the amount but I'd heard him the first time.

'Is that all?' I interrupted him.

'Yes, Boss.'

I shook my head. Of course it was. I bet she'd have everything custom made – no shop bought shit for a spoiled princess. I'd bet she was online right now ordering all kinds of sparkly crap!

'I suppose she's inside the house right now with my credit card spending plenty more though?'

'No, Boss. She's out doing her charity work. She gave the card to me when we got back. Said she'd got what she needed.'

I frowned as one of my men beckoned me over to him. I held my hand up to signal I was on an important call. 'What did she buy?'

'Erm,' he started to say and I heard the rustling of receipts again. 'Two bottles of ketchup. A box of English breakfast tea. Four bags of gummy worms. Two picture frames. Two candles. Two bottles of bubble bath and an anti-allergen pillow.'

'That's all?' I asked with a frown.

‘That’s all,’ Jacob confirmed.

‘Gracias.’ I said and ended the call.

What the hell was Alana’s deal? I’d been sure she’d have spent a fortune on tacky, girly shit.

One of my employees, Jimmy the Fish, walked over to me. ‘Everything okay, Boss?’ he asked seeing the frown on my face.

‘What?’ I asked distractedly.

He knew better than to ask again. ‘They’re waiting for you,’ he added.

‘Tell them to wait another five minutes. I have a call to make,’ I said.

Jimmy walked back over the waiting suits and I dialed Alana’s number.

‘Hi,’ she answered.

‘Did you go shopping today?’

‘Yes.’

‘Did you get everything you needed?’

‘Yes,’ she said and although I couldn’t see her, I sensed her smiling on the other end of the line. So, some bubble bath, ketchup and candy were what she needed to feel at home? This woman surprised me in so many ways. Perhaps I had misjudged her - if only a little?

Perhaps she was playing me? Whichever it was, I needed to know more.

‘I’m taking you out to dinner tonight,’ I said. ‘Be ready at eight.’

‘Dinner? Out?’

‘Yes. We’ve been married for almost six weeks and haven’t been seen in public together since. If I don’t take you out somewhere soon, people might start to think I’m holding you against your will.’

‘Alejandro Montoya, did you just crack a joke?’ she laughed softly and the sound made my cock twitch uncomfortably.

‘Be ready at eight,’ I snapped.

‘How should I dress?’ she purred.

‘Sexy,’ I replied, curious to know how she’d interpret that.

‘Fine. See you at eight,’ she replied.

I’d showered and changed at the hotel and was in the car waiting for Alana to make an appearance. It was two minutes before eight, and if she kept me waiting one minute past, I’d go in there and carry her out of the house myself, no matter what state of undress she was in.

I hated lateness. It was disrespectful. I knew, because it was one of my

favorite tactics to piss people off.

A few seconds later, the door opened and she walked out. I'd been interested to see what her interpretation of what sexy would look like and wondered if she'd dress in some little pink, sparkly number. But she had chosen an understated black dress.

It was short enough to show off her toned, tanned legs, but not too short as to be inappropriate. There was no cleavage on display, but as she turned to say goodbye to one of the staff, I saw that it was backless and the sight of her expanse of bare flesh made my cock stand to attention.

I found myself wondering what color panties she had on beneath, and how long it would take me to tear them off her when she climbed into the car.

'Good evening, Alejandro,' she said as the door was opened and she climbed inside.

I contemplated lifting the hem of her dress to check out those panties, but I thought better of it. No sense in making her pissed before we'd even got to the restaurant. I needed her to be on her best behavior.

'Buenas noches, Alana,' I smiled.

'Does this fulfil your requirements?' she asked.

'It's an interesting choice.'

'Well, that bulge in your trousers suggests that at least some part of you thinks it's sexy,' she said with a grin as she settled back against the seat.

I didn't know whether to laugh or reprimand her, so I did neither. I reached for my cock and adjusted myself to a more comfortable position, before leaning back against the seat too.

Half an hour later, our car pulled up outside the exclusive restaurant and I could already see the swarm of paparazzi waiting for us. It wasn't unexpected. I'd had them tipped off myself. People were starting to ask questions about my new wife and this was the perfect, public way to answer them.

If Alana was bothered by the press, nothing in her demeanor showed it. I expected, being the pampered princess that she was, she would probably enjoy the attention.

The car door was opened for us and I stepped out first, reaching for her hand and helping her out. I pulled her close to me and the scent of her perfume caught me off guard. She smelled so good, I wanted to push her

back into the car and eat her for dinner.

Instead, I leaned my head down and whispered in her ear. 'Best behavior. The whole world is watching.'

'Of course,' she smiled at me.

I slipped my arm around her waist and we walked towards the restaurant. Cameras were flashing in our faces and people were shouting our names but Alana didn't flinch.

'Mrs. Montoya,' a reporter sidled up to her with a microphone in her face. 'This is the first time we've seen you and Mr. Montoya together since your surprise wedding. Can you tell us why you've been hiding away?'

I waited. This was her chance to tell the world what a bastard I was.

She turned her body to mine and rested her hand on my chest. 'Have you seen my husband?' she asked with a flash of her eyebrows. 'We're newlyweds. Why do you think we've been hiding away?' Then she gave them all a killer smile and they broke into laughter as the cameras kept flashing.

She looked up at my face, gazing adoringly at me and I couldn't help but smile at her.

She was an incredible actress. I leaned down and pressed my mouth over hers. I was taking a liberty doing this in public, but I also wanted to see how she'd handle it.

She placed her hand on my cheek and kissed me back. I slipped my tongue inside for an instant, but I regretted it as soon as I tasted her.

I'd kissed her once before, but that had been in front of my mother and I'd been distracted. Tonight, she tasted of peppermint and strawberries, and sin, and now I knew that, I wanted more of her. In fact, all I could think about was sliding my tongue into the other parts of her body that belonged to me.

I pulled away and looked into her eyes. Had she enjoyed that as much as I had? Before I could read her, the maître d was out of the restaurant and ushering us inside.

'I'm so sorry about this intrusion, Mr. Montoya,' he said. 'I've reserved you your favorite table.'

I placed my hand on the small of Alana's back and we walked into the restaurant and away from the baying photographers.

Heads turned as she passed. She was beautiful, with curves in all the right places and a certain kind of confidence that I'd rarely seen in a woman. But she seemed to have no idea of the effect she had on people. And that didn't fit

at all with the spoiled little princess I'd thought I was marrying.

Our marriage was a business arrangement. I had chosen a woman who would give me an heir and nothing more. I didn't want to like her, to think she was funny, or smart, or wonder what she was doing when she wasn't with me. I certainly didn't want to fall in love with her. I didn't have time for such complications. That's why I'd chosen a woman I could never fall in love with - but it seemed I'd been duped.

Alana Carmichael was proving my assumptions wrong at every single turn.

Chapter Ten

ALANA

ALEJANDRO HANDED THE MENUS BACK TO OUR WAITER AND TURNED TO FACE me. He wore a navy suit and a crisp white shirt, open at the collar, revealing just the tiniest glimpse of one of his many tattoos. It hadn't escaped my attention that almost every woman in the restaurant had glanced in our direction at least once. He was probably the best looking man I had ever seen – but he was still a bastard and a devil. I could never forget that.

'That was quite the show you put on outside,' he said as he took a sip of his water.

'Well, I had to make it look convincing, didn't I? Although I'm not sure that us together is that convincing.'

He frowned at me. 'And why is that?'

'Oh, come on. I'm not your usual type, am I? I'm sure there are plenty of people wondering what L.A.'s most eligible bachelor is doing with a slightly chubby brunette from New York.'

His frown turned to a scowl. 'Chubby? In what world could you be ever considered chubby, Alana?'

'In your world, Alejandro. Your world of models and actresses and women who survive on carrot juice and kale,' I replied.

I was confident in my body, usually, and back in New York, I'd been happy to show off my curves in any weather. But here, in L.A, women had bodies that were beyond unbelievable. They all looked like they'd been airbrushed to perfection.

'None of those women meant anything to me,' he said dismissively.

'And I do?' I flashed an eyebrow at him.

'You're my wife, aren't you?' he frowned.

‘Hmm, your wife in name only.’

He narrowed his eyes at me and I wondered what was going through his mind. I felt a flush of heat between my thighs as I sat under the glare of his gaze.

‘Speaking of names. Why do the staff call you Alana?’

I frowned at him. ‘Because it’s my name. What the hell else should they call me?’

‘Mrs. Montoya,’ he snapped.

Of course. I’d only ever heard them call him Mr. Montoya, or Boss. They never used his first name.

‘I’m not Mrs. Montoya,’ I started to say and saw him scowl at me. ‘I mean, it makes me sound like your mom. And it’s too formal.’

‘It’s kind of supposed to be, isn’t it? They’re the staff.’

‘They’re your staff. But to me, they’re the people I spend most of my days and nights with,’ I replied.

I wondered if he was going to reprimand me. He was so bloody serious and had so many rules. But there was no way I was going to insist on Magda, Jacob and Hugo calling me Mrs. Montoya.

He stared at me for a few moments and was about to reply when our waiter brought the wine. When Alejandro had tasted it and confirmed it was to his liking, our waiter poured us each a glass.

I took a sip, expecting it to taste like pretty much any other red wine I had ever had, but I was surprised to find it was the most incredible wine I’d ever tasted. Rich and warm, with hints of chocolate and cherry. It almost justified its eight hundred dollar price tag.

‘So, how was your shopping trip?’ Alejandro asked as I was still savoring the aftertaste of the Rioja.

‘Good,’ I nodded as I put my glass on the table.

It had been a surprise earlier that morning when Jacob had handed me a small white envelope. It had contained a credit card, and a note on Alejandro’s personal stationery instructing me to buy whatever I needed to make his house feel more like my own. I had called him to say thank you and ask how much I was allowed to spend, and he had told me that he didn’t care, as though money meant nothing to him.

It even made me wonder if he had a heart in there after all – if only for a brief moment.

‘You said you got what you needed?’ he asked.

‘Yes.’

‘What did you buy?’ he took a sip of his wine and eyed me over the rim of his glass.

‘Just some stuff,’ I blushed. I didn’t want to tell him that I’d bought ketchup and candy.

‘What stuff?’ he pressed. ‘Am I going to come home to twelve new sofas and a new four poster bed?’

‘No. I didn’t buy anything like that,’ I snapped.

‘So, what did you buy?’

‘If you must know, I bought some bubble-bath, ketchup and candy. Oh, and my favorite teabags. A new pillow as I don’t like the ones on your bed. A couple of picture frames and some candles.’

‘That’s what you bought to make you feel at home?’ he asked with a raise of one eyebrow.

‘Yes,’ I said suddenly feeling embarrassed by my simple tastes in front of this man who thought nothing of ordering an eight hundred dollar bottle of wine with dinner.

‘Why didn’t you just ask for them to be put on the grocery list?’

‘Because there was nothing wrong with the brands you have in your house. But when I thought about what things would make your house feel more like my home, they were the things that I thought of.’

He frowned at me and I suddenly felt the need to explain myself.

‘That brand of ketchup is what my grandma used to use when I was a kid. It reminds me of her house, and that was always where I was happiest. I love English breakfast tea in the mornings. The tea you have doesn’t taste as tea-like.’

‘Not as tea-like?’ he asked as the corners of his mouth curled into a smile.

I shook my head in frustration and went on. ‘That bubble bath is the one my grandpa used to buy me every Christmas, it always makes me think of him. The candles are jasmine and that’s my favorite smell in the world. I like a nice firm pillow, and the ones in your bed are too soft. The candy was just because I love candy and there is never any in your house. And the picture frames are to put a couple of pictures of my family in. Happy now?’

He stared at me and I couldn’t read what was going through his head at all.

Did he think I was an idiot? Well, I didn’t care if he did. They were the kinds of things that mattered to me – not sofas and four poster beds.

‘You surprise me, Alana,’ he said eventually.

‘It shocks you that I’d buy things like that and not spend a fortune on pointless furniture that we don’t need?’ I challenged him.

‘Yes,’ he answered a little too quickly.

‘Well, that’s because you don’t know me at all, Alejandro.’

‘Don’t I?’ he asked, his eyes narrowed.

‘Tell me what you think you know then?’ I said as I glared back at him.

He sat back and ran a hand over his dark stubble. ‘You’re a spoiled little princess who has never had to work for anything in her life.’

I blinked at him. That wasn’t me at all. Not even close. But I reminded myself that I didn’t care what this monster thought of me. In fact the less he thought of me, the better. Maybe then he would let me go.

I leaned back in my seat and picked up my wine glass. ‘Well, in that case, you’ve got me completely nailed,’ I said as I gave him my biggest fake smile.

The rest of our dinner had passed pleasantly enough. Alejandro and I had concentrated on making small talk rather than anything more contentious. I had just finished the last bite of the most delicious steak I had ever tasted in my life and I looked up at him. He was cutting into his steak and I looked at his hands. They were large and powerful, and I suddenly had a vision of him ripping my panties off with them.

He did everything with such certainty and confidence. I squeezed my thighs together as I felt the heat building in my core. I should hate this man, and I did most of the time, so why did my body want him so badly?

Why did I have constant visions of those beautiful hands running over my body. Of him holding himself over me and ...

He looked up at me and caught me staring and flashed me a wicked grin that made my insides turn to molten lava.

I was about to ask him how his steak was when I saw the flash of metal from the corner of my eye. Before I could register what was happening there was a gun pointed at my face, and Alejandro was jumping up off his seat. I stared at the barrel and could see nothing but the gun in front of me.

‘Give my regards to your father,’ I heard someone snarl, but then there was a flurry of activity around me. The next thing I knew, the gun was gone and I looked up to see Alejandro wrestling a large bearded man to the ground.

‘Pull the car around,’ he barked to someone that I couldn’t see as two of

his bodyguards rushed to his side. They picked the man up from the floor and Alejandro stood up and turned to me. I stared at him open-mouthed, my legs and hands trembling like autumn leaves in a storm.

He took one large stride towards me and then scooped me into his arms. I buried my head against his chest. I didn't want to look at all of the faces of the diners who were staring at us.

He marched out of the restaurant, holding me close to him and barking at people to get out of his way.

The next time I looked up, we were in the safety of the car. He sat back against the leather seat, with me still in his arms.

'Drive, Jacob,' he ordered and the car sped away from the curbside.

It was only then that I felt brave enough to look at his face, and then I was sorry that I did. He was looking at me with such concern in his eyes that it made me want to cry.

He smoothed my hair from my face. 'Are you okay, Alana?' he asked softly.

I nodded. I was. Thanks to him.

But, this wasn't right. He wasn't the good guy here. He wasn't nice. He didn't care about me.

I started to edge my way off his lap but he held me tight to him. 'Alana! You're in shock. Just sit still!'

I didn't resist him. I didn't want to. I remained on his lap and he loosened his grip on me. Then he slid his phone out of his pocket and made a call to someone. Most of what he said was in Spanish, but despite that, I understood the nature of the call. I suspected that the man with the gun in the restaurant wouldn't be breathing for much longer.

It was only when he ended the call, that I felt his muscles relax.

He ran his hand up the outside of my thigh and rested it on my hip. I felt the warmth of his skin through the thin fabric of my dress, but despite that I shivered from his touch.

'Are you okay?' he asked again.

'Yes,' I whispered. 'What was that about? He mentioned my father.'

Alejandro nodded. 'I know. But don't worry. He'll be dealt with.'

'But, what was it about?'

He tucked my hair behind my ear and looked into my eyes. 'Your father and I have many enemies, Alana. I don't know why that happened tonight, but I will find out. This is why I insist on you having a bodyguard whenever

you leave the house. Do you understand why that's so important now?'

'Yes,' I nodded. 'But I never needed one in New York. If this is about my father ...'

'Just let me deal with it,' he said softly. Then he reached forward, with me still on his lap, and took a bottle of whisky and a crystal tumbler from the drinks cabinet. He poured a generous measure into the glass and handed it to me.

'Here. It will help with the shock,' he said.

I took it from him and downed it in one. The strong liquor burned my throat and made me cough, but I handed the glass back to him.

'More?' he raised an eyebrow at me.

'Yes, please.'

'Okay,' he said as he poured another. 'Careful, princess. This is stronger stuff than you'll be used to.'

I saw that as a challenge. 'You think I can't handle my liquor because I'm a feeble woman?' I asked.

'No,' he said with a laugh. 'I think you can't handle fifty proof Scotch when you're knocking it back like that.'

I knocked the second glass back too, just to prove my point.

Chapter Eleven

ALEJANDRO

BY THE TIME THE CAR PULLED UP OUTSIDE THE HOUSE, ALANA WAS completely wasted. She was still sitting on my lap and she ran a hand down my chest, dangerously close to my groin. ‘Did you get me drunk to take advantage of me?’ she giggled.

‘I think you got yourself drunk, princess,’ I said as I set her down gently on the floor of the limousine so I could open the door. I stepped out of the car and held out my hand to her.

‘I don’t think I can stand up,’ she slurred.

‘Ostia! I told you to be careful with that stuff,’ I said with a sigh as I leaned down and scooped her up, pulling her out of the vehicle.

‘You don’t get to tell me what to do. You’re not my father!’ she pouted.

‘No, I’m not,’ I frowned at her. If I was, I would never have handed her over to a monster like me.

I walked her through the house and placed her down on the bed. Her dress had ridden up to the top of her thighs and I was given a glimpse of her black lace panties. My cock stood to attention and I cursed the fact that she was so drunk.

I wanted to fuck her more than I’d ever wanted to fuck anyone in my life. I’d been abstinent now for six long weeks and I was desperate for some relief. I thought about how easy it would be to bury myself inside her sweet pussy. Maybe, once I did, I’d be able to get her out of my system?

She looked up at me and bit on her lower lip and I thought my cock might bust the zipper of my trousers if it got any harder.

‘You’re not going to the hotel tonight, are you?’ she said and I saw tears in her eyes.

I should have gone to the hotel. I should have gone out and fucked someone senseless. 'No, of course not,' I told her.

I walked over to her and placed my hand on her forehead. She was warm but not too hot. 'Sit up,' I ordered and she did as she was told.

I reached down and took hold of the bottom of her dress. She shuffled her ass so I could lift it up and then I pulled it over her head until she was sitting there in only those tiny little panties.

'I knew you wanted me,' she slurred.

I took one of my t-shirts from the dresser and handed it to her. She looked up at me with huge brown eyes and lifted her arms above her head instead of taking the t-shirt from me. I pulled it over her head with a roll of my eyes.

Consentida! She really was a spoiled princess.

Then she leaned back against the pillows and closed her eyes while I undressed.

Once I was naked, I slipped under the covers and she rolled to face me, nestling herself against my body. I bit my lip in frustration. This woman was going to fucking kill me!

'Are you going to fuck me, Alejandro?' she half purred, half slurred.

'No. Pero quiero comerte el coño,' I groaned.

Shit! I assumed she didn't speak Spanish, and I certainly fucking hoped that was true, because I had just told her that I wanted to eat her pussy.

'What does that mean?' she asked with a yawn.

'Nothing. Go to sleep.'

She pressed her groin against mine and my stiff cock twitched against her. 'Seems like you want to fuck me,' she giggled.

I smacked her ass lightly. 'Go to sleep.'

'I am your wife. And I think you should take care of me,' she breathed.

I cupped her chin with my hand. 'You're playing a very dangerous game, Alana. Rest assured, that one day I am going to fuck you, princess. But, when I do, I want you to be in full control of your senses. Because I'm going to ruin you for any other man, and when I'm done with you, you're going to beg me for more.'

I felt her whole body shiver as she pressed herself closer to me.

'You're an asshole,' she snapped, and then a few seconds later, she was snoring softly.

I wrapped my arm tighter around her as I thought about the man who had pulled a gun on her earlier. I'd already had confirmation that my men had

taken him to a safe place.

I should have been there now, interrogating him, but he would have to wait until morning. How could I possibly have left her when she was incapable of looking after herself?

While Alana liked to think that her father was some white knight, the truth was he was as much of a monster as I was, but at least I didn't pretend to be otherwise. He'd made plenty of enemies over the years and I wouldn't put it past him to have thrown his daughter to the lions to save his own skin. After all, he'd already done it once when he'd handed her over to me.

I looked down at her as she slept and wondered how on earth she had ended up here with me. I almost felt like releasing her from our contract and letting her go.

Almost.

Because the more I got to know her, the more I wanted to keep Alana for myself.

Not just for a couple of years.

Not just until she gave me my heir.

But forever.

Because, I was exactly the type of monster who would do that.

Chapter Twelve

ALANA

MY EYELIDS FLUTTERED OPEN AND I WAS SUDDENLY ACUTELY AWARE OF THE intense throbbing in my head. I groaned out loud and rolled onto my back.

Alejandro was gone.

Oh, crap! I had asked him to fuck me. I had actually said those words out loud. I threw my hands over my face in shame. Not only had I propositioned him, but he had turned me down. I had been almost naked and literally offering myself on a plate and he'd said no.

Then another memory burrowed to the surface. One of my face pressed against his hard chest. Of his strong arms wrapped around me. Of a whispered promise that he would ruin me for any other man. My insides melted like warm butter at the thought.

I looked around the room. There was no trace of him. I hadn't even felt him get out of bed. I wondered if he'd stayed the night, or had slipped away as soon as he was able to – leaving his drunken mess of a wife to sleep it off. Not that I could be blamed for getting a little drunk, surely? It wasn't every day a crazed madman sticks a gun in your face.

I glanced at the bedside table and saw the glass of water placed on top of a sheet of notepaper. I leaned over and saw there were two Advil there too. I moved the glass and picked up the note, written on Alejandro's personal stationery.

Drink this and take these. I'll call you later, A x

I blinked back a tear. He'd signed it with a kiss. Somehow that note felt more intimate than anything that had ever passed between us before. Even when I'd had my semi-naked body pressed up against his, it had been about getting a need met. It hadn't been about either of us caring about the other.

I picked up the glass and noticed the water was still cold. He must not have left that long ago and that realization made me smile.

I took hold of the the two pills and tossed them into my mouth before taking a large gulp of the cold liquid and laying back against the pillows.

The events of the previous night began replaying in my head. Who was that man in the restaurant, and why had he targeted me? He'd mentioned my father, but what the hell could that be about? My father was a politician, and I had no doubt he'd angered many people in his career – but enough for them to want to shoot his daughter in the middle of a crowded restaurant?

I was sure Alejandro would get to the bottom of it – it was what he did, after all. But whether he would tell me the truth about it, was another matter entirely.

Chapter Thirteen

ALEJANDRO

I WALKED INTO THE OLD WAREHOUSE AND NODDED TO THE FOUR MEN WHO had been keeping the gunman from last night hostage.

Jax, my oldest friend and my second in command, walked over to me, flicking his lit cigarette into the distance.

‘Those things will kill you,’ I said to him.

‘Well, something’s gotta,’ he replied with a grin.

‘What do you have for me?’ I asked.

‘Layton Cooper. Forty-four. Lives in Virginia. Wife left him last year. They had a daughter. She died a little over two years ago when she was sixteen. Suicide, apparently.’

‘Has he said much?’

‘No, Boss. As per your orders we haven’t interrogated him yet. And he’s been as quiet as a church mouse all night except to ask for some water.’

‘Gracias,’ I said and walked over to where Layton was bound to a chair.

I picked up a bottle of water from the table as I passed. My men had been there all night and had taken provisions, and I knew they wouldn’t have shown him any mercy by agreeing to his request for a drink.

I pulled up a chair and sat in front of Layton. ‘You thirsty?’ I asked him.

He looked up at me. ‘Yes,’ he whispered as his eyes lingered on the bottle.

‘Why did you try and shoot my wife?’

‘To hurt her father,’ he said.

I opened the bottle and held it to his lips, offering him the cool water. He gulped it greedily until I took the bottle away.

‘Why do you want to hurt her father?’

‘Because he took everything from me.’

‘Do you have a death wish, Layton?’

He shrugged. ‘I have nothing left to live for. Why don’t you just shoot me in the head and get it over with?’

I smiled at him. ‘I’m not sure you appreciate who you’re dealing with. I don’t just shoot people in the head, Cabrón. I like to torture them first.’ I watched as the color drained from his face and he suddenly realized the situation he was in. ‘Especially when they put a gun in my wife’s face,’ I snarled.

‘I’m sorry about that. I would never have hurt her,’ he shook his head. ‘I just wanted to scare her. I wanted her to tell him how terrified she was, so he would know exactly how it felt.’

‘What exactly did Foster Carmichael do to you?’

‘I told you. He took everything from me. He took everything from me,’ he started to cry.

‘Well, I’m going to need a little more than that. Or would you like me to pull out your fingernails to make you talk?’

He looked up at me, his eyes wide with fear. And then Layton Cooper told me all about why he hated my father in law so much.

I walked out of the warehouse and wiped the blood from my hands. Jax was two steps behind me as the rest of my men cleaned up the mess inside. In a little over an hour, there would be no trace of Layton Cooper left to be found.

Jax and I climbed into the car. ‘Take me to the hotel. Use the underground entrance. I need to get cleaned up,’ I said to my driver.

‘Of course, Boss,’ he nodded and put the car into drive.

‘Did you have any idea Carmichael was involved in that kind of shit?’ Jax asked me.

I shook my head. ‘I knew he was a nasty Cabrón, so nothing should surprise me.’

Jax let out a low whistle. ‘That is fucked up.’

‘I know,’ I said with a sigh.

If what Layton Cooper had told me was true, then I almost felt bad for killing the guy. But, nobody got away with putting a gun in my wife’s face. Cooper should have taken his grudge up with Foster Carmichael and not his daughter.

‘Do you think Alana knows?’ Jax asked with a cocked eyebrow.

‘No. No way,’ I replied. Alana thought her father was a good guy. I’d already known she was completely wrong on that front, but I hadn’t realized just how wrong she was.

I waited until I was alone in my suite before I called Alana. I didn’t intend to tell her anything about Layton Cooper and her father’s involvement with him, although I knew she’d ask.

She picked up on the second ring. ‘Hi,’ she said softly.

‘Hey. How’s the head?’ I asked her.

‘Throbbing,’ she groaned.

‘I told you to be careful with that Scotch,’ I laughed.

‘Yeah, well. You know if you tell me to do something, I’m likely to do the opposite, don’t you?’

‘I had noticed that.’

‘So, did you find out who that guy was last night?’

‘Just some guy your father pissed off one time, that’s all. He won’t be bothering you again.’

There was a few seconds pause. She knew better than to ask me about my business or the methods I used to deal with problems.

‘Pointing a gun in my face because he was pissed at my father seems a bit extreme. What exactly did my father do?’

‘I don’t know,’ I lied. ‘But he said he didn’t want to hurt you, just to scare you.’

‘What was his name?’ she asked and it didn’t escape my attention that she used the word was and not is.

‘Layton Cooper.’

‘Oh,’ she breathed. ‘I’ve never heard of him.’

I certainly fucking hope not, I thought but didn’t say. ‘What are you doing today?’ I asked.

I shouldn’t care what she was doing, but I did. Images of her body pressed against mine forced themselves into my brain and I felt my cock getting hard.

‘Just going to lie by the pool and read. Maybe I’ll have a swim?’ she replied.

I pictured her in one of those tiny string bikinis and the twitch in my cock

turned to a throb.

I cleared my throat to try and clear my head. ‘Sounds like a good way to cure a hangover. I have a meeting this afternoon, but then I’ll be done for the day. I’ll be home for dinner.’

‘Okay,’ she said and I was sure I could hear the happiness in her voice.

What the fuck are you, doing, Alejandro?

‘I’ll see you later then,’ I said.

‘Yes. Bye, Alejandro,’ she purred and the words bypassed my brain and went straight to my dick.

‘Adiós, princesa.’

One hour later, I was freshly showered, changed and ready for my late lunch with the mayor when I bumped into Malcolm Grant and his wife, Amelia, in the lobby of my hotel.

‘Alejandro,’ Amelia said as she approached me, kissing me on each cheek and enveloping me in a cloud of sweet, cloying perfume.

Malcolm walked up behind her and shook my hand. Malcolm was an investor and he and his wife also spent a lot of money in my hotel. He loved the golf and she loved the spa.

‘Where have you been keeping that lovely new wife of yours?’ Amelia said as she batted her eyelashes at me.

‘I could ask the same of you, Amelia. She’s out doing charity work almost every single day.’

Amelia blinked at me and then I saw the hint of a smile on her lips.

‘What?’ I frowned.

She fiddled with her earring and pursed her lips while she looked between me and her husband.

‘What is it?’ I snapped, trying to keep a lid on my temper.

‘It’s not my place to say,’ she said coyly and I knew she was lying. Amelia Grant loved drama and any chance to cause some was a good day out for her. ‘But, Alana only came to one of our lunches about three weeks ago, and she left after an hour.’

‘What?’ I snarled.

‘Well, I suppose I can’t blame her. Some people just aren’t cut out for it, I suppose,’ she simpered. ‘It takes its toll. So, I wonder why she told you she was doing charity work then?’

I felt the anger surging through my chest and thundering around my body. If Alana wasn't with Amelia and her cronies, then where the fuck was she going every day?

'I'm sure it's just a misunderstanding,' I said with a forced smile. Then I lifted Amelia's hand and kissed it gently. 'Please excuse me, I'd better be going. I have a meeting.'

'Of course. Bye, Alejandro,' she called after me while Malcolm simply stood there looking like he wanted the ground to swallow him whole.

I stormed through the lobby and into the conference suite. Taking my phone out of my pocket, I dialed Jacob's number.

'Hi, Boss,' he answered.

'Where is Alana?' I barked.

'By the pool, Boss. Just saw her there myself.'

'And yesterday? After her shopping trip? Where did she go?'

'She went out to do her charity work.'

'Who with?' I snapped.

'Just her and Hugo, Boss. You said she didn't need a driver as long as he was with her.'

I gritted my teeth. I had said that, and now I wondered if I'd made a huge mistake leaving my wife alone all day in the company of her handsome, ex-Navy SEAL bodyguard. 'And she goes there every day?' I asked.

'Almost,' he replied.

'Just her and Hugo?'

'Yes, Boss,' Jacob answered and I heard the confusion in his voice.

'How long are they gone for?'

'Usually about five or six hours, Boss. Sometimes all day.'

'Where is Hugo today?' I barked.

'It's Wednesday, Boss. It's his day off.'

I ended the call without another word as my blood thundered in my ears.

Charity work! That lying, cheating, puta!

I knew she wasn't to be trusted. She was her father's daughter after all. And as for Hugo, once I was through with him, he would be begging me for a quick death.

I felt a hand on my shoulder and spun around to see Jax standing there. 'Everything okay, amigo?' he asked with a frown seeing the anger on my face.

'No,' I growled.

‘Can it wait until after our meeting? The mayor has arrived?’

I buttoned my suit jacket and flexed my neck muscles to relieve some tension. I had to take this meeting with the mayor. Maybe it would give me a chance to calm down before I confronted my lying, whore of a wife. Because if I went home now, I might just break my cardinal rule of never hurting a woman.

So, she felt like a prisoner in my house, did she? Well, she fucking would be from now on, that was for sure. She wouldn’t be stepping foot over the front door again. I would chain her to the fucking bed if I had to.

Chapter Fourteen

ALANA

I STEPPED OUT OF THE SHOWER AND WRAPPED A FLUFFY TOWEL AROUND myself before walking into the bedroom.

When my hangover had finally subsided, I'd enjoyed a lovely afternoon in the sun followed by fifty lengths of the pool. Now, my muscles were aching in that pleasant post-exercise way.

I was walking over to the bed when the bedroom door burst open and Alejandro stormed into the room. I could feel the anger radiating from him from twenty paces away. He glared at me, his dark brown eyes full of rage and fire.

I swallowed and wrapped my towel tighter around myself as he approached, as though that somehow offered me some protection from the raging demon who was advancing on me. I had no idea what the hell had made him so angry, but I had little desire to be on the receiving end of his wrath.

He stopped as he reached me although he stepped close enough that I could feel the heat from his body and smell the expensive cologne he used.

'Where were you yesterday afternoon? After your shopping trip?' he growled at me and despite my fear, I felt his words vibrating through my body.

'I was doing my charity work,' I replied.

'And the day before?' he snapped.

'The same.'

He inched closer to me. 'With Hugo?'

I blinked at him. What was this about? 'Yes. He comes with me. You won't let me leave the house without him.'

He glared at me then. His eyes burning into mine. ‘So you and him go out of this house for hours every day and you do your charity work?’ he scoffed, saying the last two words as though they were dirty somehow.

He was starting to annoy me now and I glared back at him. ‘Yes. What the hell is your problem?’

‘My problem, Mrs. Montoya, is that you have made me look like a fucking fool,’ he advanced on me, causing me to step back until I had nowhere else to go and was pressed against the wall.

He placed his hands either side of my head, caging me in. My legs trembled as he glared at me, but the rest of my body thrummed with energy and anticipation.

‘Did you think I wouldn’t find out that you’ve been lying to me, puta? Have you been fucking him? Is that where you two really go every afternoon?’

I blinked at him. I couldn’t have been more shocked if he’d slapped me across the face. ‘I haven’t been fucking anyone,’ I snapped as the anger started to pulse through my veins. And while I didn’t know much Spanish, I knew what puta meant. ‘And don’t call me a whore!’

‘Then where do you go? Because I have just had a very interesting conversation with Mrs. Grant, who tells me that you attended one charity lunch three weeks ago and they haven’t seen you since.’ He edged even closer to me, closing the gap between us to barely an inch as he stared down at me. ‘So, tell me, puta, where the fuck have you been?’

I looked up at him. God, he was infuriating! ‘For a start, Mrs. Grant and her bunch of smiling sycophants might call what they do charity work, but it’s just an excuse for them to get drunk every afternoon and throw a party once a year for whatever charity happens to be fashionable. Do you know what this year’s event is for? A new wing of the school. That fancy private school that already coins in millions of dollars a year. Of course I never went back there. I have nothing in common with those women. I wanted to help people who are actually struggling,’ I snapped at him.

I saw the confusion flickering over his face as he frowned at me. ‘So, where the fuck have you been going?’

‘To the women’s shelter downtown. If you bothered to pay any attention to me and my life, then you would know that,’ I shouted as I pushed him in the chest.

He didn’t budge an inch. He narrowed his eyes, searching my face as

though he was trying to determine if I was lying to him.

‘Go and look through my purse if you don’t believe me. I have plenty of paperwork in there. I do their books for them. I’ve been fundraising for weeks. Or check my phone. Every single day, I’ve spent hours on the phone to potential donors,’ I sniffed as I tried to stop a tear from rolling down my cheek.

But it was too late. All of a sudden, the tears started falling from eyes and I couldn’t stop them.

All the pent up tension and anger and frustration of the past few weeks wanted to tumble out of me and I had to let it.

I had thought that the two of us were getting somewhere. I’d thought we were finding a way to survive this complete sham of a marriage without driving each other crazy. And now he was calling me a whore, and accusing me of cheating on him.

He continued to stare at me, his jaw working as he considered what to say next. I didn’t expect an apology from him. I doubted he’d ever apologized for anything in his life. ‘I didn’t realize that,’ he said quietly.

‘How could you accuse me of sleeping with Hugo?’ I sniffed. ‘Of all the things you could think, you accuse me of having sex with someone else?’

He frowned at me, his hands still planted beside my head on the wall. ‘Well, we don’t ... It wasn’t a huge leap to assume you were getting it elsewhere.’

‘Like you do?’

His frown deepened into a scowl. ‘No. I have never broken our marriage vows, Alana. Not once. As much as I’ve been tempted to. I have needs.’

I swallowed. *Was that true? Surely not? Whatever, it didn’t matter right now.*

‘Well, I’ve gone twenty-five years without giving into temptation, I’m not about to give it up now for someone who is paid by my husband to be nice to me. Besides, I’m not a cheat. I would never do that.’

‘What?’

I tried to press myself closer to the wall, but there was nowhere left for me to go. He didn’t know that I was a virgin. And now I felt even more vulnerable around him. ‘Nothing,’ I said quietly.

‘Alana, are you telling me you’ve never had sex?’

I nodded.

‘But what about your boyfriends?’

‘I never had that many. I was always busy on my father’s campaign. Even in college, I had to work every weekend. I was saving myself for marriage, or at least for someone I really loved,’ I shrugged.

‘You’ve never been in love?’

‘No. I told you, I didn’t really have time for relationships. I was always busy helping my dad.’

He dropped his arms and took hold of my hand. His skin was warm and rough and his touch felt like a spark of electricity. ‘Lo siento, Alana,’ he said softly. ‘I had no idea.’

I looked up at him and blinked away the tears. Despite how much I hated him, my body hadn’t got the memo and it was drawn to him like oxygen is drawn to a flame. I felt my blood thundering around my body as his gaze roamed over my face.

The throbbing between my thighs was building to dangerous levels and I wondered why I had never felt like this before in my life. I had dated boys, and I had liked them well enough, certainly more than I liked this devil standing in front of me. But my body had never craved someone like this. I felt the desperate need to have his hands on my skin. To feel him inside me. And I was tired of waiting.

‘I was saving myself for someone I was in love with, but I would settle for lust,’ I said as I looked into his eyes and saw the fire blazing in them.

He drew in a breath, ‘Don’t let your mouth make promises that your body can’t deliver on, Alana,’ he hissed.

‘I mean it. You are my husband. You want children, yes? So, at some point, we have to do this. And I want to do it now.’

He stared at me, his eyes searching my face, and I wondered if he was going to turn me down - again.

‘Fuck!’ He finally growled as he reached for my towel and tugged it open so it fell onto the floor.

My cheeks flushed pink as he openly stared at my body. No man had ever seen me naked before. I knew he was used to dating some of the most beautiful women in the world and suddenly I felt self-conscious in comparison.

I attempted to cover myself with my hands but he took hold of my wrists and pinned them to my sides.

‘Don’t *ever* hide your body from me, Alana,’ he said, his voice low and gravelly.

‘Okay,’ I whispered as my heart hammered in my chest.

He let go of my wrists and took a half step back so he could look me over. I stood there awkwardly while he appraised me. It felt like an eternity before he spoke. ‘You are fucking beautiful,’ he growled as he planted his hands on the wall either side of my head.

I felt the emotion swelling in my chest and couldn’t help smiling.

Then he bent his head lower and sealed his lips over mine, forcing his tongue inside my mouth as he kissed me fiercely. He pressed his hard body against mine and I whimpered against him, feeling the heat and the rush of cream between my thighs. I could feel his erection pressing against my abdomen and I rubbed myself against him.

‘Fuck, Alana!’ He hissed as he broke our kiss. ‘Go and lie on the bed,’ he ordered.

I did as he told me, walking over to the bed and lying down, and then I watched while he undressed. Him peeling off his clothing was a sight I’d pay good money to see. He slipped his shirt over his broad shoulders and down his muscular forearms and it fell to the floor, revealing his toned, tattooed torso. Next, he unfastened his belt, his thick fingers pulling on the leather as he slid it off and tossed it next to his shirt. His eyes held mine as he unzipped his trousers and pushed them down his thick thighs, along with his boxer briefs, to reveal his huge cock, standing thick and proud and glistening with pre-cum.

I swallowed, wondering how I would stretch to accommodate him. He was huge.

In a few swift movements, he’d removed the rest of his clothes and kicked off his shoes and was standing completely naked. The sight of him like that was never something I’d get used to. He looked like he had been chiseled from stone.

He was perfect.

I took a deep breath as he walked over to the bed and crawled over me, holding himself up on one of his strong forearms.

‘Relax, princess,’ he said softly. ‘I won’t hurt you.’

He kissed me softly and I melted into him. Then his warm hand was sliding over my bare skin. He cupped my breast and squeezed gently, eliciting a moan from me. He moved his head southwards and sucked my nipple into his mouth, and to my shame, I groaned his name.

He smiled against my skin and heat flushed over my cheeks.

He lifted his head and looked at me, his eyes narrowed. 'Just how far have you gone before, Mrs. Montoya?' he asked.

'Second base,' I whispered.

He closed his eyes and made a noise that sounded distinctly like a growl and I couldn't help but laugh.

His hand travelled further southwards, slipping between my thighs and gliding easily through my wet folds. 'Have you made yourself come before?' he said before moving his head and sucking on my other nipple.

'Yes.'

'Good,' he said as he nipped me gently. 'So, you know how good it feels to lose control?'

'Hmm,' I mumbled as he started circling my clit with two fingers.

'But, no man has ever had the pleasure of touching this beautiful wet concha before me?' he said as continued rubbing on the sensitive bud of flesh.

'No,' I gasped.

'And no-one has ever been inside you,' he growled as he slipped a thick finger inside me.

I arched my back off the bed in pleasure. The feeling of him breaching my hot opening was incredible.

'No,' I groaned as he slowly slid his finger in and out of me.

I felt the pressure building and wondered if he was about to make me come within a few minutes of having his hands on me. I bit my lip to stop myself from crying out. I didn't want to make him ever more arrogant and self-assured than he already was.

He started to trail kisses down my stomach and a few seconds later his head was between my thighs. 'If your cream tastes as good as it smells, Alana, then I am going to be spending a whole lot of my time eating this pussy every day.'

I blushed at his words, but I loved his filthy mouth. He blew a cool stream of air over my wet folds before using his hot tongue to lick the length of my cleft, making me gasp out loud. Then he sealed his hot mouth over my clit and I almost passed out with the jolt of pleasure that coursed through my body.

'Jesus, Alex,' I groaned. I hadn't meant to call him Alex but I couldn't quite form the word Alejandro.

If he was bothered, he didn't show it.

He sucked gently, but persistently, and the sound of him devouring my pussy filled the room.

He was skilled and relentless and soon I was bucking my hips to meet his rhythm. But, he wrapped his strong hands around the backs of my thighs and held me in place until I was moaning his name and begging him to let me come.

Then he used his tongue to rim either side of my clit while he sucked and suddenly my orgasm burst through me like a river breaking a dam.

I cried out in pleasure and relief. I felt a rush of cream as he continued sucking and licking and all I could do was lie back and let it wash over me. When my orgasm had subsided, he moved lower and pressed his tongue into my opening, sucking at my juices.

Then he lifted his head and looked at me, his face wet with my arousal. ‘Fuck, Alana, I think we have a problem, princess,’ he said seriously.

‘Why?’ I asked. ‘What’s wrong?’

‘You taste so fucking good that I’m not sure I’m going to be able to let you leave this bed ever again,’ he said with a wicked grin as he crawled back up the bed.

I punched him on the chest, but I could tell he hardly even felt it. ‘That wasn’t funny,’ I said with a smile.

‘I never said it was,’ he said before he sealed his mouth over mine. He pushed his tongue inside, making sure that I could taste myself on him. For some reason, that only made me want him even more. I pushed my hips up to meet his, grinding myself on his hard cock.

‘Don’t. Not yet,’ he groaned. ‘I need to make sure you’re ready for me.’

He kissed me deeply as his hand slid down between our bodies. He slipped a finger inside me easily, and then he added another and I felt the stretch.

I had never felt so full. I had used my own fingers before, but his were huge in comparison.

He moved them slowly.

In and out.

Over and Over.

Driving me crazy.

He nuzzled my neck as he continued his slow, delicious torment. I clung to him and whimpered. Our bodies pressed together, both damp with perspiration.

‘Please, Alex,’ I breathed as I lifted my hips to take more of him.

He responded by adding a third finger and I felt the stretch and burn. I tensed involuntarily, my muscles squeezing around his fingers as he drove me to the edge.

‘Just relax, princess,’ he said softly. ‘I’ve got you, but I need to loosen you up. I have no idea how you’ve managed to reach the age of twenty-five and maintain your virtue, because this body is built for sin.’

Then he started to move his fingers in and out again, stretching them gently as he did. The slight discomfort soon gave way to pleasure and it wasn’t long before I felt another orgasm building.

Surely he couldn’t? Not again?

I was proven wrong a few seconds later, when he pressed his thumb on my clit and my climax ripped through my body like a shockwave. He kept rubbing gently until my tremors subsided, and then he slipped his fingers out of me before shifting his hips until he was settled between my thighs.

He pressed his huge cock at my opening and I groaned in response. Despite the orgasms and the feel of his mouth and his fingers on me, I wanted him inside me more than I had ever wanted anything in my life.

‘Please, Alex,’ I panted.

‘Soon, princesa,’ he soothed. ‘Your coño is dripping wet, but this is still your first time and I don’t want to hurt you.’

‘You won’t,’ I insisted.

‘Are you on any birth control?’

‘No,’ I whispered.

‘Fuck! I don’t keep condoms in the house,’ he hissed. ‘When was your last period?’

‘Last week.’

‘Good. Then, we should be okay,’ he growled.

‘Do you? Are you?’ I stammered. I couldn’t quite bring myself to ask the question, especially as I was beyond desperate to have him fuck me, but he understood anyway.

‘I never fuck without a condom. I’m clean. You have nothing to worry about. I promise.’

‘Okay,’ I breathed.

He inched inside me slowly, and despite how ready I was for him, I felt the burning stretch as he filled me with his giant cock.

But the pain was an enjoyable one. It made the pleasure immediately

afterwards even sweeter.

‘Spread your legs as wide as you can, princess,’ he ordered. ‘Let me inside you.’

I opened my legs as far as they would go and he shifted closer towards me, sinking deeper into me until I had taken him to the hilt.

The feeling of being so full of him was incredible and I felt the waves of pleasure rolling through every inch of my body.

He groaned out loud when he was all the way inside and my walls clenched around him. ‘Feel how much your pussy loves my cock, princess? I can’t believe no-one has ever tried to claim this before me,’ he growled. ‘Because it is the sweetest tasting, and tightest little concha I have ever known.’

‘You have a filthy mouth,’ I panted.

‘Oh, you’ve heard nothing yet,’ he said before slipping into Spanish. I had no idea what he was saying, but it sounded so damn sexy, I didn’t care.

I lifted my hips to meet his as he thrust in and out of me. My breasts were already pressed up against his hard chest, and I wrapped my legs around his waist until there wasn’t even a millimeter of space between us.

‘Alex,’ I groaned again as I felt another orgasm building.

‘If I’d have known how sweet your pussy was, I’d have fucked you on our wedding night. And now that it’s mine, no-one is ever going to get the chance to taste you or fuck you ever again,’ he growled.

‘Good,’ I panted as I held onto him, my fingernails digging into his muscular back as his shoulder muscles flexed with his efforts. ‘Because I never want you to stop doing this.’

‘Fuck!’ he hissed. ‘I’m being gentle with you because it’s your first time, princess. It won’t always be like this.’

He continued to pump in and out of me, sending endorphins flying around my body as he rubbed against a sweet spot inside me that I hadn’t even realized existed.

I felt a rush of cream as the first wave of my next orgasm hit.

‘Jesus! You are fucking soaking wet, mi bella princesa,’ he growled as he started to move faster, until the wet sound of my arousal filled the room.

Then he kept growling in Spanish in my ear. I still had no idea what he was saying, but I did know that it was incredibly hot.

I pushed my head back against the pillow and shouted his name. At that moment, I would have been happy for him to chain me to his bed and keep

me as his sex slave. Alejandro Montoya was an animal in bed and I wasn't sure I would ever be the same again.

When he had fucked us both to a long and intense orgasm, he rolled onto his back, pulling me with him until I was lying on his chest. I listened to the steady beating of his heart as we both caught our breath. I lay with my head on his chest and wondered what the hell I had just gotten myself into.

Chapter Fifteen

ALEJANDRO

I WOKE UP WITH MY BODY PRESSED AGAINST ALANA'S AND HER BEAUTIFUL, round ass nestled against my cock. I reached my hand down, rubbing it over her hip and onto her stomach. I'd woken her in the night to fuck her again and she'd responded willingly.

I flexed my shoulder and felt the sting of a scratch from her nails as she'd dug them into me when I'd made her come for the fourth time.

I'd had no idea she was a virgin when I married her, but something about being the only man inside her had made me even more desperate to claim her for my own.

Her body was so responsive to mine, it felt like we had known each other forever. She was so willing and eager, and I was going to teach her every filthy way I liked to fuck.

I'd been as gentle with her as I could. But, it wasn't something I was used to, and once I was inside her tight little pussy, I could hardly control myself. She got so fucking wet, and her cream tasted delicious. Sweet and salty and thick.

I knew she'd be sore this morning, but that didn't change the fact that I was still going to fuck her again anyway, because my cock was already throbbing and desperate to get inside her. I slid my hand between her thighs and she pressed her ass back into me.

'Open your legs wider, princesa. I want in your hot little concha now,' I growled in her ear.

She parted her thighs without question and my fingers slid easily through her dripping folds until I found her wet channel of heat, and pushed two fingers inside her.

‘Alex,’ she groaned and my balls drew up into my stomach. Some time last night, she had taken to calling me Alex, and I fucking loved it. It had been when she was close to the edge, and as though she couldn’t quite get my full name out of her mouth.

‘Are you sore?’ I asked as I took her earlobe between my teeth and tugged.

‘A little,’ she breathed. ‘But, I’m okay.’

‘Good, because I wasn’t planning on leaving this bed without burying myself inside you again. And I hope you know that we are *never* using condoms, because I want nothing between my cock and your pussy.’

‘Okay,’ she panted as I continued pumping my fingers in and out of her. ‘But, what did you mean last night, about it not always being like this?’

‘What?’

‘You said you were being gentle, and that it wouldn’t ... oh,’ she stopped talking as I pressed on her clit with my thumb.

‘I meant that I don’t usually do gentle, princess. I like to fuck hard.’

‘Then show me,’ she breathed.

‘Be careful what you’re asking for, Alana. Because once I let go, I might not be able to hold back. I will nail you to this bed, princess, and you will still feel me inside you for the rest of the week.’

‘I want to. I can take it,’ she groaned. ‘Please, Alex. I want the real you.’

‘The real me is a monster. You sure you want me to let him loose?’

‘Yes,’ she panted and I felt like my cock was about to explode.

I rolled her onto her front and pinned her to the mattress with the weight of my body. Taking hold of her wrists, I held them above her head with one hand.

‘Spread those legs wide for me,’ I growled.

She did as I instructed and I gave her a sharp slap on the ass.

‘Ow,’ she wriggled and I did the same again, enjoying seeing her creamy white skin turn pink in an instant.

I settled between her thighs, my cock pressed against the seam of her ass and her whole body tensed.

I planted a kiss on her shoulder blade. ‘Oh, I’m going to fuck this ass, princess. Make no mistake about that, but not today.’

I felt her body relax beneath me and I shifted lower so I was nudging at her opening. ‘There’s a fine line between pleasure and pain, Alana. I’m going to teach you to enjoy both,’ I said and then I slammed into her, making her

cry out and forcing her a few inches up the bed.

I lay down on her, the full weight of my body pinning her in place as I slammed into her over and over again, pounding her pussy as hard as I could. She whimpered and groaned beneath me, and I felt her walls squeezing me tighter as I brought her to the edge.

She obviously liked to be fucked hard!

I dragged my teeth along her neck and shoulders and then I bit down. She screamed my name as her orgasm finally hit. With a few more thrusts, I felt my balls tighten as I shot my load in her.

Even when I was done, I kept going because her pussy was like a magnet to my cock. It wouldn't let me go. I wormed my free hand beneath her and found her swollen clit. I pinched and rubbed as I sucked on the spot on her shoulder where I'd bitten her. A few moments later, her second orgasm hit like a freight train and she shuddered and bucked beneath me.

Her whole body trembled violently as I pulled out of her. 'That, princess, is how I like to fuck,' I whispered in her ear.

Then I released her hands and pushed myself up, giving her a final, hard slap on the ass before climbing out of bed and walking to the shower. I didn't trust myself to stay in the bed with her because I couldn't keep my hands off her, and I might give her the wrong idea about what this was between us.

Because this was about fucking.

Pure and simple.

So, why was it such a fucking struggle to walk away from her?

I was pulling on my suit jacket when Alana walked out of the bathroom, wrapped in a towel. She'd taken a soak in the tub rather than a shower, and I knew that was because she was tender from the hammering I'd given her virgin pussy.

Maybe I should have felt ashamed, or guilty about that, but I didn't. It made me feel like a fucking lion. I had claimed her for my own and she would never be fucked again without remembering the feel of my cock inside her.

She looked up at me and bit her lip and I realized she was feeling nervous. This was new territory for both of us. I wasn't entirely sure how to navigate this new dynamic in our relationship myself, but I had to maintain the upper hand. I had to remain in control.

‘I have a new house rule,’ I said as I shrugged on my jacket.

‘Oh? What?’ she asked as she stared at me with those huge brown eyes.

‘When I’m in the house with you, you don’t wear panties.’

The skin on her cheeks flushed pink and she opened her mouth in surprise.

‘Keep your mouth open like that, princess, and you’ll be experiencing another first this morning, because I will fill it with something.’

‘But, Alejandro ...’ she started to say.

‘Alejandro? That’s not what you were calling me last night,’ I cocked an eyebrow. ‘What happened to Alex?’

Her blush deepened further. ‘Alex,’ she said softly and I smiled. I liked her calling me that. ‘There are times of the month when that’s just not practical.’

I walked over to her. Even after what we’d done last night and this morning, she was still too embarrassed to talk openly about her own body.

‘You can wear panties when you’re on your period, princess. And now, that we’re on the subject, how long do they usually last?’

‘Three or four days.’

I stepped closer to her and heard her breath catch in her throat. ‘I want to make it clear right now, that I am not in the slightest bit bothered by some blood, and I will be fucking you regardless.’

She blinked at me.

‘There’s not a chance I’m going three to four days every month without being inside you. Understand?’

‘Okay,’ she whispered.

‘Good.’

‘But, I can’t just walk around here with no panties,’ she insisted.

I slipped my hands around her waist and onto her ass. Leaning down, I pressed my lips against her ear. ‘You can, and you will, princess. And, if you disobey me, you will suffer the consequences.’

She squeezed her thighs together and I couldn’t help but smile. She might protest, but she had already proven that she enjoyed being told what to do.

I thought about bending her over the dresser and fucking her again before I left, but I was going to be late, and I had plans for her later.

I kissed her instead and her body melted into mine. She snaked her arms around my neck and my cock hardened in an instant. What was supposed to be a quick kiss on the lips turned into a long, deep, tonguing, that made me

want to carry her back to bed and take a sick day.

‘I have to go,’ I said as I reluctantly pulled away from her. ‘I’ll be home for dinner. And don’t forget my new rule.’

Chapter Sixteen

ALEJANDRO

WALKING OUT OF THE HOUSE, I CLIMBED INTO THE WAITING CAR. AS SOON AS we pulled out of the gates, I dialed Hugo's number.

'Buenos dias, Boss,' he answered.

'Meet me at the hotel in an hour,' I barked and then I ended the call without any further comment.

I leaned back against the headrest and closed my eyes as I thought about last night. How soft Alana's body had felt under mine. Her smell. Her taste. The way her tight little pussy squeezed my cock.

Hugo Fernandez was lucky that fucking my wife had put me in such a good mood.

I was sitting at my desk when Hugo was shown into the room. He stood before me, his hands clasped in front of him as he waited for me to speak. This man was as hard as nails, that was why I employed him, and I was about to test his mettle and his loyalty to their limits.

Hugo didn't flinch as he stood there, waiting to be told the reason why I had summoned him to my office. But I knew he'd be wondering if he was going to walk out of this room under his own steam or be carried out, in a body bag or otherwise.

I had a reputation as an unforgiving employer. It was one I cultivated. I expected total loyalty from my employees, and if I didn't get it, they were of no use to me.

'Do you have something you'd like to share with me?'

‘I don’t think so, Boss.’

‘You sure?’

‘Regarding what, Sir?’ he said as he looked directly at me.

He certainly had balls. I had to give him that. ‘Regarding my wife?’ I snarled.

‘Not that I’m aware of.’

I licked my lip as I glared at him. Was he loyal to Alana, or just plain stupid?

‘I suggest you think carefully about what you say next, Hugo, if you want to keep your job, and you want your head to remain attached to your shoulders. Where have you been taking my wife every day?’

‘To the O’Malley shelter downtown, Sir.’

‘Why?’

‘Because that’s where she asked me to take her.’

‘And you didn’t think it pertinent to share that with me?’

‘No, Sir,’ he replied.

‘Really?’

‘I thought you’d have asked me if you wanted to know where she was going, Sir. And if you had, I would have told you. But, I didn’t think you wanted to be bothered by the detail of Mrs. Montoya’s comings and goings.’

I frowned at him. I had to admit, I’d never shown any outward interest in Alana’s daily activities before now. But that was beside the point. ‘How long has she been going there?’

‘Since the day I started working for her.’

‘And that’s the only place you two go?’

‘No, Sir. Occasionally, she goes to the grocery store. And I’ve taken her to the beauty salon a couple of times too.’

I stood up and walked around the desk. ‘On your knees,’ I barked.

He looked at me, his jaw clenched shut, but he complied. I pulled my gun from its holster and held it to his temple, pressing the cold steel against his skin.

He still didn’t flinch, but I saw the beads of sweat rolling down his forehead.

‘Do you realize how lucky you are to still be breathing right now? When Amelia Grant told me that Alana hadn’t been to any of her liquid lunches, and I knew that you and my wife had been disappearing for hours every day, you can imagine what I must have thought?’

I saw his Adam's apple bob as he swallowed. 'Yes, Sir.'

'Are you fucking my wife, Cabrón?' I growled as I pressed the metal barrel harder against his skin.

'No, Sir.'

'Do you want to?'

He licked his lips. 'No, Sir.'

'You understand that if I had even an ounce of doubt about that, I'd skin you alive and make her wear you as a coat, don't you?'

'Yes, Sir.'

I studied him as he knelt there, his face full of anger and defiance, and very little fear. He had balls of steel and I admired that about him.

I took the gun from his head and walked back around to my side of the desk. 'Take a seat,' I snapped and he stood up, brushing the creases from his trousers before sitting down.

'I'm not sure if I'm impressed by your loyalty to her, or completely pissed. But, remember that you might protect my wife, but you still work for me. You got that?'

'Yes, Sir.'

'If you ever keep something like this from me again, I won't think twice about putting a bullet in your head.'

'I won't, Sir.'

'You're lucky she thinks so highly of you, or I'd have you on clean up duties for the rest of your life.'

'I appreciate you not doing that, Boss,' he said and it was understood that this was dealt with and we wouldn't speak of it again.

'Good, now get out of here or she'll be wondering where you are.'

Hugo nodded and then he walked out of my office.

Chapter Seventeen

ALANA

I WAS READING IN THE DEN WHEN I SAW THE TEXT FLASHING UP ON THE screen of my cell. It was from Alejandro, or The Devil, as I had him saved in my contacts.

I'll be home in ten minutes. Remember my rule, princess.

I picked up my cell and frowned at the screen. Who the hell did he think he was, ordering me to wear no panties like I was some employee whose services he was paying for, rather than his wife?

Despite, my irritation, I felt the wetness pooling between my thighs already. Last night had been incredible. I had felt things that I didn't even know how to explain.

Alejandro Montoya might be a devil, but he was also a sex god. If my body was built for sin, then his was built for pleasure. And I couldn't get enough of him. So, if he wanted no panties, then no panties would be what he'd get.

I stood up and slipped my white cotton underwear down my thighs. I looked around for somewhere to put them and saw my purse on the floor. I supposed that was as good a place as any and dropped them inside.

Standing there in my dress, but with no underwear, felt strangely liberating, and naughty. The gentle thrumming of energy between my thighs suddenly turned up a notch and all I could think about was having some part of Alejandro inside me.

My skin flushed with heat and my throat felt dry all of a sudden. I walked to the kitchen and was thankful to find that there was no-one else in there. Magda had prepared a lasagna for dinner and had left it in the refrigerator, ready to be popped into the oven when needed, so she had probably retired to

her own quarters.

I was at the sink, filling a glass with cold water when I felt him walk into the room. My body crackled with electricity just from being in his vicinity. I lifted the glass to my lips and took a mouthful as I heard him walking across the kitchen.

A second later, I felt his strong hands on my hips and his hot mouth on my neck. He rubbed his jaw along my sensitive flesh, his stubble grazing my skin as he inhaled deeply.

‘You smell fucking delicious,’ he whispered.

Then his hand slipped southwards and he lifted my dress. I smiled as I thought about what he was about to find beneath. His warm hand moved between my thighs and I parted them slightly for him, causing him to smile against my skin. A second later, he was sliding his thick fingers through my wet folds and I bit my lip to stifle a moan.

‘Good girl,’ he growled in my ear. ‘I’m glad you’re ready for me because I have been thinking about fucking you again all day. I’ve had a hard on for you all afternoon, princess, and I can’t wait a second longer to get my cock in you.’

I heard the sound of his zipper opening and a few seconds later, he was inside me. Hot and stiff and all the way to the hilt. I dropped my glass into the sink with a clatter and had to grab onto the edge of the kitchen counter to keep myself from lifting off the floor as he pounded into me.

The feeling of being full of him again was exquisite. I was still tender from the previous night and earlier that morning, but I didn’t care. I needed him inside me as much as I needed air. The slight burning only added to the pleasure as he drove at a spot inside of me that made me feel like my body was numb and alive at the same time.

Whatever it was he was doing to me, my body craved it. He owned me completely.

He sucked on the tender skin of my neck as he ground out his relief. ‘Fuck!’ he hissed when he climaxed.

Then his cell phone started ringing and he cursed in Spanish. He took it from his pocket and pulled out of me when he looked at the screen. ‘I need to take this,’ he barked and then he was fastening his trousers and storming out of the room.

I turned and watched with my mouth hanging open. I had never felt so cheap. He’d literally just shot his load in me and then walked off, leaving me

panting with need and with his cum dripping down my thighs.

I swallowed and took a deep breath. The attentiveness and the way he'd taken care of me the previous night had obviously been a one-time deal. In his defense, he had warned me that it wouldn't always be like that, but I hadn't realized I'd just become his plaything to be used at his will.

Asshole!

I took some tissue from the counter and wiped my thighs before tossing the paper into the trash. Then I walked out of the kitchen and back to the den, grabbing my panties from my purse and putting them on. I went back to reading my novel – it looked like that was the only action I was getting for the rest of the night.

At least twenty minutes must have passed by the time Alejandro found me in the den.

'There you are, princess,' he said .

I didn't even bother looking up from my book and I heard him chuckle wickedly.

'Are you mad at me because I didn't make you come?'

'No,' I snapped.

'Because, I know the timing was fucked up, but I had to take that call.'

'Fine,' I said as I turned the page and stared at my book as though it was the most interesting thing in the world. When, all I really wanted to look at was the Adonis in the finely tailored suit standing in front of me.

He walked towards the sofa and kneeled in front of me before grabbing me by the hips. He pulled me towards him, causing my book to fall from my hands.

'What are you doing?' I snapped.

'What does it look like? Quiero comerte el coño,' he said with a grin as he pushed my dress up past my thighs.

His grin disappeared when he saw my panties. 'What the fuck are these?' he growled.

'I thought we were done,' I said with a shrug.

'Done?' he glared at me. 'We haven't even started, princess. You think I'd just come home and blow my load in you and leave you needing more? But, you know what, even if we were done, I told you, no panties! I told you that I wanted access to you at all fucking times. So, in that case, we are never

done, are we?’

I blinked at him. Jesus, he was serious about the panty thing. ‘Okay,’ I whispered.

‘No, it’s not okay,’ he snapped as he stood up and reached for my hand, pulling me up from the sofa as though I was as light as air. Then he hoisted me over his shoulder so my ass was up in the air.

‘Put me down,’ I said as I hit him on the back with my balled fists.

He slapped my ass – hard. ‘I told you there would be consequences for disobeying me.’

‘Where the hell are you taking me?’ I asked but he didn’t answer me.

He stalked through the house and I almost died of shame as we passed one of his personal bodyguards in the hallway.

A moment later, we were in Alejandro’s office. He set me down on my feet and kicked the door closed behind him.

I backed away from him until my ass bumped against his desk. My legs trembled in fear and anticipation. The way he was glaring at me was terrifying. So, why the hell was this turning me on so much?

He glared at me, his eyes fierce and full of fire as he closed the distance between us in one stride. He reached down and pulled my dress up so it was bunched around my waist. Then he hooked his fingers under the band of my panties, and with one quick tug, he tore them from me, before stuffing the shredded material into his pocket.

‘That’s my favorite pair of my panties you’ve just ruined,’ I said defiantly.

‘I’ll burn all of your panties if you don’t start doing as you’re told,’ he growled. ‘Now turn around.’

‘What?’

‘Turn. Around,’ he barked.

I turned until my body was facing away from him and the front of my thighs were pressed up against his desk. Then I waited in breathless anticipation of what he was planning next.

‘Bend over the desk,’ he ordered.

I swallowed. But I did as I was told until my cheek was pressed against the cool mahogany. I sucked in a deep breath as I wondered if he was going to fuck me over his desk, and the thought made my insides clench in expectation.

But he didn’t.

I felt the rush of air first as his hand swung down and landed on my ass.

‘Ow. That hurt,’ I winced and my hand flew back instinctively to shield my skin from his assault. *What the hell?*

‘It’s supposed to, princess. Now put your hands back on that desk and if you move them again, I’ll add another ten to your punishment.’

My punishment! Who did he think he was? ‘But, I just ...’ I started as I felt another smack on my ass.

‘Did you just talk back to me?’ he snarled.

‘No,’ I whispered just before I felt another slap on my sensitive skin.

‘I thought so. Now be a good girl and take your punishment, and maybe I’ll give you a reward afterwards.’

I gritted my teeth to stop myself from making some snarky comeback about where he could stick his reward. I guessed that would only make him even more angry, and besides that, as humiliating as it was to be bent over his desk getting my ass spanked, it was thrilling too.

It felt so wrong on so many levels, but it felt so damn good to have him take complete control of my body. His slaps stung my skin, but afterwards the heat that remained was warm and tingly. I could feel my pussy getting wetter with each second and that knowledge made my cheeks burn with equal parts shame and arousal.

Alejandro brought his hand down again on the fleshy part of my ass cheeks and I closed my eyes as the burning pain shot through me.

‘Now that I’ve got you warmed up, let’s see just how much that ass can take,’ he growled.

Warmed up? This was the warm up? Shit!

I braced myself for the next slap and when it landed I bit the inside of my cheek to stop myself from crying out. I didn’t want to show him any weakness. Not because of my own pride, but because I wanted him to be proud of me.

I wanted to take my punishment well for him, and that realization completely floored me.

‘Spread those legs for me, princesa,’ he snarled and I obeyed without question.

‘Your concha is soaking wet, Alana,’ he said as he plunged two of his fingers inside me, causing me to whimper shamelessly. ‘If you’re enjoying this spanking then I’m obviously not doing it right.’

I didn’t reply. I got the sense he wanted me to remain quiet. This felt like

a test and I desperately wanted to pass.

He pulled his fingers out of me and then he slapped my pussy. The wet sound of his hand connecting with my dripping folds was so loud in the small room, and I hoped that his bodyguard wasn't in the hallway. There was no way he couldn't have heard that.

Alejandro spanked my ass, my thighs and my pussy over and over again until the whole area was burning and stinging. I cried out at the last one on my ass and the tears rolled down my cheeks. I wasn't sure I could take any more. I didn't mind a little pain, but it was becoming too much. I couldn't help feeling disappointed that I'd started crying when I'd promised myself that I wouldn't.

To my relief though, he stopped and then his warm hands were running softly over my reddened skin.

'This ass is a pretty sight to behold, princess,' he growled as he slid his fingers through my folds and coated them in my cream, before sliding them up the seam of my backside and circling my hole.

I was completely spent. I didn't think I had the energy to fight him if he insisted on fucking me there, even though I wasn't sure I was ready for that yet.

But then he leaned over me, his mouth pressed against my ear. 'You took your punishment well, princess. Will you ever wear panties in this house without my permission again?'

'No,' I breathed.

He wiped the tears from my cheek with the pad of his thumb. 'You want me to make you feel better now?' he soothed.

My brain wanted to tell him to go to hell, but my body was desperate to feel a part of him inside me, and for him to deliver the orgasm which had been building during the whole embarrassing spanking.

My body won. 'Yes,' I whimpered.

He brushed my cheek with his knuckles and then I heard the sound of his zipper again before he pushed his cock deep inside me. I groaned out loud as he fucked me hard against his desk. One of his hands rubbed over the sensitive flesh of my ass, and the other slipped between me and the desk, where he found my clit and started to rub to the same intensity that he was fucking me.

It was barely a few minutes before I was screaming his name as my orgasm washed over me, rolling through my core and pulsing through the

apex of my thighs.

‘That’s it princess, come on my cock like a good girl,’ he growled as he gave a few final thrusts and found his own release.

I stayed bent over the desk with my face resting on the cool wood as Alejandro fastened his zipper and belt. I felt wrung out but I wasn’t sure that I was allowed to move yet. Then I felt his strong arms pulling me up. He spun me around and brushed my hair back from my face.

‘You okay?’ he asked.

I nodded.

He pulled my dress down and smoothed it over my hips and ass so that I looked presentable again. Then he dragged his thumb over my lip, pulling my mouth open slightly.

‘The next time, you sulk like a child because I didn’t make you come, I will fill this pretty little mouth with my cock. I need you to understand that I’m a busy man. Tonight’s phone call was unexpected, and perhaps I could have been more courteous in the kitchen earlier, but there will be times when all I need from you is a quick fuck, Alana. And when I do, I expect you to comply.’

I nodded. ‘Okay.’

He stared at me, as though he was trying to read my thoughts.

‘Magda has left a lasagna in the refrigerator. I’ll pop it into the oven for dinner,’ I said, not knowing what else to say. I felt embarrassed and awkward and I wasn’t sure if he was still angry with me.

He frowned at me. ‘The only place you’re going, is the tub to soak that beautiful ass, and then bed, princess.’

I felt incredibly relieved about that because that was exactly what I wanted to do. But my stomach growled in resistance, and Magda had prepared us a beautiful meal. ‘What about dinner?’

‘The lasagna will keep. I’ll order us a take out. We can eat in bed watching the TV.’

‘And get food all over your beautiful, million thread count sheets?’

He dipped his head low and kissed me softly before looking in my eyes. ‘Those sheets are going to need washing in the morning anyway. Because I am nowhere near finished with you tonight.’

I swallowed. ‘More punishment?’

He dusted his knuckles across my cheek. ‘No, Alana. There’s no punishment in my bed. Only pleasure.’

I shivered at his words and then his hand travelled to my ass. He grabbed it possessively. It was still burning from my spanking but the pain had turned into a pleasant throb now. 'Who does this sexy ass belong to, princess?'

'You,' I breathed.

'That's right. Just like your hot pussy does. And I am going to use them both whenever and wherever I want to.'

Chapter Eighteen

ALANA

I WOKE THE FOLLOWING MORNING TO FIND ALEJANDRO GONE AND THE SUN streaming through the windows. Last night, I'd taken a long soak in the tub after my spanking, and when my skin was as wrinkled as a prune, and I'd finally got out, Alejandro was walking into the bedroom with a bag full of food.

He'd bought us burgers from my favorite burger joint and we'd eaten them in bed watching a movie. It had almost felt like we were a normal couple, if only for a few hours.

Once the film had finished, he'd turned off the TV and then he'd fucked me over and over again for hours. I lost count of the number of times he'd made me come, but he had more than made up for leaving me hanging in the kitchen earlier that night.

After such an eventful night, I'd been completely exhausted and had slept like the dead. I hadn't even felt Alejandro getting out of bed. He always got up early and left for work, but I couldn't help feeling disappointed as I realized he had left without even saying goodbye. I wouldn't have minded if he'd woken me.

I shook my head. I was being silly. That wasn't what our relationship was about.

I stretched my arms above my head. Every part of my body was pleasantly aching. It seemed my husband was a machine when it came to sex and I was loving this new side to our relationship.

It was a beautiful sunny day and I headed outside to the patio. I usually enjoyed a coffee in the garden in the mornings. Stepping out of the huge French doors, I was surprised to see Alejandro sitting there reading a newspaper. There was a pot of fresh coffee, a jug of orange juice and some fresh pastries on the table in front of him.

‘Good morning,’ I said with a smile as I sat down opposite him. ‘It’s not like you to join me for breakfast.’

He looked up from his paper and smiled at me. ‘Buenos dias, princesa. I’ll be joining you for more than just breakfast. I’ve taken the day off,’

‘Oh? Any particular reason?’ I flashed an eyebrow at him.

He folded his newspaper and placed it on the table before picking up the juice and pouring each of us a glass. ‘Nothing in particular. I haven’t had a day off for weeks, and I figured I deserved one.’

‘Hmm, I’m sure you do. By the way, what does quiero comerte el coño mean?’ I asked. He’d said it in the den before my spanking, and the way he’d said it made me think it was something filthy.

He laughed softly and my heart started to pound in my chest at the sound. He had an incredible laugh but I didn’t hear it very often. Then he looked into my eyes and grinned wickedly. ‘It means, I want to eat your pussy.’

‘Oh,’ I blushed, as I picked up a croissant and took a bite.

He stared at me for a few seconds as I chewed the warm, buttery pastry.

‘Ven aquí,’ he ordered, his voice both commanding and as smooth as chocolate.

‘I don’t know what that means either,’ I whispered.

‘It means, come here.’

My pussy clenched in response and without even thinking about it, I stood up and walked around the table to him. As soon as I was within touching distance, he reached for my hand and pulled me onto his lap.

‘This is a beautiful dress, princess,’ he said as he slid his hand between my thighs. I groaned at the feel of his rough fingertips on my skin and I heard him chuckle softly.

‘Open,’ he growled and my body obeyed him without hesitation. He edged his hand up further before his fingers brushed the fabric of my underwear.

‘Do we have to go over the panty rule again, Alana?’ he whispered against my ear as he pulled the fabric to one side. His fingers slid easily through my wet folds to my clit and I sucked in a deep breath.

‘In my defense, I didn’t know you were home,’ I said.

‘But you do now, so take them off,’ he said, drawing back his hand and holding it out to me, palm up in expectation.

I was about to stand up but he kept his arm around my waist and held me in place on his lap. ‘You’re not making this easy,’ I said as I wriggled my hips and ass until I was able to slide my panties down over my hips.

I peeled them slowly down my legs and over my feet. Then I placed them in his outstretched hand and watched as he stuffed them into his pocket.

‘Do you seriously expect me to not wear panties whenever you’re in the house?’ I asked him. ‘I mean it’s not always practical. Like when your mom comes to visit.’

He planted a soft kiss on my neck before running his teeth along my jawline and I shivered. ‘Don’t worry. You’ll wear panties when I permit you to – like when my mom comes to visit. But at all other times you’ll be bare.’ He slipped his hand under my dress again and back up to where my body was aching to feel him.

‘But why?’ I panted.

‘Isn’t that obvious?’ he said as he slid one of his thick fingers inside me. ‘I want access to this sweet concha whenever and wherever I choose,’ he growled as he started to move his finger in and out of me. Then he added a second.

‘Alex,’ I moaned. ‘What if someone sees?’

‘There’s no-one out here but us, princess. Relax and let me show you what happens to good girls when they do as they’re told.’

I leaned my head against his chest and closed my eyes as he worked me with his fingers. He pressed on my clit with his thumb as he buried his fingers in me and reached for that sweet spot deep inside. Rubbing on it over and over until I felt like I was losing my mind.

‘Please, Alex,’ I whispered against his chest.

‘Look at me,’ he commanded and I looked up into his beautiful brown eyes. Then he leaned down and sealed his mouth over mine, dipping his tongue inside until my whole body pulsed with pleasure. He kept me teetering on the edge for what felt like an eternity, until I was whimpering into his mouth with need. Then, he picked up his pace and gave my clit a hard press with the pad of his thumb, and I came apart around him.

‘Alex,’ I cried as my orgasm tore through my body. He kept rubbing until I had ridden the very last wave of pleasure before pulling his hand from

beneath my dress.

‘I do love some cream with my morning coffee,’ he said with a wicked grin and then he placed his two fingers in his mouth and sucked them clean.

Alejandro and I had spent a lazy morning eating breakfast, reading newspapers and sitting in the garden. I’d changed into my bikini half an hour earlier, and was doing a few lengths of the pool when I heard a huge splash behind me.

I spun around to see him swimming towards me, his beautiful, muscular body gliding effortlessly through the water. He had a fire in his eyes that suggested he was only in the mood for one thing. A quick glance of his naked body below the water as he reached me, confirmed my suspicions.

I grinned at him before turning and swimming away from him as quickly as I could. He was too fast for me though and I had barely reached the side when he grabbed me by the waist.

‘Are you trying to run away from me, princess?’ he growled as he nipped my shoulder blade.

I laughed and wriggled in his grip until he pushed me back against the edge of the pool, caging me with his strong arms and pressing his hard body into mine. He bent his head and kissed me so fiercely, I struggled for breath. Then his hands slipped below the water line and he tugged at the ties on either side of my bikini bottoms.

‘Alex,’ I gasped. ‘Someone might see us.’ I tried to swat his hands away but he pulled on the fabric and the flimsy material gave way easily in his strong hands. He grinned at me before throwing the bottom half of my bikini out of the pool and far out of my reach.

‘They won’t. So stop resisting me and let me inside you.’

I squeezed my thighs tightly together and he forced his knee in between them, nudging my legs apart.

‘How many women have you had sex with in this pool?’ I asked him as I looked over his shoulder at the water rippling around us.

He sucked on his top lip as though he was considering his answer, while also looking downright edible. ‘None,’ he finally said as he forced my legs wider and settled himself between my thighs.

‘None?’

‘I’ve never brought any women to the house before.’

‘So, where did you take them?’ I knew that before our marriage, he’d been well known for his love of women – many women.

‘The hotel.’

‘But why didn’t you bring them here?’ I asked with a frown. His house was beautiful and stylish – and very impressive. But then I supposed the penthouse suite of one of L.A.’s finest hotels was too.

‘This is my home. I didn’t want them here. It would have been too personal. Now stop talking or I’ll put that beautiful mouth of yours to much better use,’ he growled.

‘We can’t. You have staff everywhere,’ I said as I looked around. ‘Not to mention security cameras.’

‘I turned the cameras off earlier, and I gave most of the staff a day off too. Jacob is on the front gate and there are three men patrolling the perimeter. Nobody will come anywhere near us.’

‘Why did you give everyone the day off?’

He ran his teeth along my jawline and I felt the goosebumps prickle over my skin. ‘Because I want to fuck my wife in every room, and on every surface of this house,’ he growled.

I felt his words deep in my core and the warmth and wetness pooled between my thighs. I wrapped my arms around his neck as he pressed his rock hard cock against my opening. ‘I like it when you call me your wife,’ I purred in his ear.

‘Do you?’ he said as he planted soft kisses along my throat.

‘Yes. It’s a nice change from princess.’

He stopped kissing me and looked in my eyes. ‘You don’t like princess?’ he asked with a flash of his eyebrows.

I shrugged. ‘Well, it was never meant as a term of endearment, was it? You call me princess because you assume I’m a spoiled daddy’s girl.’

‘Hmm,’ he returned to kissing my neck. ‘You are a spoiled princess though. But you’re my one now.’

I leaned my head back and groaned as he began sucking on a tender spot near my clavicle. ‘I don’t want to be spoiled. I want to be respected. I want to be your equal,’ I said as I pressed my hips forward and forced the tip of his cock inside me. He bit down on my neck and I yelped in pleasure.

‘Let me spoil you, princess. I’ll give you everything your heart desires. But don’t ever mistake my indulgence for weakness.’

‘I wouldn’t dare,’ I breathed as he pushed the full length of his huge cock

inside me, pinning me to the side of the pool.

‘Buena niña,’ he said and then he bent his head lower and pulled my bikini top until one of my nipples popped out of the fabric. He sucked it into his mouth before nailing me to the pool wall.

I raked my nails down his strong back as he made me come so hard I thought I might pass out.

Chapter Nineteen

ALEJANDRO

I STILL HAD MY COCK BURIED DEEP INSIDE ALANA AS I WALKED THROUGH THE water, carrying her out of the pool with her legs wrapped around my waist and her hot mouth sealed over mine. I'd already shot my load inside her but I was still hard. I couldn't get enough of her and I was going to fuck her until I'd had my fill. Then maybe, I would stop thinking about her for almost every minute of every fucking day.

Ever since I'd first buried myself in her tight little pussy two nights ago, I'd known that I was fighting a losing battle.

I was pussy drunk.

I walked over to the large chaise lounge and lay her down on it, pulling off her bikini top and tossing it into the bushes.

'Alex,' she admonished me and I felt my cock jerking to life inside her. I loved the way she said my name.

'If you're mad about your bikini top, princess, wait until you see the marks on your neck,' I grinned at her.

Her hands flew to her neck. 'Alejandro Montoya, have you given me a hickey?'

'No,' I shook my head. 'I've given you several.'

She opened her mouth to protest and I silenced her with a kiss, forcing my tongue inside her and demanding her submission. It didn't take much and a few seconds later, she was running her hands over my back and ass, her hot pussy squeezing me until I started fucking her again.

She was as insatiable as I was. It was hard to believe that she'd been a virgin just a few days earlier because she was a fucking sex addict now.

The way she moaned my name sent shivers down my spine. I nailed her

hard and she took everything I had to give without any resistance or complaint. I rewarded her by telling her how much I loved to fuck her, how I couldn't get enough of her and how I would never let her go.

But, I told her all of it in Spanish because I couldn't allow her to have any more power over me than she already did.

Chapter Twenty

ALANA

I PUT THE PHONE DOWN AND SMILED TO MYSELF. ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL CALL to a local businessman had just got us twenty-thousand dollars closer to our new building. I'd been working at the shelter for four weeks now and I loved it here.

Hugo accompanied me every day, and while men weren't usually allowed inside the place, he was given special permission by Kristen, as long as he kept to himself and stayed with me at all times.

That rule had lasted about five minutes though, because the kids loved him, and they were constantly pestering him to play soccer or baseball or check out some video game. More often than not, he politely refused because he rarely let me out of his sight. But now that I had my own lockable office, he was a little more open to giving in to the kids requests occasionally.

I had told him to go and have fun about half an hour earlier, when I'd known I wouldn't be leaving the office for a while.

The women and children who lived here were so inspiring and they made me count my blessings every single day.

I looked around the little office Kristen had set aside for me and blinked back tears of happiness. I really felt like I belonged here. I loved working with Kristen and the other shelter workers, and I loved that I could put my fundraising skills to good use. I'd manage to raise almost half a million dollars in donations in the past few weeks and it gave me such a sense of purpose.

And just as my working life was starting to take off, my personal life had taken a pleasant upswing too. Not only was my husband incredibly sexy, but he was a machine in bed. I felt the tightening in my core as I thought about

the things that man could do to my body.

He was still the devil incarnate, but he was an incredibly talented one. It had been two weeks since we'd first had sex, and whenever we were together, we'd done little else since. I found myself thinking about what he was doing throughout the day, and counted down the hours until I could be alone with him again.

I wondered if he did the same. I knew that he didn't do love. He'd made himself perfectly clear many times about that fact, but whenever he came home at night, he always seemed to be as desperate as I was to get to bed. Although more often than not, we never even made it that far before he was tearing my clothes off.

I shook my head to clear it. He probably never thought about me much at all when he was working. He was too busy running the Montoya empire, not to mention he was constantly surrounded by beautiful women at his hotel. I smiled to myself as an idea popped into my head. Maybe there was a way to make sure he was thinking about me, if only for a little while?

I picked up my cell and dialed his number. I knew that what I was about to do was dangerous, but I had come to enjoy trying to push Alejandro's buttons, especially as I now knew exactly which ones to press.

'Hola, princesa,' he answered, his voice low and gravelly.

'Hey,' I breathed as goosebumps prickled along my arms. Even the sound of his voice made me weak at the knees.

'Is everything okay? It's not like you to call me in the middle of the day?'

'I know,' I purred. 'But I was just wondering if I had permission to buy myself some panties from the store. There's a Target at the end of the block, and I have a meeting this afternoon with some possible donors. My skirt is really short today, and I don't want them getting a glimpse of anything they shouldn't and investing for the wrong reasons, do I?' I stifled a giggle.

'What?' I heard the growl in his throat. 'You left the house with no panties on?'

'Yes,' I purred.

'What the fuck!' he snapped. 'Where are you?'

'At the shelter.'

'The shelter? How did you get there?'

'Hugo drove me, of course.'

'So, you've been sitting in the back seat of Hugo's car with no panties and a short skirt on?'

‘Yes,’ I stifled another giggle.

‘Alana! Why the fuck would you do that?’ he barked.

‘Because you said no panties. I thought that was the rule.’

‘You had better be fucking kidding me with this!’ he snarled and I suddenly pictured him sitting at his desk with steam coming out of his ears.

I couldn’t hold my laughter in any longer and I burst into a fit of giggles.

‘Alana!’ he shouted.

‘I’m just playing with you,’ I said when I could finally breathe.

‘So, you are wearing panties?’

‘Of course I am. I’m sorry. But you’re so easy,’ I laughed again but he didn’t join in with me and I wondered if he’d appreciated the joke at all.

‘Easy, am I?’ he growled. ‘I’ve half a mind to come over there and spank your ass right now.’

‘Well, I’m leaving soon. So, you’ll have to wait until you get home later,’ I breathed.

‘You do realize you’ve now given me a raging boner and I have a meeting in ten minutes?’

‘Sorry,’ I said again with a smile. ‘I’m sure you can figure something out.’

‘Take off your panties and send me a picture,’ he growled.

‘What? No!’

‘It’s your fault my cock is leaking, princess, now send me something I can jerk off to nice and quick.’

I bit my lower lip. I’d never done anything like that before, but the thought of him having that picture on his cell phone and looking at it whenever he wanted to, sent a thrill right through me. ‘You wouldn’t show anyone else, would you?’

‘What? You really think I’d show anyone my wife’s pussy?’

‘Okay,’ I said as I put him on speaker. I slid my panties off and angled my phone for the perfect shot. I pressed send and then I pressed the phone back to my ear.

‘Fuck, Alana,’ I heard him hiss. ‘That is the most beautiful coño I’ve ever seen in my life. When I get home tonight I want you ready for me, princess, because I am going to fuck you so hard you’ll struggle to walk tomorrow.’

I felt my insides melting like warm butter. I loved his filthy mouth. There was a knock at the office door and I jumped. ‘I have to go. Someone wants to see me.’

‘Fine. I’ll make do with this photograph for now. Now, put your fucking panties back on.’

I laughed. ‘Yes, Sir. I’ll see you later.’

I slipped my panties back on and opened the door to see Lucy Callaghan standing there, her eyes wide and brimming with tears.

She had arrived at the shelter four weeks earlier - just eighteen years old, although she could have passed for much younger, and with no-one in the world to turn to.

I knew she had a story. I’d seen the scars on her arms and back when she’d changed her shirt in the den one day. We’d become close in the past few weeks though, and I knew she’d tell me what that story was when the time was right.

‘Hi, sweetheart. Is everything okay?’ I asked as I put an arm around her shoulder.

‘No,’ she sobbed and shook her head as she walked into my office.

I guided her to the chair opposite my desk and closed the door behind me. Then I poured her a glass of cool water from the jug on my desk and handed it to her. She took a few deep breaths before taking a drink. I let her catch her breath and she looked up at me, her big brown eyes shining with tears.

‘Want to talk about it?’ I asked her as I handed her a tissue.

She shook her head. ‘I can’t.’

‘Okay. Why not? Are you in trouble?’

She nodded. ‘Big trouble,’ she sniffed and my heart broke in two. What possible trouble could this young girl have got herself into that she couldn’t tell me about?

I pulled up my chair and sat beside her. ‘I know it must feel like you have no-one to turn to, but I’m here for you, Lucy. I promise. No matter what you tell me, I’m not going anywhere. You can trust me.’

She wiped her eyes with the tissue. ‘I know I can. But I can’t tell you this, because you’ll have to keep it a secret and I know that you won’t be able to. You’ll have to tell someone.’

I pressed my lips together. She was scaring me now. ‘Have you hurt someone?’ I asked her.

She shook her head. ‘No. Nothing like that.’

‘Then what is it, sweetheart? I can’t help you if you won’t tell me what we’re facing here. But, if you tell me what it is, maybe we can work it out?’

She looked up at me. ‘Promise you won’t tell a soul,’ she implored me.

I looked at her and felt my heart breaking in two. What the hell else could I do but agree? ‘Okay. I promise,’ I said.

‘I’m pregnant,’ she sniffed and I almost sighed with relief.

‘Pregnant?’ I asked instead.

She nodded.

‘Okay. We can deal with that,’ I said.

She shook her head again. ‘That’s not all,’ she said and started to sob again.

I squeezed her hand. ‘Okay. What else is there?’ I asked softly.

‘I’m only sixteen,’ she whispered. ‘After my parents died, I was going to be taken into care, but I ran away instead to live with my boyfriend.’

Oh! Sixteen. Shit! ‘But your paperwork, it all said you were eighteen.’

‘Blake forged it all so we could get married without consent. It was all part of his plan ...’ she started to cry again and I wrapped an arm around her shoulder and stroked her hair as she sobbed against my chest. I assumed Blake was her ex-boyfriend and father of her baby.

‘Everything is going to be okay,’ I whispered.

‘You won’t tell anyone, will you? They’ll make me go back to Chicago. They’ll take me into care,’ she sobbed.

‘I won’t tell anyone – for now, I promise. But we’re going to have to figure out what to do next, Lucy.’

‘We?’ she said as she looked up at me with wide eyes.

‘Yes, we,’ I smiled at her.

‘Everything okay, Alana?’ Hugo asked me as I sat in the back of his car on the way home.

‘What?’ I asked absent-mindedly, even though I’d heard his question.

‘Oh, yes, just some shelter stuff.’

He nodded and went back to driving and I went back to staring out of the window and wondering what the hell I would do about Lucy. After she had stopped crying she had told me that she was three months pregnant. Her parents had died in a car accident a couple of years ago and she had been living a life on the run ever since.

The father of her baby was her ex-boyfriend, Blake, who from what she said was a nasty piece of work. He had basically coerced her into running away with him and had managed to get her some fake documents. She’d been

all set to marry him when she'd caught him cheating on her with a waitress and had jumped on the first bus she had found, which happened to be headed to L.A.

She was terrified. Terrified of being pregnant; of being taken into care; of having to leave the shelter she had come to think of as home, but it seemed she was mostly terrified that Blake would find her.

I wracked my brain to think of a solution that would protect her from all her fears, and right now I couldn't think of one. I knew I'd have to talk to Kristen eventually, but only once Lucy had given me permission. I was a firm believer that a problem shared was a problem halved.

I wondered briefly if Alejandro could help me. I was sure he could find out more about Blake for a start, and he had plenty of officials in his pockets who could help us out. But, I couldn't. He had made it abundantly clear that we were about sex and nothing more. I couldn't betray Lucy's trust by telling him, when I wasn't even sure he would care or offer any help at all.

No, for now at least, I would have to figure this out on my own.

Chapter Twenty-One

ALANA

I'D JUST FINISHED TYPING UP THE NOTES OF MY AFTERNOON FUNDRAISING meeting when Alejandro walked into the den. I put my laptop on the table as he stalked towards me.

He didn't say a word, he simply picked me up, hoisted me over his shoulder and walked me out of the room.

'Put me down,' I giggled until I realized we were headed towards his office and then I swallowed.

Oh crap! With Lucy's revelation, I'd almost forgotten about the panty incident! Did he have no sense of humor at all?

He pushed open the door and walked inside before kicking it closed behind him. He put me down on my feet and I stared at him.

'Are you going to spank me again?' I breathed.

'Do you want me to?' he asked with a cock of his eyebrow.

I wasn't sure how to answer that. The spanking had been humiliating and painful, but also incredibly hot. 'Not too hard,' I finally replied.

He narrowed his eyes at me and it felt like an eternity before he spoke again. 'Take off your clothes,' he said as he crossed his arms over his chest and glared at me.

Well, this felt new.

I reached behind me and unzipped my skirt before pushing it over my hips and onto the floor. I stepped out of it and then I started to unbutton my shirt. His eyes were fixed on my hands, so I slowed my movements, giving him a show. Once my shirt was off too, I reached behind and unhooked my bra and let it fall down, allowing my breasts to spring free. My nipples hardened instantly as they hit the cool air and I smiled to myself as I saw

Alejandro's eyes drawn to them.

Then I hooked my fingers under the band at either side of my panties. 'I didn't know when you'd be home,' I said apologetically.

He ran a hand over his jaw. 'Leave the panties,' he said in a low growl that vibrated through my body.

'Okay,' I breathed as my legs trembled violently.

Then he walked around to his chair and sat down. 'Come here,' he commanded.

I walked around his desk until I was standing in front of him. His eyes roamed over my body and I sucked in a breath. What the hell was he waiting for?

'So, getting me all worked up today was your idea of fun, was it, princess?' he growled.

I bit my lip and nodded.

'Do you know what I like to do for fun?' he flashed his eyebrows at me.

'Fuck?' I offered.

I saw him bite back a smile. 'Sometimes.'

'But not today?' I panted as I stood there before him.

He shrugged. 'Maybe.'

I ran a hand over my arm as goosebumps prickled along my skin, and my whole body began to tremble.

'Why are you so nervous, princess?' he said with a wicked smile.

'Probably because you want me to be?' I offered.

He chuckled before leaning forward and grabbing hold of my panties, hooking his fingers under the seam at the top of my thighs, he pulled sharply, shredding the fabric easily with his strong hands.

'You're a panty fiend,' I said with as much of a scowl as I could muster.

He nodded. 'Yes, I am. Yet, you thought it would be funny to phone me at work and tell me you were wandering around downtown L.A with no panties on? Knowing what that would do to me?'

I wrinkled my nose. 'It was kind of funny.'

'Sit on the desk,' he said and I scooted past him and perched on the edge of his desk. He swiveled his seat until he was directly facing me. Reaching for my ankles, he grabbed them and lifted my legs, planting my feet either side of him on the armrests of his chair until I was completely spread open for him.

'Lean back on your elbows, princess,' he growled.

I leaned back, my eyes never leaving his as I placed my elbows on the desk.

‘All I have thought about for the past four hours has been burying my face in this pussy,’ he said with a wicked grin.

I blinked at him. ‘I thought you were angry with me?’

‘Angry? After you sent me that beautiful photograph? Why would I be angry?’

I sucked in a breath. This man had me constantly on edge. I could never second guess what he was thinking.

He moved his chair closer to the desk and wrapped his forearms around the back of my thighs. Then he dipped his head slightly and looked up at me, those incredible brown eyes holding me captive. ‘Have you guessed what I like to do for fun yet, princess?’

I felt the blush creeping up my neck and over my cheeks. ‘Eating pussy?’ I stammered.

‘Ciertamente,’ he said and then his head disappeared between my legs and I felt his warm breath against my skin before his tongue pushed inside my folds. He licked the length of my cleft before settling his hot mouth over my clit and started to suck softly.

I felt the pleasure rolling over me in delicious waves as he devoured me. I looked down at his face and he had his eyes closed in pleasure. That was when I realized this was as much about him as it was me. For an arrogant asshole, he was incredibly generous when it came to sex.

Then he looked up at me, catching me staring at him. His eyes narrowed and I saw the fire in them as he held my gaze.

I was still looking into his eyes when he made me come with a violent shudder. I groaned out loud as he coaxed the final tremors from my body with his tongue and then I leaned back, my head hanging between my shoulders as I gasped for breath.

I waited for him to stop, but he kept on going. Sucking on the hyper sensitive nub of flesh until I was hovering somewhere between pleasure and oblivion. Then he slipped a finger inside me too and the shift in focus sent shockwaves through my body.

‘Oh, God, Alex,’ I shouted as my second orgasm crashed through me like a freight train. I lay back flat against the desk as my whole body trembled.

Alejandro stood, positioning himself between my legs while my feet remained on the armrests of his chair. I heard the metallic jangle of his belt

buckle followed by his zipper and shivered in anticipation of what was coming next.

I'd barely had time to recover when he grabbed me by the hips and drove his cock into me. I moaned out loud as he pounded into me.

'I've been wanting to fuck you on my desk all day, princess. And until I get you to the office at my hotel, this one will have to do.'

So, that was the reason for his office then? He leaned over and kissed me, pushing his tongue into my mouth so I tasted myself on him. I groaned into him and he chuckled softly.

'You love being fucked, princess, don't you?'

'Yes,' I panted.

'Bueno, because I do love to fuck you.'

Chapter Twenty-Two

ALEJANDRO

ALANA AND I HAD EATEN DINNER AND I'D SUGGESTED WE GO TO BED WITH the intention of fucking her senseless, but she had seen that some movie she loved was on TV and had pleaded with me to watch it.

I'd agreed and had regretted it almost instantly. It was some God-awful, chick flick about college roommates who spent most of their lives getting wasted.

I lay on the bed scrolling through my cell phone and she lay with her head at the other end, propped up on her elbows and laughing out loud every five minutes.

I was hardly paying attention when I felt her hand on my thigh. 'Are you not enjoying the movie,' she asked me.

'No. It's fucking awful. I never did that whole college thing, going out and getting borracho every weekend.'

'Well, neither did I. But it's just a film,' she shrugged.

'But, you went to college?' I narrowed my eyes at her.

'I did. But I never did any of that other stuff. I had to work on my father's campaign almost every weekend.'

She turned off the TV and then she looked up at me with those huge brown eyes of hers as she stretched out on the bed.

'So you never went out and got drunk most weekends like a regular college student?' I asked her.

'I did a few times,' she said with a shrug. 'And I used to go to this great club in New York with my friend, Kelsey. I only went a few times though. Not nearly as much as I should have.'

'You wished you'd gone out and got drunk a little more?'

‘I wish I’d danced more. I love dancing. I don’t think I danced enough,’ she said as she stared at me. Suddenly, she seemed sad and I had an unfamiliar urge to want to make her feel better.

I stood and took hold of her hand, pulling her up from the bed. ‘You love dancing? Then let’s go dancing.’

‘What? Now?’ she laughed.

‘Yes. Now.’

‘But, it’s late.’

‘It’s ten pm!’

‘I have nothing to wear.’

‘We’re only going to a club. A short skirt and a tank top will do just fine.’ I slapped her on the ass. ‘Now go get changed and I’ll take you dancing.’

She gave me one of those wide, genuine smiles and wiggled her ass as she walked to the bathroom. I felt my dick twitching as I watched her.

What the fuck was I doing?

We walked through to the private, VIP area of the club and I slid into the booth behind Alana. A waitress brought over two ice buckets containing a bottle of champagne and a bottle of vodka, along with a jug of ice and some glasses.

Alana looked around wide eyed. ‘This is nothing like the clubs I’m used to,’ she shouted over the thumping music.

I couldn’t help but smile at her. The Naked Flame was the hottest club in L.A. Even on a weekday night it was bouncing.

It was a hot spot for the L.A elite. People with more money than sense thought nothing of dropping a few thousand dollars a night in the place.

Something about having Alana sitting next to me in the crowded club, in her tiny little skirt was making me crazy.

I leaned into her ear. ‘Take off your panties,’ I growled.

She blinked at me in shock. ‘Here?’

I nodded. ‘Si. Here. Now.’ I ordered.

She looked around us. The club was packed but we were in the most secluded part of it, and behind a rope which was guarded by four of my men. She chewed on her lower lip for a few seconds and then she discreetly slid her panties off over her hips and down her legs.

I held out my hand and she placed them in my palm. I resisted the urge to press them to my face and inhale her sweet scent. I stuffed them into my pocket instead before pouring us each a glass of champagne.

She sipped hers delicately as she continued looking around the club. 'I love people watching,' she said with a smile.

'Aren't you going to dance for me, princess?' I winked at her.

She laughed out loud. 'I think I'll need a few more of these first,' she said as she held up her glass.

'Then drink up. There's plenty more where that came from. Or are you unable to handle your champagne as well as your whisky?'

She glared at me and licked her lower lip. I knew she'd see that as a challenge. Then she chugged back the whole drink and held her glass out to me for a refill. I filled it for her and watched as she leaned back against the seat with a smile on her face.

I looked down at her legs. Her skirt was so short, it barely covered her ass cheeks when she was sitting. Suddenly, all I could think about was that beautiful, bare pussy just inches away from me.

I put an arm around her shoulder and turned my body towards hers before sliding my free hand between her thighs, running my fingertips over her warm, soft skin.

She gasped aloud and I saw the champagne glass trembling in her hand.

I slid my hand up further until I reached her pussy and slid two fingers through her wet folds. I leaned closer to her, my body shielding her from view as I slipped a finger inside her and she groaned loudly.

'Alex, please don't,' she gasped.

'Don't what, princess?' I growled.

'Please don't make me come in the middle of this club.'

I brushed my thumb over her clit and she shivered. 'Relax, princess. No-one can see us here,' I said as I kissed her neck.

'They might have security cameras,' she panted as I slowly slid my finger in and out of her dripping wet opening.

'They don't. Not here.'

'How do you know that?'

'Because this is my club.'

'Oh? But still. Can't we wait until we get home?' She gasped as she placed her glass on the table and held onto my forearm, her fingertips digging into my flesh, as though that might be enough to deter me.

I glared at her. 'You seem to forget who's in charge here, princess.'

She glared right back. 'I haven't forgotten. How could I? But, I can't help but wonder why you have a booth in your club with no security cameras. And I'm your wife, not one of your many conquests who will happily let you fuck them in the middle of your nightclub.'

I felt the anger coursing through me. I didn't do public displays of any kind - with anyone. Finger fucking a woman in the middle of my club was a first for me, and it pissed me off more than I would care to admit that she assumed I'd done it with others before her.

I closed my eyes and sucked on my top lip. Alana was getting too close. I was letting my guard down with her and what was even worse than that, was that she knew it too. And that was dangerous. I couldn't allow her to call the shots.

Not now.

Not ever.

I grazed my lips across her ear. 'You honestly think being my wife means that you mean any more to me than all of those other women before you?' I growled. 'Now, open your legs and let me inside what's mine.'

She glared at me, her chin tilted in defiance. She knew she could walk away if she chose to. But I watched in satisfaction as she blinked back the tears and submitted to me.

Suddenly, I felt like the devil she believed me to be.

But this was necessary. I couldn't allow her to go on thinking that there was anything more to our relationship than just sex.

She parted her thighs and I kept her shielded from view as I slipped a second finger inside her. I watched as she bit down on her lip as her walls clenched around me, demanding more.

'You're dripping wet already, Alana. You're going to enjoy this,' I growled. 'I'm going to make you come for me, princess, even if you're determined not to.'

She groaned as she tipped her head back and her legs parted even further for me. I worked my fingers in and out of her soaking wet channel and she moaned in pleasure.

My cock throbbed painfully, desperate to get inside her too. It was fucking weeping for her and there wasn't a damn thing I could do about it.

Fuck! This woman did things to me that I couldn't control and I didn't know how to deal with it.

For a moment, I thought about how easy it would be to pull her to straddle me, take out my cock and have her ride me right here in the privacy of our booth. Suddenly, that image was the only thing I could think about. And because I had spent so much time inside her these past few weeks, I knew exactly how it would feel to have her squeezing my length the way she was squeezing my fingers right now.

Despite how much I wanted that, I knew it was too much of a gamble. I was already taking a risk doing this in the middle of my nightclub. We were in a discreet booth and my men would shield us from prying eyes but there was always the chance that a paparazzi with a long lens had somehow sneaked in here.

But, despite the risks, I couldn't stop myself.

I finger fucked her right there in the booth and while I felt like a bastard for doing it, I felt like a king too. Alana was mine and she would do whatever the fuck I told her to do when I told her to do it.

She leaned her head against my shoulder as her orgasm threatened and I heard her whimper against me.

I should have kissed her. I should have stroked her hair with my other hand, but I didn't.

I rubbed my thumb over her clit and brought her to a shuddering orgasm. Then, I pulled my fingers out of her and sucked her sweet cream from them. 'Your coño is so fucking good, princesa, you're lucky I don't spread you open on this table and eat you out right here.'

She lifted her head and looked up at me, her cheeks flushed pink and her eyes wide.

'I told you, you'd enjoy it,' I said with a grin.

She glared at me, and then she straightened her skirt and stood up. 'I'm going to dance.'

I stood too.

'Alone,' she snapped.

I scowled at her. The thought of her walking into that mass of bodies in that tiny skirt, no panties and with her cream dripping out of her made me feel like an animal. The prospect of anyone even being near to her right now made me feel a rage inside me like I'd never felt before.

I didn't recognize the feeling and I didn't like it.

'You go down there with me, or you have a team of bodyguards around you instead. It's your call, princess,' I warned her.

She frowned at me. 'Fine,' she said and then she stalked off to the dance floor with me on her heels.

What the fuck was happening? I didn't chase women!

She wormed her way through the throng of people until she found a spot she seemed happy with. I tried not to react when other bodies touched hers - I told myself it was inevitable on the crowded dance floor .

As soon as she started to dance, the music changed to something with a slow, heavy bass and her body moved in perfect rhythm to it.

I didn't dance much as a rule. Fuck, I never danced, but there was something about watching her that was hypnotizing. I suspected she wouldn't want my hands on her after what had just happened, but this wasn't the kind of song you danced to alone, and I'd be fucked if I would let anyone else anywhere near her.

I slid my hands onto her hips and she looked up into my eyes as she moved against me.

I might have just put on an epic power display up in the privacy of our booth, but there was no doubting that she had it all now.

I slipped my hands onto her ass as her hips grinded against mine. She lifted her arms into the air as she danced, and I moved one of my hands from her ass to caress her throat with my fingertips. My fingers still smelled of her sweet cream and now she had the scent on her neck too. I buried my face there as our bodies moved in time to the music.

My cock strained uncomfortably in my trousers and I growled against her as I pulled her closer to me, dragging her body across my rock hard erection.

She smiled at me. 'Were you this possessive over all of those other women before me too, Alejandro?' she purred in my ear.

Fuck! She had me.

'No,' I growled and then pressed my face against her neck. I bit into the tender flesh and sucked hard enough to make her cry out. I'd never been this fucking turned on before in my life. Despite us both being fully clothed, this was as close to fucking as two people could possibly get.

I brushed my lips against her ear. 'I need to get you home. Because I might just fucking die if I don't get my cock inside you soon.'

I wondered if she'd resist me after what I'd done earlier, and if she did, I wasn't averse to picking her up and carrying her out of there, but she nodded at me, her eyes full of heat and desire.

'Okay,' she breathed.

I grabbed her hand and pulled her through the crowd of people until we reached the entrance.

‘Car is outside, Boss,’ one of my men said as we reached the door.

I nodded my thanks and we walked to the waiting limousine. Jacob opened the door for us and she stepped in first, pulling her skirt down at the back as she did to hide her bare pussy from view. Not that anyone but me would have seen it, because I wouldn’t let anyone else get even a glimpse of her.

I climbed in behind her and she slid across the seat, as far away from me as she could get, but with a wicked grin on her face. I followed her as Jacob closed the door behind us.

Kneeling on the floor in front of her, I grabbed her by the hips and pulled her roughly to me. Her legs parted around my body and her skirt rode further up her thighs, exposing her to me so I could see her beautiful pussy dripping with her cream.

I could smell her sweet scent and couldn’t wait to bury my tongue and then my cock in her.

‘Alex,’ she panted and I smiled.

I hadn’t liked her calling me Alejandro in the club. ‘Yes, princess?’

Chapter Twenty-Three

ALANA

I LOOKED DOWN AT ALEJANDRO'S HANDSOME FACE AS HE KNELT IN FRONT OF me. My insides were churning and I felt a burning need to have him inside me.

I knew that he'd been lying in the club earlier. I knew in my heart that I meant more to him than most of those women before me, but I wasn't sure if the fact that he'd lied about that made him more or less cruel.

What I did know right now, was despite the fact he was a devil, my body wanted him so desperately I'd let him do anything to me. I'd just been willingly finger fucked by him in the middle of the busiest and hottest nightclub in L.A. So, if what he wanted now was sex in the back of his limo, then so be it.

Just as he was sliding his hands up my thighs, his phone started ringing and he cursed in Spanish. Sitting back on his heels, he took it out of his pocket and glanced at the screen. He cursed again as he pressed it to his ear.

'Me cago en la puta!'

He spoke in Spanish and although I didn't understand most of what he said, I did know whatever was going on was making him furious. He barked something to Jacob in the front seat as he continued talking on the phone and a moment later the car came to a rolling stop.

He ended his call and looked at me. 'I have to deal with something,' he snapped. 'Don't wait up.'

The next thing I knew the car door was being pulled open and he was climbing out into the street.

'Qué carajo crees que estás hacienda? Get in the front. You don't sit with her,' he barked to a man who was about to climb into the back of the car with

me.

A second later, I saw the same man getting into the front seat beside Jacob. I assumed he was my bodyguard for the drive home, and I was thankful that he wasn't sitting in the back with me, while I was dripping wet and wearing no panties.

I sat back against the seat and the car started moving again.

'You okay back there, Alana?' Jacob's voice came through the speaker.

'Yes, thanks, Jacob,' I lied.

'I'll get you home as quickly as I can,' he said softly.

'Thank you,' I replied as I leaned my head against the window.

I was asleep when I felt the mattress dipping beside me. I opened my eyes and saw Alejandro slipping under the covers. He lay on his back with his hands behind his head.

I hadn't expected him home and thought he might sleep at the hotel like he used to, yet here he was. Whatever the reason he was determined to push me away from him, his actions told me that he wanted this closeness between us as much as I did.

I knew something bad must have happened and while he didn't talk to me about his business, I also knew that he would struggle to sleep, as he often did. A part of me wanted to punish him for his earlier treatment of me in the club. But, another part of me wanted him to make everything feel better - and I could make him feel better too. We could at least do that for each other.

I placed my hand on his chest and he turned his head to look at me.

'It's late. Go back to sleep, princess.'

'Is everything okay?' I asked.

He let out a long sigh. 'Nothing that can't be handled.'

'Okay,' I replied.

I didn't know what to do next. He was always in charge and I didn't know how to be. I moved closer to him and planted a kiss on his muscular chest. I heard a low growl in his throat and it spurred me on.

I kissed him again and then trailed my lips down his stomach towards his cock, which was already standing to attention.

I inched my lips closer and he groaned softly. When I kissed the tip he growled out loud. 'Are you sure about this, princess?' he asked.

I didn't answer him, instead I wrapped my lips around the head of his

cock, swirling my tongue over the end.

‘Fuck!’ he hissed and then his hand was in my hair, pushing against the back of my head. I took more of him into my mouth and tasted a rush of pre—cum.

‘Joder! Alana!’ he groaned and it spurred me on. I sucked as he pushed his cock deeper into my mouth. He tasted so good - sweet and salty and hot skin.

I sucked harder, using my tongue to intermittently swirl over the tip before taking him to the back of my throat again, enjoying the feel of his thick shaft on my tongue. His fingers wrapped in my hair and he pushed my head towards him while he started to fuck my mouth.

I realized I was no longer in control, but I didn’t care. I loved the effect I was having on his body, and listening to him groan and say my name, and curse in Spanish over and over again was mind blowing. I felt the familiar warmth building in my abdomen as he claimed my mouth.

‘That feels so fucking good,’ he growled and my pussy clenched at his words. ‘I’m going to come, princess.’

I appreciated the warning, but I was desperate to taste him. When he spurted, hot, thick and heavy against the back of my throat, I swallowed it greedily, sucking and licking the length of his shaft as I cleaned up every last drop from him.

His hands fell to his sides and I looked up at him and smiled. He looked like I usually felt after he’d made me come and that made me feel incredible.

I crawled up the bed to him and he wrapped his arms around my neck, pulling me to him for a kiss. His tongue dipped inside my mouth and I groaned. The thought that he was tasting himself on me was such a turn on.

When he broke our kiss, I pulled back from him and he smiled at me. ‘You sure you’ve never done that before, princess?’

I shook my head. ‘Never. Was it okay then?’

‘Okay? That’s like saying Da Vinci was an okay painter,’ he said with a flash of his eyebrows.

‘Are you saying I’m a blowjob genius then?’ I grinned at him.

‘Well, genius might be a stretch,’ he winked at me. ‘But, you’ll definitely get there with practice.’

I opened my mouth in mock horror and he laughed before pulling me

back to him and wrapping his giant arms around me. He ran the pad of his thumb back and forth across my shoulder blade.

‘I suppose this has been a night of firsts,’ he said.

‘Why is that?’ I asked.

‘What happened in the club ... I’ve never done that with anyone before. Not in public. I want you to know that.’

‘Never?’

‘Never. I’ve never danced with anyone in public either before ... well, except for my mom ... and I might have danced with my cousin, Lauren once at a wedding.’

‘With your cousin?’ I laughed.

‘I was thirteen!’ he laughed too.

‘So, why do you push me away, Alex?’

He shook his head and sighed. ‘Because you want more from me than I’m prepared to give you, Alana.’

I looked up at him. ‘You’re an arrogant asshole, do you know that?’ I snapped. ‘How do you even know what I want? You’ve never even asked me.’

‘I can tell by the way you look at me,’ he frowned. ‘You want –’

‘I don’t want your love if that’s what you’re afraid of,’ I interrupted him.

‘What?’ he snapped.

‘You told me you don’t do love, and I accept that. All I want from you is exactly what you give me. So, you don’t have to be cruel to push me away from you. I’m already at a safe distance and I intend to stay here.’

‘So, it doesn’t matter to you that all I want is your body?’

‘That suits me just fine, because that’s all I’m offering.’

He rolled on top of me and pinned my arms above my head. ‘You’ll give me whatever I want, princess,’ he growled. ‘If I want your heart too, I’ll take it.’

‘But what would you do with it?’ I teased him as I wrapped my legs around his waist and pulled him to me so his cock, which was already hard again, was nudging against my opening. ‘My body, you understand completely, maybe even better than I do, but you wouldn’t have a clue how to handle my heart, big guy. Besides, it’s too good for you,’ I purred in his ear.

‘You might just be right about that, princess,’ he said as he slid the tip of his length inside me. ‘Now, how about we stop talking and I fuck you?’

Before I could respond, he slammed into me. 'Because this is what we do, isn't it, princess? This is when I own you,' he railed into me over and over again, driving at my sweet spot until my legs were trembling. 'This is when I own every single part of you - body, heart and soul,' he growled and all I could do was agree as my orgasm crashed over me in a huge rolling wave.

Chapter Twenty-Four

ALANA

I GLANCED AT MY PHONE AS IT VIBRATED ON THE DESK BESIDE ME. THE DEVIL himself was calling according to the screen.

‘Hello,’ I answered.

‘Hola, princesa,’ he said, his voice as smooth as silk. ‘I forgot to mention that there’s an event at the hotel tonight. It’s some business awards thing. They have it here every year and I’m expected to open the proceedings. I hadn’t thought about the fact that people will be expecting my wife to be with me. So?’

‘Are you asking me out on a date, Mr. Montoya?’ I purred into the phone with a huge smile on my face. It wasn’t often that he needed anything from me and I relished having the upper hand for once.

‘If that will make you say yes,’ he growled and my insides clenched in response.

‘Okay. What shall I wear?’

‘It’s black tie. So something formal.’

‘Erm, I don’t have anything formal.’

‘So, take the credit card and go shopping. I’ll pick you up at eight.’

‘Okay,’ I said as I glanced at the clock on the wall. ‘I guess poor Hugo is going to have to come dress shopping with me then? And of course I’ll need some new underwear too. You don’t think he’ll mind, do you?’ I teased.

‘Don’t try and make me jealous, princess. Because you won’t like me when I’m angry.’

‘I don’t like you when you’re not angry,’ I reminded him.

‘Is that so? You seemed to like me just fine last night when you were sucking my cock. And even more when I was eating your sweet coño.’

‘Well, you don’t have to like someone to have sex with them?’ I said, remembering what he’d said to me on the night of our wedding.

‘Cuidado!’ he warned. ‘And if Hugo gets even a glimpse of your panties, the ones you’re currently wearing, or the sexy ones you’re going to buy to let me fuck you in later, he’ll be looking for a new job in the morning and you won’t be sitting down for a week.’

Then he hung up the phone and I was left almost breathless with anticipation.

Chapter Twenty-Five

ALEJANDRO

THE CAR PULLED UP OUTSIDE THE HOUSE AT A LITTLE BEFORE EIGHT AND A few moments later, she walked out of the house. My cock jerked to attention at the sight of her wearing a beautiful, strapless evening gown that clung to every single one of her curves.

I'd never been jealous of a dress before tonight, but I would have given anything to be wrapped around her body the way that material was. Her breasts were so full and round that they spilled out of the top just the perfect amount. I imagined that one sharp tug on the fabric and they'd spring free.

She walked to the car and Jacob opened the door for her.

'Good evening, Mr. Montoya,' she purred.

I grabbed her hand and pulled her onto my lap and she squealed in delight. 'What are you doing?' she giggled as I nuzzled her neck.

'Fuck! I wish I'd brought the limo,' I hissed, cursing the fact that I'd chosen the Bentley.

'Why?' she asked, all wide eyed and innocent. Jesus, she was so fucking naïve sometimes, it killed me.

'Because, then I could raise the privacy screen and fuck you in this dress,' I said as I wrapped my arms around her waist, pinning her to me.

'But then you might ruin this very expensive dress,' she whispered as Jacob climbed back into the car.

'I'm going to ruin it later anyway,' I growled in her ear. 'Along with those new panties you bought.'

Her skin flushed pink. 'You have a filthy mouth,' she whispered.

'I know. But I have an even filthier mind, and you love it.' I brushed her hair back from her face and pulled her to me so I could kiss her. I parted her

lips with my tongue because I had a desperate need to get some part of my body inside her, and even I wasn't okay with fucking her in full view of my driver or any passers by.

By the time we got to the hotel, I had a raging, painful hard on.

I made Jacob take us to the service entrance so I wouldn't have to walk through the crowded lobby with my cock straining at the seam of my trousers. I checked my watch and groaned inwardly as I realized the event was due to start in less than ten minutes, and I wouldn't even have time to take her up to my suite for some quick relief.

Chapter Twenty-Six

ALANA

I LOOKED UP AT ALEJANDRO AS WE WAITED IN THE ELEVATOR. HE LOOKED SO handsome in his tuxedo, and his amorous affections in the car on the way here had me a trembling, hot mess. It was a pity we had to go to the awards dinner.

The elevator stopped at our floor and we stepped out, and right into two blonde Amazonian goddesses. I swear I had never seen two more beautiful women in my life.

I sensed Alejandro tense beside me and he stepped forward, partially shielding me from their view.

‘Alejandro,’ the slightly taller one said as she turned and caught his eye. ‘We’ve been wondering where you were.’ Then she wrapped her arms around his neck and gave him a kiss on each cheek. The second one did the same while I stood there looking and feeling like a Z-list extra at an A lister’s movie premiere.

Alejandro turned and placed his hand on the small of my back. ‘Ladies, this is my wife, Alana,’ he said and I held out my hand in greeting.

They both looked at my outstretched hand and then at me as though I was something that was stuck to the bottom of their Jimmy Choos. I let my arm fall to my side and willed the ground to swallow me whole.

‘Alana, this is Keira,’ he indicated the taller one. ‘And Michaela.’

They gave me a half assed, fake smile and then turned their attention back to my husband. ‘So, where have you been, Alejandro?’ Michaela purred as she placed her hand on his arm. ‘We’ve missed you.’

He cleared his throat and then checked his watch. ‘This thing is about to start, and I think I’m needed on stage,’ he said as he walked past them,

pulling me along behind him.

‘Who were those women?’ I asked as we walked towards the conference suite.

‘No-one important,’ he said dismissively.

I stopped in my tracks, causing him to stop too, and he turned to me and sighed in frustration. ‘What?’ he snapped.

‘Are they your ex-girlfriends?’ I asked him. They looked just like some of the women I’d seen him in magazines with – impossibly skinny, tall, blonde and beautiful.

‘I dated them both for a few weeks, that’s all.’

‘At the same time?’

‘Yes!’ he growled.

Jesus! He dated those two goddesses at the same time? Just how much woman did one man need? ‘How many weeks is a few?’ I asked.

He bent his head so his face was close to mine. ‘I have a past, Alana. I’ve dated plenty of women, and we are going to run into them occasionally. But they are in my past. So, please stop acting like a spoiled child and behave yourself.’

I glared at him. He knew that accusing me of acting like a spoiled child would push my buttons, and now I had to behave or I would risk having him say he was proven right.

‘Fine. Let’s go,’ I said and plastered a fake smile on my face.

The awards dinner had turned out to be quite entertaining. Alejandro and I were sitting on a table with the mayor and his wife as well as some of the senior council officials and I had enjoyed talking all things politics with them.

Alejandro had joined in too. His knowledge of the inner workings of the L.A machine was impressive and I found myself having a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

Alejandro was charming and funny and he had these people eating out of the palm of his hand. I was having such a good time that I’d almost forgotten about the way his ex-girlfriends had looked at me earlier.

I’d excused myself to use the powder room and was sitting in one of the stalls when I heard their voices.

‘Oh, my God, can you believe Alejandro married that?’ one of them said.

‘I know,’ the other one replied. ‘I saw her in that magazine article and thought they must have caught her at a bad angle, but nope – she’s just fat,’ she said and the two of them burst out laughing.

I choked down a sob, not wanting to alert either of them to the fact that I was there.

‘He is sooo out of her league. Have you seen how she’s squeezed herself into that ridiculous dress? What the hell was he thinking?’

More laughter.

‘Oh, honey, it won’t last. She’s clearly not his type. Do you think he likes to do all of that freaky stuff with her?’

‘God, no! Could you imagine her? I bet she’s a strictly missionary with the lights off kind of girl,’ they shrieked with laughter.

‘I’m sure he’ll be looking for extra-marital fun soon enough,’ one of them cackled. ‘Maybe we can convince him to send her home early tonight and remind him just what he’s missing?’

They carried on talking about me as they left the powder room and I felt the salty tears running down my cheeks. I wiped them away with the back of my hand and took a deep breath.

What a pair of bitches!

Alejandro had fulfilled his role for the evening. Perhaps I would ask him if we could leave - together? Suddenly, the night wasn’t so much fun and I wanted to change out of my dress and into my comfy sweats.

I fixed my make-up in the mirror and then with my head held high, I walked out of the restroom. I was making my way back over to our table when I saw them with him – draped over him while they all laughed.

Were they laughing at me?

I looked at the three of them and the realization that I didn’t belong here hit me like a punch to the stomach. Kiera and Michaela looked like they belonged here. They looked like they belonged on his arm.

I looked down at my ample breasts straining to break out of my dress and realized I must have looked like a complete fool.

I felt the tears threatening again and I turned and fled to the elevators. I’d sneak out through the service entrance and catch a cab home. Alejandro could have his blonde goddesses and leave me the hell alone.

The elevator stopped at the underground entrance and as the doors opened, I was greeted by one of Alejandro’s guards, Jose.

‘Good evening, Mrs. Montoya,’ he said with a smile. ‘I’m afraid I can’t

let you leave just yet.'

'Why the hell not?' I sniffed.

'Because Mr. Montoya has asked me to escort you to his suite.'

'What?' I snapped. I'd only left two minutes ago. How the hell did he even know I was gone?

'If you'll step back inside, I'll take you there now.'

'No, I'm leaving,' I said as I tried to push my way past him.

'I'm afraid you can't do that.'

I put my hands on my hips and glared at him. 'What are you going to do? Carry me up there? I'm pretty sure your boss wouldn't be very happy if you manhandle his property?'

'I'm sure he wouldn't, ma'am. But he'd be even more unhappy if I let you leave here and don't escort you to his suite. So, I'll take my chances,' he said with a shrug.

I stared at him. He was serious. 'Please, Jose, I just want to go home.'

He looked down at the floor and shook his head and then looked up at me again. 'I can't.'

'Fine,' I snapped as I walked back into the elevator.

Jose accompanied me to the top floor and let me into Alejandro's suite.

'Goodnight, Mrs. Montoya,' he said as he closed the door behind him.

I pulled on the handle after he'd left and realized it was locked.

Damn Alejandro!

How dare he keep me prisoner until he deemed it fit to grace me with his presence. I had no idea how long he was planning on staying downstairs and making me wait for him while he flirted with his ex-girlfriends.

I kicked off my heels and walked around the suite. It was absolutely beautiful, with incredible views of the L.A skyline. If I wasn't so bloody mad, I might have enjoyed it a little more. But as it was, I was pissed, and I sat on the sofa and glared at the door, waiting for The Devil to arrive.

A few moments later, he did.

Chapter Twenty-Seven

ALANA

‘WHAT THE FUCK IS WRONG WITH YOU, ALANA?’ HE SHOUTED AS HE WALKED into the room. ‘You don’t just walk out on me in the middle of a fucking dinner.’

I made a bolt for the door. I wanted out and away from him and this whole place. But he held out his arm and blocked me like a linebacker, before hoisting me onto his shoulder, carrying me into the bedroom and throwing me down onto the bed.

‘I asked you a fucking question,’ he snarled as he towered over me.

‘I didn’t think you’d even noticed that I’d gone,’ I snapped. ‘Keira and Michaela looked like they were keeping you plenty entertained.’

His scowl deepened. ‘So, this is about your childish jealousy? You made me look like a complete fool because you couldn’t handle me talking to a couple of women? For fuck’s sake, Alana!’

‘Oh, get over yourself!’ I sniffed.

He leaned his face closer to mine as though he was about to reprimand me, but then his scowl faltered. ‘Why have you been crying?’

‘I haven’t,’ I snapped.

‘Don’t fucking lie to me. I can see you’ve been crying. Why?’

‘I’m just tired. Can I please go home?’

‘This is our home for tonight. We’re staying at the hotel.’

‘Can’t we go just to the house?’

He glared at me and I wondered whether I was going to incur his epic wrath but he sat down next to me on the bed.

‘No, we can’t. Now, I want to know what the hell happened downstairs? One minute you seemed like you were having a great time. The mayor was

waiting to ask you more about your work at the shelter. He thinks you're a fucking angel! But the next thing I know I'm being told that you'd bolted and were on your way to the ground floor?'

'Did you have someone spying on me?' I snapped.

'No. But this is my hotel, and you're my fucking wife. My security watch you. It's their job to know where you are at all times. Now, for the love of God, what the fuck is going on? Is this about Michaela and Keira?'

I shook my head but he'd already seen the truth in my eyes.

'I knew it. For fuck's sake, Alana. I can't help the fact that I have a past. Just because you've never fucked anyone else, don't hold that against me.'

'You think I'm bothered that you screwed them? I don't give a crap who you screwed, you arrogant asshole!' I shouted as I pushed myself off the bed and stormed towards the door, but he was on his feet and blocking my way before I reached it.

'Then what is it?' he hissed.

I looked up at him, into those incredible dark eyes and then I remembered what those women had said about me. How I didn't belong with someone like him. I remembered how small and insignificant they had made me feel and I started to cry. Not a delicate ladylike cry either, but full force sobs that wracked my body.

I had never felt so alone in my whole life.

'Alana,' he said as he pulled me into his arms. Then he was stroking my hair and whispering in my ear. 'Please tell me what's wrong, princess. I can't stand to see you crying. Did something happen? Did someone hurt you?'

I pulled back from him and wiped the tears from my eyes. 'No. I'm just being silly. Please just let me go home and I'll be fine.'

'You're not going anywhere until you tell me what the hell has gotten you so upset.'

I stared at him for a few seconds wondering if he was going to call me a spoiled little princess again because I'd gotten so upset about what two women I barely knew had said about me. But, I also knew he wasn't going to let this go.

So, I drew in a shaky breath and I gave him a blow by blow account of what I'd overheard in the restroom – every word of it was etched into my brain.

'Me cago en lá puta?' he snarled. 'Bitches! Alana! I can't ...' he shook his head.

‘They were right though, weren’t they?’ I sniffed.

‘What?’ he scowled at me.

‘I’m not your type, am I? You could have married any woman you wanted. You’re used to dating models and actresses and I can’t compete with women like that, Alejandro. I don’t want to either. I’m fed up of never feeling good enough. Please just let me go home,’ I pleaded, unsure exactly which home I was referring to.

‘Alana,’ he said softly. ‘You don’t have to compete with anyone. There is no competition between you and them. None at all. You are my wife. You are the only woman I have ever married.’

‘You make that sound like I’m someone special, somehow. But, our marriage is nothing more than a business arrangement,’ I reminded him.

He ran a hand over his jaw. ‘Maybe that was why I married you. But, I have never been faithful to another woman in my life. I have never wanted to. You ...’ his voice was thick with emotion. ‘Lo eres todo para mí.’

I wanted to ask what that meant, but he shook his head again and then he pinned me against the wall with the full weight of his body. ‘Don’t you ever let anyone make you feel anything less than what you are, Alana. You are an incredible woman. You are beautiful, and smart. You have a huge heart –’

‘And a huge ass,’ I interrupted him.

He slid his hands around to my ass and squeezed. ‘This is the most beautiful ass I have ever seen in my life,’ he growled. ‘It’s not huge, it’s fucking perfect.’

I smiled at him. ‘I always kind of liked it myself before today too.’

Then he delivered the killer line. ‘Those bitches never made me come even half as hard as you do,’ he said with a grin. I couldn’t help but laugh as I pressed my forehead against his chest.

‘I hate that they made you feel so worthless, princess, because you are worth ten of them. I dated those women because they were there, Alana. They could have been anyone. They meant nothing to me then and they mean even less to me now. You are the only woman in my life and you are the only woman I want in my life.’

I looked up at him and smiled because I felt like he meant it. This thing between us might be a business arrangement, but in that we had come to need each other too. He no longer stayed out at the hotel anymore and every night he came home to me. He made me feel desired and he could do things to my body that I had never dreamed possible.

‘Will you stay here with me?’ he breathed against my skin.

‘Yes,’ I panted as his hands moved to my thighs and he started to pull my dress up over towards my waist.

‘I’ve been desperate to get you out of this dress ever since I saw you in it at the house,’ he growled in my ear.

I groaned as one of his hands slipped between my thighs and he hooked the fabric of my panties to one side before sliding two of his fingers through my wet folds. ‘Did Hugo see these panties today?’ he teased me.

‘Of course not.’

‘Good girl. I love how wet you get for me, princess. Your cream is so fucking sweet.’

I gasped out loud as he slipped two fingers inside me before sliding them out again and quickly pulling my dress off over my head. He tossed it into a pile in the corner like it was a rag. His eyes burned with fire as he looked down at my pink lace panties.

‘Now, these are fucking adorable, princess. It’s a shame I’m going to ruin them,’ he growled before he tore them from me.

‘Hey! They cost me forty dollars.’

‘I’ll buy you some more,’ he smiled against my skin as he wrapped me in his huge arms. ‘I’ll buy you a new pair for every single day of the rest of your life because I love tearing them off you.’

He lifted me up and carried me to the bed before placing me down on it. ‘Roll onto your front,’ he ordered and I did as he told me.

He rubbed his hand over my ass and I tensed. I had run away from him, hadn’t I? Was he going to punish me?

‘Relax, princess,’ he said softly as though reading my mind. ‘My bed is just for pleasure, remember? But sometimes a spanking can be about pleasure too,’ he said as he smacked my ass cheek with his hand.

He didn’t spank me hard, just hard enough for it to send a jolt of electricity through me. Then his hand was soothing my skin. ‘See?’ he said before he spanked me again.

‘Yes,’ I groaned as his fingers slid between my thighs and dipped into my opening.

‘You want more, princess?’

‘Yes.’

He smacked my ass again with one hand while he finger fucked me with the other.

‘You like having your ass spanked, don’t you? I can feel you creaming all over my fingers.’

‘Alex,’ I groaned as I writhed beneath him.

Then he slid his fingers out and I heard him undoing his belt buckle and his zipper.

‘Fuck, Alana. I need inside you right now,’ he groaned and then he was on his knees, pulling me towards him until my knees were on the floor too and he had me bent over the bed.

He pushed his cock deep inside me and I heard him let out a loud groan. ‘I just can’t keep out of this pussy. Do you have any idea what you do to me?’

I could barely form a coherent word, but I figured it was a rhetorical question so I just concentrated instead of the exquisite feeling of being full of him as he took exactly what he wanted, while giving me exactly what I needed.

Chapter Twenty-Eight

ALEJANDRO

I LOOKED AT ALANA LYING ON THE BED - NAKED, FRESHLY FUCKED AND WITH my cum dripping from her pussy. I didn't think I'd ever seen anything so fucking sexy in my entire life.

I felt the anger surge in my chest as I remembered what she'd overheard those nasty, jealous bitches saying about her earlier. But then she smiled up at me and I felt my rage subsiding.

'Why am I completely naked, and you're still in your tux?' she asked with a flash of her eyebrows.

'Because naked is how I like you, princess,' I said with a grin.

'Well, I really like you naked too.'

'Hmm. Pity you're not in charge then, isn't it? I have to make a few calls. Will you be okay?'

'I'm sure I can keep myself occupied,' she said with a roll of her eyes.

'Roll those eyes at me again, princess, and you'll feel my belt on your ass.'

'Ooh, kinky,' she giggled as she got up and walked towards me. She blew me a kiss as she walked towards the bathroom and I slapped her ass as she passed me.

'Oh my God! This tub is huge!' she cried as she popped her head back out of the room.

'I know,' I smiled. 'Why don't you run yourself a bath and I'll join you as soon as I'm done?'

'That sounds like a plan,' she said as she disappeared back into the room. 'This bathroom is bigger than my whole apartment back in New York. Oh, my God, you have one of those showers that does the thunderstorm thingy,'

she shouted and I couldn't help but smile to myself. For a spoiled Manhattan princess, she sure was easily pleased.

Thirty minutes later, I walked into the bathroom to see Alana lying back in the huge jacuzzi tub with her eyes closed and a glass of champagne in her hand.

I started to unbutton my shirt as I watched her. She looked so peaceful and content that I almost felt guilty disturbing her. 'Is there any of that champagne left for me, princess?'

She opened her eyes and smiled at me. 'Of course. I saved you a little,' she indicated the champagne in the ice bucket on the side of the tub and the glass beside it.

'Well, can you pour while I undress?' I said as I pulled off my shirt.

She glided over to the other side of the tub and poured me a glass while I took off the rest of my clothes. I slid into the hot, bubbling water and sighed. I didn't use this thing nearly enough.

'This is some bathroom you have here,' she said with a grin. 'Now, I get why you used to stay here so much.'

'Actually, I've hardly used this tub. The shower is fucking epic though,' I flashed my eyebrows at her.

'You should get one for the house too.'

'The tub or the shower?'

'Both?' she said.

'You don't like the bathrooms at the house?' I asked. They were traditional and understated, I supposed. Giant roll top baths and huge walk in showers, but none of the high tech additions that the hotel had.

'Actually, I love the bathrooms in the house,' she said with a shrug. 'They're beautiful and relaxing.'

'Well, now you can have the best of both worlds. We can stay here at the hotel any time you like.'

'You mean, like I could just show up here one day while you're working and decide we're sleeping over?'

I nodded. 'Whenever you want, princess.'

She downed the last of her champagne and placed her glass on the side. Then she chewed on her lower lip as she stared at me and I knew a question was coming.

‘How many women have you had sex with in this tub?’ she asked with a wicked grin on her face that I suspected was only partly due to the champagne.

‘None,’ I said as I finished my own glass and put it next to hers.

‘None? Really?’ she frowned.

‘Zero.’

‘But what’s the point of a tub like this if you don’t enjoy it?’

‘I think you’re misunderstanding the nature of my previous relationships. They weren’t about jacuzzi baths and champagne.’

‘What were they about then?’

‘You really need to ask?’

‘I just did.’

‘They were about sex. Nothing more.’

‘But, this tub is built for sex,’ she purred and I watched the flush creep up her neck and over her cheeks. ‘Isn’t it?’

‘Come over here and we’ll see.’

She pushed her body through the water until she was directly in front of me. I pulled her to straddle me, my cock already throbbing and nudging at her opening as I trailed kisses up her neck.

‘I think that you’re built for sex, Alana,’ I breathed in her ear and she whimpered as I rolled her hips over my cock.

‘What about your shower? Ever had sex in there?’ she breathed as she stared into my eyes.

‘Yes, a few times,’ I admitted. ‘But I can guarantee I never enjoyed it as much as I’m going to enjoy fucking you in it tomorrow morning.’

I felt her pussy clench on the tip of my cock. ‘You’ve got a filthy mouth,’ she breathed.

‘So you keep telling me.’

She edged herself further onto my cock as she ran her fingers through my hair and stared deep into my eyes. I felt like she was trying to see into my soul, and if she’d stared at me much longer, I might have just let her.

I lifted my hips and flipped her beneath me so she was kneeling on the ledge and I was kneeling on the base of the tub behind her.

‘Open wide, princess,’ I ordered and she spread her legs far apart. Reaching in front of her, I found her swollen clit and then I moved her body so that one of the jacuzzi jets was aimed directly onto the tender bud of flesh, leaving my hands free to roam up her body until I found her hard nipples and

tugged them gently.

‘Alex,’ she gasped and I slid my cock deep inside her.

‘Have I ever told you how much I love fucking you?’ I growled in her ear.

‘No,’ she groaned and I felt her pussy clenching around my cock, milking me with her hungry little squeezes.

‘I can’t get enough of your tight little coño, and I’m going to use it whenever and wherever I want to, because it belongs to me, doesn’t it?’

‘Yes,’ she groaned as I pounded into her against the side of the tub while the jacuzzi jet pummeled her clit.

I carried on squeezing her breasts and tugging at her nipples while I spoke to her in Spanish - telling her how much I needed her and how I would never let her go.

Then I sucked on the soft skin of her neck. A few seconds later, I felt her orgasm crash over her like a wave and she roared my name when she finally let go. The sound of her voice echoing around the bathroom, and the feeling of her walls tightening around me tipped me over the edge.

‘Fuck, princess,’ I said in her ear as we caught our breath. ‘You were right. This tub was built for sex.’

‘Told you,’ she said with a sigh.

Chapter Twenty-Nine

ALANA

I WOKE IN THE HUGE BED WITH ALEJANDRO'S ARM DRAPED OVER ME. I blinked in the dim room, forgetting where I was for a moment. My temples throbbed lightly with an impending headache and I wriggled out from under him as I reached for the bottle of water beside the bed.

He stirred as I moved. 'Where do you think you're going?' he growled.

'Nowhere. Just getting a drink.'

'Well, hurry up and get back over here.'

'You're very bossy,' I said just before taking a long gulp of the cool liquid.

'That's because I'm the boss,' he chuckled to himself and I lay back down beside him. He wrapped his arm around me again and pulled my body against his so my back was pressed up on his hard chest. I wiggled against him and he slapped my ass.

'Behave yourself and go back to sleep. It's too early,' he said with a yawn.

'I'm just getting comfortable. It's not my fault you can't control yourself.'

He ran his teeth along my shoulder and nipped at my skin. 'You'll regret that remark later when I teach you a thing or two about control, princess. Now go back to sleep.'

I closed my eyes and listened to the sound of his soft breathing and wondered how I could feel so happy with a man I could hardly stand.

Alejandro and I slept late before we'd eventually got up and eaten a delicious breakfast, and then as promised, he had fucked me in his amazing shower.

I was almost sad to be heading home, but Alejandro had work to do and I needed to drop by the shelter.

We stepped out of the elevator and I froze on the spot. Kiera and Michaela, the two bitches from the night before were in the lobby. They were looking as glamorous and groomed as ever, while I was wearing a t-shirt of Alejandro's with no bra and a pair of skinny jeans from the hotel boutique.

Alejandro looked at me and then back out into the lobby. He must have noticed them too. They were kind of hard to miss.

He grabbed my hand and pulled me behind a pillar, placing his index finger under my chin and tilting my face up towards him.

'Hey! You are Alana fucking Montoya. So, put a smile on your face, hold your head high and walk through that damn lobby like the queen that you are.'

I swallowed and nodded. Suddenly, it felt like I could do anything with him by my side. Then he leaned down and kissed me softly.

'Ready?' he asked.

'Yes.'

He winked at me and then hand in hand, we strolled through the lobby, straight towards the Bitches of Eastwick.

Alejandro squeezed my hand and I felt a renewed confidence. Our marriage might be a sham, but they would never know that. And no matter what this thing was between Alejandro and I, it was me who made the eyes roll back in his head every night. It was my name he groaned when he was on the brink of losing control.

'Good morning, ladies,' he said as we approached them.

'Morning Alejandro,' they purred as they batted their eyelashes at him.

I felt a prickle of annoyance that he was even giving these women the time of the day, but then I remembered that this was his hotel, and everything here was always about business. He pulled me closer to him, sliding his arm around my waist.

'Any nice plans for the day?' he asked them.

'We'll probably hit the beach and then we have a shoot at four,' Keira answered. 'How about you?'

'Us? Well, my beautiful wife wants to go take a drive down the coast.'

Liar!

‘But, to be honest, I doubt we’ll leave the house once we get home, because I can hardly keep my fucking hands off her,’ he said as he looked at me and winked.

I suppressed a laugh as they stood there with pure envy in their eyes.

‘Enjoy your day at the beach, ladies,’ I said with a smile and then I strolled out of the hotel with the King of L.A.’s hand on my ass.

‘Thank you for that,’ I said when we stepped outside into the sunshine.

‘Any time, princess,’ he replied with a smile and then he pulled me into his arms and kissed me, slipping his tongue into my mouth and making my knees tremble.

I almost squealed with joy when he finally let me up for air and I saw Keira and Michaela watching us with their mouths hanging open.

Chapter Thirty

ALEJANDRO

JAX LOOKED UP AT ME WITH A HUGE GRIN ON HIS FACE. ‘I’VE MISSED THIS, amigo,’ he said as he hoisted the unconscious man up from the floor and sat him on the chair in front of me.

‘You’re fucking loco, amigo,’ I said with a smile and a shake of my head. We had been in Chicago for two days dealing with this prick right here and I couldn’t wait to get home.

I looked down at Richie Burnett. I had always hated this prick. I had always known he wasn’t to be trusted, but he had worked for my Uncle Phillippe for years, and I’d been prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt for my uncle’s sake.

But, I had kept my eye on him, and had been proven right when I had caught him stealing from us, creaming an extra cut of the profit for himself every time he made a deal on my family’s behalf – as if we didn’t pay him enough. Greedy motherfucker!

I slapped Richie hard across the face and he groaned as his eyes flickered opened. He looked up at me. ‘Hijo de puta!’ he spat.

I looked at Jax who shook his head and laughed quietly. ‘Can you believe this piece of shit?’

‘Nope,’ Jax replied.

‘You still with us, mal nacido?’ I snarled.

He attempted to swing his arm at me, obviously forgetting that I had dislocated his shoulder a few hours before. He’d endured so much pain that he no longer knew what he could feel or where it was coming from.

‘Argh!’ he cried out and winced as he slumped back against the chair.

I picked up the knife from the table beside me and held it up so that the

metal blade caught the light of the overhead bulb, ensuring that Richie knew exactly what was coming next. We had made him watch two days earlier while his most loyal employees, and fellow thieves, had their tongues cut out before being shot in the head. He had known there wasn't a chance in hell he would be getting off so easily. Their bodies had been disposed of quickly and cleanly, and we had appointed a new head of our Chicago operations – Neo Lopez. Neo was young and ambitious, but he respected the order of things and I liked that about him.

Richie sat on the chair, blood congealing on every part of his body. His grey hair was so matted with dried blood that it looked black. He had been in this room for over forty-eight hours.

I had to admit I was impressed with how much he'd been able to take. I had learned the fine art of torture and the ability to inflict exactly the right amount of pain to keep a man alive whilst making him beg for death, at a young age. But, now Richie was close to the end. He was constantly slipping into unconsciousness. His body was broken, burned and bruised beyond recognition. But, Richie was a message. A message that nobody stole from the Montoyas.

I lifted his head and held the blade to his neck. 'Fuck you, Richie!' I spat as I slit his throat open and watched as the last drops of life drained from him.

'Get someone in to sort this mess out, and let's get cleaned up and get the fuck out of here,' I said to Jax as I wiped my hands on a towel.

'On it,' he said as he pulled his cell phone out of his pocket.

My business in Chicago had kept me away from Alana for two days and two nights. I'd missed her much more than I thought I would. I'd hated sleeping in my hotel room alone without her warm body pressed against mine.

It had been a week since our night at my hotel and it felt like something had shifted between us. I had hated the fact that she had been made to feel so worthless by a couple of women who meant nothing to me. I had seen a side of her that I never had before – her insecurities and her vulnerabilities, and they had brought out my protective streak.

I walked through my house and into the bedroom and smiled when I saw her sleeping figure on the bed. I pulled off my clothes and tossed them into the laundry hamper. My cock was already hard just thinking about what I was about to do to her.

I slipped beneath the covers and she stirred in her sleep

‘Alex?’ she said sleepily.

‘Yes, it’s just me princess. I missed you,’ I said as I pressed my body against hers.

‘I missed you too.’

My hands slid over her hips, over the soft cotton fabric. ‘Why are you wearing panties when you knew I’d be back tonight?’ I growled in her ear.

‘I got my period,’ she murmured.

I kissed her neck and she purred like a kitten as I slipped my fingers beneath the waistband of her panties. ‘Open your legs, princess. I want inside you.’

‘You’re going to ruin these beautiful white sheets,’ she breathed.

‘I don’t give a fuck about the sheets,’ I growled against her skin. ‘Besides, Magda is very proficient in getting blood out of clothes, I’m sure a few stained sheets aren’t beyond her.’

‘What? No. I’ll wash them myself,’ she insisted.

‘Whatever you want, princess, just let me fuck you.’

‘I’ll need to use the bathroom first though.’

I rolled onto my back, releasing her. ‘Of course.’

She got out of bed and walked to the bathroom and I admired her beautiful ass. A moment later, I heard the toilet flush and the sound of running water before she walked back out into the bedroom, hovering in the doorway.

‘Come here,’ I ordered.

She chewed her lip but then she approached the bed. I sat up and reached for her hand, pulling her to straddle me.

My hands slid onto her hips and I hooked my fingers under the band of her underwear. ‘These little cotton panties are very sexy.’

‘Don’t ruin them –’

I was already tearing them off before she could finish the sentence.

‘They’re my favorite,’ she finished with a sigh as she punched me lightly in the chest.

‘I’d say I was sorry, but ...’ I shrugged.

‘You’re not?’ she said with a flash of her eyebrows.

‘Not even a little bit,’ I grinned as I tossed the scrap of material onto the floor.

‘You have panty issues,’ she laughed.

‘I have you wearing panties, issues,’ I said and then I pulled her to me, crushing her lips against mine as I kissed her fiercely.

I shifted my hips until my cock was pressed up against her pussy and she whimpered into my mouth. I pushed inside her and she broke our kiss, gasping out loud.

‘Alex,’ she groaned.

‘What, princess?’ I growled as I took hold of her hips and guided her down deeper onto me.

‘That’s so good,’ she moaned. ‘But ... the mess.’

‘It will all be on me, not the sheets. Just relax and let me fuck you.’

She tilted her head back and groaned and I sat up, putting my arms around her waist and sinking my teeth into the tender skin on her neck. She wrapped her arms around my shoulders as she ground herself onto me.

After a few moments of allowing her to ride me at her own pace, I grabbed her ankles and pulled her legs towards me, circling them around my waist and causing her to sink even deeper onto my cock.

‘Jesus, Alex,’ she hissed in my ear.

‘That good, princess?’ I asked as I nuzzled her neck.

‘Yes,’ she groaned. ‘So good.’

‘You feel how deep I am inside you, Alana?’

‘Uh-huh.’

‘I can’t get any further in you, but it’s still not enough. It’s never enough.’

‘Alex.’

I told her how much I’d missed her – how much I needed her. But, like I usually did, I said it all in Spanish.

I rolled her hips over mine and had to slow down so I wouldn’t blow my load in her too soon. She was so hot and wet and tight, I lost my mind when I was buried inside her.

Then she started squeezing my cock with her pussy muscles as she came hard. I couldn’t hold on any longer, and I wrapped my hands over her shoulders, pushing her down onto me as I pumped out my own release.

I closed my eyes and pressed her tighter to me and she rested her head on my chest.

‘That was incredible,’ she panted. ‘But I’m almost scared to stand up.’

I planted a kiss against the top of her head. ‘Don’t move. I’ll take us for a shower.’ I stood up, with her legs around my waist and my cock still inside her and I walked us to the bathroom.

Chapter Thirty-One

ALEJANDRO

I STOOD AT THE FLOOR LENGTH WINDOW OF MY OFFICE AT THE HOTEL, looking out at the L.A skyline. I would never tire of this view no matter how many times I looked out across it. I smiled as I thought of another view I'd never tire of and that was of my wife's beautiful ass as I fucked her from behind. My cock twitched at the memory.

I heard the door creaking behind me and turned knowing it would be Jax, I turned to see him sauntering into the room.

'Hey, amigo,' he said as he took a seat opposite my desk.

I nodded at him. After our trip to Chicago, Jax had headed straight to Virginia to dig into Layton Cooper and find out if what he'd told us in that warehouse was true. This was Alana's father we were talking about, and I didn't want anyone else looking into this for me.

'What have you got for me?' I asked.

'Everything points to what Cooper said being the truth,' Jax said as he let out a low breath.

'So, how was the daughter's death ruled a suicide?'

'Well, we both know that Foster Carmichael has a lot of powerful people at his disposal. Bethany Cooper was a young, troubled teen. She'd just had an abortion and couldn't live with the guilt – at least that was the picture that was painted.'

'But Layton Cooper believed differently?'

Jax nodded. 'Yep. And all of the leads I followed led me to the same conclusion. Her friends confirmed she completely changed after her trip to New York. She went from a straight A student who was popular and outgoing, to someone who was withdrawn and barely spoke to anyone.'

‘And the baby?’

‘Bethany told people that it was her high school boyfriend who’d knocked her up, but I spoke to the kid and he flat out denied it. I put some pressure on him too, amigo, but he said he and Bethany had never got past third base.’

‘But Foster though? She would have been fifteen when he met her?’

Jax nodded. ‘I know. Sick fuck! But I had a *friendly* chat with the coroner,’ he said with a flash of his eyebrows.

I knew from experience that Jax’s friendly chats were anything but and the coroner would have been lucky to escape with just a broken bone or two.

‘And he confirmed that he was paid a significant amount of money from someone in the Carmichael administration to confirm the death as suicide, despite there being no note and some defensive wounds on Bethany’s wrists.’

‘Fucker!’ I hissed.

‘And if that wasn’t enough, Bethany apparently confided in her best friend, Karen, that the baby’s father was an older man she’d met in New York, who had basically invited her to his office, drugged her and convinced her that she had begged him for sex. She didn’t name this man, but said he was very powerful. Karen also told me that Bethany was clearly terrified of this guy and what he was going to do to her.’

‘But what’s the connection between the Coopers and Carmichael?’

‘Layton Cooper did some contracting work on Foster Carmichael’s lake house. I spoke to some of his employees and from what they said, Bethany used to enjoy going to work with her dad and his crew sometimes. Cooper took his daughter to Carmichael’s lake house and apparently while she was there, Cooper objected to the unhealthy interest Carmichael showed in his young daughter and he stopped her going there. I had someone look into Bethany’s social media accounts and she had arranged to meet someone in New York a few weeks later during her class trip. Carmichael was in New York at the time.’

‘And Carmichael, or at least someone from his administration, paid to cover this up?’ I asked, knowing all too well how easily corrupted some officials were.

‘Yes,’ Jax said with a solemn nod of his head. ‘You think Alana knew about any of this?’

I shook my head. ‘No way. She volunteers forty hours a week at a shelter for abused women and kids. I can’t believe that she would be involved in

anything like that.'

Jax let out a low whistle. 'You've married into one fucked up family, amigo, and that's saying something.'

I nodded my agreement. 'At least my family are open about what we are, but Carmichael pretends he's some sort of fucking saint. And worst of all, Alana believes he is too. It drives me fucking crazy how loyal she is to that son of a bitch.'

'She'll see through him one day, amigo.'

'I fucking hope so. I won't have my children anywhere near that sick fuck!'

By the time I got home a few hours after my meeting with Jax, I was still raging. And if I couldn't take my frustration out on the Carmichael who deserved my wrath, then his daughter would have to do. Besides, she could soothe my anger way more effectively than anything else I could think of.

I stormed through the house looking for her and found her in her usual spot, reading in the den. She was such a bookworm and I'd come to realize that reading was her favorite way to unwind. But, it most definitely wasn't mine.

She looked up from her book as I walked into the room – all huge brown eyes and innocence.

Did she really have no idea what a monster her father was? Or was she covering for him. Did she know all about poor Bethany Cooper and the fact that her father had raped and murdered her?

I shook my head. I couldn't believe it of her. She was too good. Too good for her cunt of a father, and too good for me. Pity I was too much of a monster myself to let her go though.

I walked over to her and held out my hand. She put her book down on the sofa beside her and took my hand without questioning why, or where I was taking her.

I pulled her up and led her out of the room and up to the master bedroom. As soon as we were inside, I closed the doors behind us and she stood by the bed, staring at me and trembling slightly. I crossed the room to her and brushed my knuckles across her cheek.

'I've had a fucking awful day,' was all I could think of to say. All I could offer as justification for what I was about to do to her.

She nodded in understanding. ‘Okay,’ she breathed.

‘Take off your clothes and lie on the bed,’ I growled.

She obeyed immediately and started to slide her yoga pants over her hips and down her legs before kicking them off. She wasn’t wearing panties and her compliance with my rule almost made me smile.

I watched as she silently removed her tank top and bra and tossed them onto the floor too. Then she lay back on the bed.

‘Spread your legs so I can see what belongs to me,’ I snapped as I started to undress, and she opened them wide until I had a glorious view of her waxed pussy.

I heard her breathing becoming heavier and faster as she waited for whatever I was about to do to her. I pulled my belt off and walked to the head of the bed.

‘Give me your hands,’ I said, and she lifted them up to me. I looped the leather around her wrists, pulling it tight against her skin until she winced slightly. I fed the belt through the metal bed-frame and then back through the loop on her wrist before fastening it and securing her wrists in place.

She looked up at me the whole time I was doing it, her eyes wide and her mouth open in expectation. I bent down and kissed her quickly, nipping at her lower lip as I pulled away.

I picked up a pillow. ‘Ass up,’ I ordered, and she raised her hips, allowing me to slide the pillow beneath her so that her pussy was at the perfect angle for the hammering I was about to give her.

When I’d finished undressing, I crawled over her, running my hands over her body and squeezing each of her breasts in turn, making her groan out loud. I was already hard, and I couldn’t wait to bury my cock in her. But if I wanted to fuck her as hard as I intended, I needed her wet and loose.

‘Alex,’ she moaned, and I sucked one of her nipples into my mouth as my hand slid down her body until I reached her slick folds.

‘I need to fuck you real hard, princess,’ I growled against her skin as I slipped two fingers inside her.

‘I know,’ she moaned as I added a third finger, stretching her wide as she writhed beneath me, pulling at her wrist restraint.

‘The more you pull against that, the tighter it will get,’ I said as I grazed my teeth along the soft skin of her neck.

‘I can’t help it,’ she panted.

I sank my teeth into her neck and sucked hard.

‘Alex,’ she whimpered.

‘What, princess?’ I growled as I thrust my fingers in and out of her.

‘I need you inside me,’ she breathed.

‘I’ve got half of my hand inside you, Alana. How much more of me do you want?’

She dragged in a breath as I pumped her faster.

‘You want my cock in you, don’t you?’

‘Yes,’ she gasped as her hips bucked against me. I slipped my fingers out of her wet channel and positioned myself at the perfect angle between her thighs, until I was nudging at her opening. My cock was screaming to be inside her.

She pulled at her restraints again as she tried to press her hips up onto me, but I held her in place, my body pressing down on hers. I rested my upper body on one forearm and I wrapped my free hand around her throat.

She looked at me. Completely helpless. Just how I liked it. I hadn’t done anything to earn her submission, but I would take it anyway.

‘Alex,’ she whispered. ‘Please?’

I suddenly realized that I had more than her submission. I had her trust too. And I definitely hadn’t done anything to deserve that.

‘If that’s what you want, princess,’ I growled as I slammed into her.

She made a noise – half shout, half groan, somewhere between pain and pleasure, and it turned me into a demon. I pressed my mouth over hers, forcing my tongue inside her as I gently squeezed her throat. She whimpered into my mouth, but she kissed me back as fiercely as I kissed her.

After a few minutes, I had to wrench my mouth away from hers so I could breathe as my heart raced. I buried my face in her neck instead as I nailed her to the bed with every ounce of energy I had.

I’d never felt such a desperate need to get inside someone before. My body craved her. I felt like I was losing my mind. What the fuck was this woman doing to me?

I took my hand from her throat and she gasped as I slid it down her body, cupping her ass cheek and lifting her hip even higher so I might get another fraction further inside her.

‘Oh, God,’ she moaned.

‘No, not God. Me,’ I growled in her ear as I drove into her even harder.

I bit and sucked her neck as I kept on fucking her, marking her as my own. Because she was only meant for me. I loved that no man had touched

her before me and I would make sure that none ever would after me.

Chapter Thirty-Two

ALANA

I PULLED AT MY RESTRAINTS AND THE SOFT LEATHER OF ALEJANDRO'S BELT pinched my skin, but I couldn't help it. I was desperate to touch him.

I wanted to pull my fingers through his thick dark hair and rake my fingernails down his back. I didn't want to know what had happened today to make him come home in desperate need of this, but he was fucking me like a man possessed – and I loved it.

There was no tenderness from him at all. He was all anger and fire and fury, but I didn't care. I let him take what he wanted, because I knew that was what he needed. And I so wanted to be what he needed, and I didn't even know why.

I should hate this man. This devil. But, I couldn't any longer. He was breaking down every last line of my defenses and there wasn't a single thing I could do to stop him.

His fingertips dug into my ass cheek and I cried out, half in pleasure, half in pain, as he increased his efforts. He pounded into me, driving at that sweet spot inside me over and over again until I could feel myself falling off the edge of the cliff.

I shouted his name as my orgasm crashed over me like a tsunami and he bit so deeply into the tender skin between my neck and my shoulder, that I was sure he must have drawn blood. But the pain was blocked out by the euphoria coursing through my body like it was the blood in my veins.

He gave a final thrust as he found his own release and then he collapsed on top of me – his skin damp and his breathing heavy from his exertions.

If my hands were free, I would have wrapped my arms around him and buried my fingers in his hair. But my wrists were still bound, and my legs

were trembling so bad that I could barely lift them.

We lay there for a few moments, barely moving, before he lifted himself up and reached up to free my wrists.

I rubbed at the tender skin but noticed that it wasn't broken. Then Alejandro stood up and walked to the bathroom without saying a word, leaving me lying alone.

I heard the shower being switched on and I got up from the bed. I ran a hand over my neck and shoulders and rubbed at the bite mark, checking for blood, but there was none.

I looked towards the bathroom and took a deep breath. I could pout at how he had just walked out of the room without a word after what we'd just done, or I could accept that I was married to a man who had more demons than hell itself.

I walked into the bathroom and looked at him standing in the shower with the hot water running over his muscular body. I would never get used to the sight of him naked. He was a work of art.

He looked up and saw me standing there watching him. 'Ven aquí,' he ordered.

I licked my lips. I wasn't sure I could take much more of him right now. But I did as he asked me, stepping into the hot shower with him.

He slid a hand around my waist and pulled me to him, before settling one hand on my ass as the other moved to the back of my neck. He wrapped my hair around his fist and then tilted my head up to his before sealing his mouth over mine.

He kissed me – not like before, but softly and slowly, lazily exploring my mouth with his tongue as his hands pressed me tightly to him. I wrapped my arms around his neck and my body melted into his until I could hardly tell where he ended and I began.

I felt the fire inside igniting with fervor, as though I was always on a pilot light around him, and all he had to do was touch me and I was in full flame.

We stood there like that for a long time, with the water running over our bodies as he kissed me. This was a different claiming than what had just happened on the bed. He was still taking everything from me – demanding my submission. But this was much more dangerous than before. I was falling and I had no idea how to stop.

I don't know how long we stayed like that, but suddenly the water shut off, and then he was lifting me into his arms and carrying me back into the

bedroom, his lips not leaving mine the whole time.

He lay me down on the bed, both of us dripping wet and then he settled between my thighs and we kept on kissing. I felt his erection pressing against my abdomen, but he didn't attempt to move or do anything about it.

When he finally broke our kiss, I looked into his eyes. 'You have the darkest eyes I have ever seen,' I said as I traced my fingertips along his jawline.

'They're as dark as my soul, princess,' he growled.

'I don't think that's true,' I whispered.

'Really?' he frowned.

'Really.'

'Even after what I just did?'

'What did you do?' I grinned at him.

'Tied you up and fucked you?' he said with a flash of his eyebrows.

'Well, I enjoyed that though,' I purred in his ear.

'You did, huh?' he growled.

'Yes,' I said as tilted my hips, pressing my groin against his cock and making him groan.

'We need to eat,' he said as he nipped at my neck.

'I have something right here you could eat. I figure you owe me after you just tied me up and fucked me,' I smiled at him.

'But you just said you liked that?' he grinned at me.

I placed my hands on either side of his face. It was nice to see him smiling. Whatever the reason for the bad mood he was in when he'd got home, he seemed like he was over it now. 'I did. A lot!'

He made a noise in his throat that sounded like a half growl and half groan and it made me giggle.

'You want me to eat you out, princess?' he whispered in my ear.

'Yes please,' I panted.

'If I do, will you come to the kitchen and eat dinner with me after?'

'Yes,' I panted. 'I'll eat whatever you want.'

He chuckled to himself and then his head disappeared down the bed and between my thighs.

'I've never tasted my own cum before,' he growled as he slid his tongue inside me.

'Alex,' I groaned, already on the edge.

'It's okay, princess, I got you,' he said before he ran his hot, thick tongue

right up to my clit, sucking it into his mouth as he rimmed either side of it.
I came so hard I almost passed out.

Chapter Thirty-Three

ALEJANDRO

THE FOLLOWING EVENING, I WAS SITTING OPPOSITE ALANA AT THE DINNER table. I watched as she pushed her potatoes around the plate with her fork. Wherever she was, it wasn't in this room.

‘Something on your mind, princess?’

She looked up at me and blinked. ‘Sorry, I was just thinking about the shelter, that’s all. Did I tell you we’ve found a new building?’

‘No,’ I said as I took a sip of my water.

‘Yes. It’s so much better than the one they have now. It has more rooms and a huge kitchen and a garden for the kids. It’s in a much nicer neighborhood too.’

‘Sounds good.’

She looked at me and licked her lips. I thought about sticking my cock in that hot mouth of hers but sensed she wanted something else from me. ‘What is it?’

‘I just wondered if you wanted to come to the opening with me on Saturday, that’s all? But, I’m sure you’re busy.’

‘I’ll come with you.’

‘Really?’ she said with a smile that made my cock twitch.

Shit! I was letting her get too close to me again. ‘Yes. It will be good for business.’

Her smile faltered for a second and I saw the flicker of hurt across her face. I felt a moments guilt, but I swallowed it down. I was a bastard. She already knew that.

I put my knife and fork down. ‘Come here.’

She stood and walked around the table to me. The way she obeyed me

without question turned the twitch in my cock to a throb. I pushed my chair back and grabbed hold of her hips, pulling her onto me until she was straddling me. Slipping my hand up her dress and between her thighs, I reached her pussy and was pleased to find she wasn't wearing panties.

'Good girl,' I said as I slid my fingers through her slit. I was even more pleased to find her dripping wet and ready for me. 'Does walking around with no panties make you wet, princess?'

She didn't answer as I slipped a finger inside her. Instead she let out a low moan and threw her head back, exposing the creamy skin of her neck.

I rubbed my nose along her collarbone, inhaling her sweet scent. I added a second finger and she cried out and wrapped her hands around my neck. I pumped in and out of her slick channel. The sound of her arousal making me desperate to bury myself in her.

I pulled my fingers out of her and she bit her lip in frustration. But she knew what was coming next, and as much as she loved my fingers, she loved my cock inside her so much more.

I stood, holding onto her ass as she wrapped her legs around my waist. I pushed the plates and cutlery out of the way, sending some of them crashing to the floor and placed her down on the table.

Then I reached for my zipper and pulled out my cock. I was so hard it was almost painful. In one swift move, I was inside her and I sighed with the relief of having her tight pussy squeezing me. She buried her head in my neck as I drove into her like a man possessed.

'You liked being fucked on the dining table, princess?' I panted, and she blushed in response.

When she didn't answer me, I slammed into her even harder. 'Well?'

'Yes,' she gasped.

'You're going to come for me on this table. So, the next time I'm eating here, all I'll be able to think about will be you spilling your delicious cream.'

'Alex,' she moaned, and I increased my pace, sliding my hand between us and rubbing her sensitive clit until she screamed my name instead.

Chapter Thirty-Four

ALANA

ALEJANDRO OPENED THE CAR DOOR AND TOOK MY HAND, HELPING ME OUT. He'd told Jacob to park down the block so that we weren't pulling up in his fancy car outside a shelter where the residents had very little. The fact that he'd thought of that surprised me. Maybe he wasn't such an uncaring monster, after all?

He wasn't dressed in his usual suit either, but was wearing jeans and a polo shirt, so his muscular arms and some of his tattoos were on display. Even dressed casually, he still looked hotter than the sun.

He kept hold of my hand as we walked down the street. I swallowed as we neared the shelter.

'Are you nervous?' he asked me.

God, why did he have to know me so well! 'A little,' I admitted.

'Do you think I'm going to embarrass you?' he said with a cock of one eyebrow.

'No,' I replied. 'It's just this has been my world for the past eight weeks, and now you're going to see it, and it feels kind of strange.'

'It will be fine,' he said and then he leaned in and gave me a gentle kiss on the cheek. My heart almost stopped beating. It was such a tender act that it unnerved me.

This wasn't him. It certainly wasn't him and me. We fucked and we fought. We didn't do this real husband and wife stuff. Had I made a huge mistake bringing him here? I supposed it was too late now.

A few seconds later, we were standing outside the shelter.

'You ready?' Alejandro asked.

I nodded.

As soon as we walked through the doors, we were accosted by Kristen, the shelter manager.

‘Alana!’ she shouted as she pulled me into a hug.

I hugged her back warmly. I loved Kristen. She was warm and fun and kind, and she had devoted her life to helping other people. She stepped back and smoothed her hair back from her face as she looked at Alejandro.

‘Kristen, this is my husband, Alejandro,’ I said with a feeling of pride that completely blindsided me. What did I have to be proud of? It wasn’t like any of what me and him shared was real. But, I felt it anyway.

‘Kristen,’ Alejandro said as he took her hand and kissed it. ‘It’s a pleasure to meet you.’

‘Oh, the pleasure is mine,’ she blushed.

‘This place looks great,’ Alejandro said as he looked around. ‘You must be doing an excellent job.’

Kristen put an arm around my shoulder. ‘Well, there is no way we’d be standing in this fine building if it wasn’t for your incredible wife. I think she must be our guardian angel, because before she showed up, we were about to be evicted from a building that was, quite frankly, falling apart.’

‘Kristen!’ I said as I felt the heat creeping over my neck and cheeks.

‘She’s awful at taking compliments, isn’t she?’ Kristen laughed, and Alejandro laughed too.

‘Yes, she is,’ he said and winked at me.

‘I can’t thank you enough for bringing her into our lives anyway, Mr. Montoya. I honestly don’t know what we’d do without her. You must be very proud.’

Alejandro looked at me and smiled and I felt my heart hammering in my chest. ‘Oh, I am,’ he said and if I didn’t know him better, I would have sworn he meant it.

‘Alana,’ I heard a voice behind us shout, breaking the moment. I turned to see Lucy walking towards us.

Lucy broke my heart. Sixteen years old, pregnant and with no family at all. Not that anyone else knew she was sixteen and pregnant – she had false documentation stating she was eighteen, and I still hadn’t worked out what I was going to do about it.

I hadn’t been able to get details of the father of her baby, other than he was older than her and his name was Blake. But, he sounded like very bad news. I’d spent so much time with her over these past few weeks, and I was

growing to care for her deeply. She was such a sweet kid who had been dealt a crappy hand in life.

‘Lucy,’ I said with a smile as I gave her a quick hug. ‘I’d like you to meet, Alejandro.’

‘Is this your husband?’ she said as she looked him over.

‘I certainly am,’ Alejandro answered.

Lucy turned to me and grinned. ‘Way to go, Alana,’ she said and gave me a fist bump.

Alejandro slipped his hand around my waist, skimming my ass as he did and sending a shockwave of electricity through me. He pulled me towards him. ‘How about you show me around this place?’

‘Of course, come on,’ I said and we excused ourselves.

I had almost given Alejandro the full tour, which had taken some considerable time as I’d had to introduce him to every single person we met along the way. He was charming to everyone and I saw a glimpse of how the outside world must see him – the King of L.A. No wonder he had people constantly fawning all over him.

We were walking down the hallway, when Alejandro pulled me into the store cupboard, closing the door behind us and pressing me up against it before kissing me greedily. His hand slipped over my ass and he squeezed hard.

‘Not here,’ I breathed as I broke our kiss.

‘I know,’ he said as he lifted his hand and gently dusted his knuckles over my cheek. ‘I just had to kiss you, that’s all. I can wait until we get home to fuck you, or at least until we get in the car,’ he flashed his eyebrows at me.

‘You have sex on the brain,’ I said although I pulled his body closer and could feel the growing hardness through his jeans.

‘I have you on the brain, Mrs. Montoya,’ he said as he pulled his hips away from me and nipped my shoulder blade. ‘And seeing how much these people love you is only making me want to take you home and remind you that you’re mine.’

‘How could I forget?’ I said, placing my hands on his hard chest.

‘So, how much is this place costing me?’ he said with flash of his eyebrows.

I blinked at him. ‘What?’

‘This new shelter. How much am I in for?’

Sometimes, I could hardly believe the arrogance of this man. ‘Nothing,’ I

said as I crossed my arms over my chest, trying to create some distance between us.

‘Nothing?’

I saw the surprise on his face and felt the satisfaction at him being completely clueless for once.

‘I have fundraised for every cent in this place. I haven’t used any of your money. I don’t need your money, Alejandro.’

‘What? Why haven’t you at least asked for a donation from the business.’

I shrugged. ‘I wasn’t sure that you’d be interested.’

‘You didn’t think that I’d be interested in helping abused women and children?’ he said with a scowl.

‘No,’ I replied.

His face changed in an instant and now it was full of anger and fire. He reached behind me and opened the door handle. ‘Let’s go,’ he growled.

I stepped out of the store room and he followed close behind me. I was about to say something to ease the tension that was now between us, but before I could he’d pulled his phone out of his pocket and had it pressed to his ear. A few seconds later, I heard him barking orders in Spanish.

Kristen and another of the workers, Casey, approached us as Alejandro put his phone away and he smiled at them, his mask firmly back in place.

‘Alana, I need to show you the TV in the rec room,’ Casey said. ‘It’s huge!’ She grabbed my hand and I gave Alejandro an apologetic shrug and left him talking to Kristen.

Twenty minutes later, I was chatting to a few of the kids in the den when Alejandro approached me.

‘Alana, it’s time to go,’ he said softly.

I checked my watch. It was getting late and I supposed I’d taken enough of his time. ‘Okay,’ I said.

We said goodbye to everyone and then walked out of the building. I saw the car waiting over the road and went to cross but Alejandro grabbed my arm and shook his head. Then Jacob approached us, and handed Alejandro a set of keys.

‘Be gentle with her, Boss, won’t you?’ he said.

Be gentle with who? I swallowed. Did he mean me? Was I about to be punished for my earlier slight against him.

‘Of course, I will,’ he said with a smile.

‘Night, Mrs. Montoya,’ Jacob said with a nod and then he jogged over to the car.

Alejandro took my hand and started walking down the street in the direction Jacob had come from. ‘Here’s our ride,’ he said as he steered me towards an old Mustang.

So the *she* Jacob had been referring to was a car. Alejandro had lots of cars – all high end and top spec. I wondered who this old beat up Mustang belonged to, and why we were driving home in it. Suddenly, I felt incredibly anxious.

‘Why aren’t we taking the car?’ I asked him.

‘Because I’m taking you somewhere, and it’s not the kind of place I want to go in a limo.’

He opened the passenger door for me and I climbed inside. I leaned over and opened the lock on the drivers’ door panel for him. He slid into the seat and ran his hands lovingly over the steering wheel. That was when I realized this was his car, and that he wasn’t about to push it over a cliff with me inside.

‘Where are we going?’ I asked.

‘You’ll see,’ he replied as he started the engine. The car roared to life and he smiled to himself.

Half an hour later, we had driven out of the city and into the projects. Alejandro pulled up outside an old fashioned diner and turned off the engine.

‘Why are we here?’ I said as I looked around. It was one of the poorest places I’d ever seen and not the type of place I’d expect Alejandro to even know about.

‘My mother grew up in this neighborhood. Born and raised here until she met my father when she was seventeen. When I was a kid, she still used to come back here every Saturday morning to check on her old friends and neighbors. She always brought me with her and I learned to play basketball on the court right over there. That’s where I first met Jax too,’ he said as he pointed to the court in the distance. ‘My father used to try and stop her. He said it was too dangerous. But she used to sneak here anyway. It may sound crazy, but we were probably safer here than we ever were in our gated mansion.’

‘I didn’t realize,’ I said.

He shrugged. ‘Well, it’s not something you’d know about. All of her friends and neighbors have moved on now, but she still does a lot for the place. She donated the money for that library across the street. And this old diner was going to go under, but she convinced my father to buy it and give the place a makeover. It’s operated at a loss every year he’s owned it, because the food is so cheap,’ he said with a chuckle.

I laughed too. ‘That’s not a great business model.’

He turned to me. ‘No, it’s not.’

‘I see why you brought me here,’ I said. ‘And I’m sorry that I thought you wouldn’t be interested in helping people.’

‘You don’t need to apologize for your thoughts, Alana. To be honest, I’m happy for the world not to know about that side of my family.’

‘But you wanted me to know?’ I said, and my heart swelled in my chest.

‘It seems so,’ he said as he ran a hand over his jaw.

Suddenly, it felt like everything was becoming too deep and meaningful, and I didn’t know how to be like that with him. I was scared that he would break through the last few bricks of my wall, and I didn’t know what I’d do if he did. To let him in completely ... I couldn’t.

‘Would you like to donate some money to the shelter, Mr. Montoya?’ I purred.

He turned to me with a wicked grin. ‘If I promise to be your biggest donor, will I get any additional benefits?’

I placed my hand on his thigh. ‘What additional benefits did you have in mind, Mr. Montoya?’ I breathed as I ran my hand up towards his groin.

He groaned and shifted in his seat. ‘None that I’d like to indulge in sitting in this car in the middle of this neighborhood, princess,’ he growled. ‘Let’s get you home and get you naked, and then we can discuss my benefits.’

Then he started the ignition and pulled away from the curbside.

Alejandro had me pinned to the wall as soon as we got into the house. He reached for the hem of my dress, and then had it pulled up and over my head before I could even start to protest. My body was pressed up against the cool plaster as his hot mouth and hands trailed over my body before he removed my bra.

My heart raced and every nerve ending thrummed with need. Grabbing

hold of my panties, he tugged sharply and the material shredded easily in his strong hands.

‘Alex,’ I gasped and he grinned.

‘You know how I feel about panties in the house, princess. But, as you were such a good girl today, would you like to be fucked in the hallway, or in our bed?’

Our bed! Not his – ours.

‘Bed,’ I whispered. He lifted me by my ass cheeks so I could wrap my legs around his waist and then carried me to the bedroom, all the while trailing hot kisses along my neck and collarbone.

When we reached the bedroom, he kicked open the double doors before storming over to the bed and throwing me down onto it. I bounced and landed in the middle with a giggle.

He stared down at my naked body and ran his tongue over his lower lip. ‘You are fucking beautiful, Alana,’ he growled before peeling off his polo shirt and tossing it onto the floor.

He slowly unbuttoned his jeans and peeled them down his perfectly sculpted legs, before kicking them off along with his sneakers.

I swallowed as he stalked towards me. He was always so fierce. He looked like he wanted to nail me into oblivion. He crawled over me, trailing kisses up my thighs before pushing my legs far apart and blowing cool air over my dripping folds. A few seconds later, I was writhing beneath him. Then his hot tongue licked the length of my cleft and I whimpered shamelessly.

‘I could eat your pussy all day long, princess,’ he growled against me before swirling his tongue over my clit.

He wrapped his hands around the back of my thighs and pulled me closer to him as he settled his head between my legs and began licking and sucking on the sensitive nub of flesh. I felt my climax building and building, and every time I got close, he moved lower, licking at my opening as I bucked my hips against his face.

‘Alex, please?’ I begged as he taunted me.

‘Don’t be so impatient,’ he growled before he pushed himself up on his forearms and crawled up the bed towards me. He pressed his groin into mine so I could feel his rock hard erection. ‘This is what you really want, isn’t it?’ he said as he rubbed his cock against me.

I couldn’t answer him because my mouth seemed to have lost its ability to

form coherent words.

He ran his teeth along my jawline and I could feel the dampness of my arousal on his skin. ‘You want me to bury my cock inside your sweet little pussy, princess?’ he whispered in my ear.

‘Uh-huh,’ was all I could manage.

He lifted his head and looked into my eyes. ‘You were incredible today, Alana. What you’ve done for the shelter is incredible. I meant it when I said I was proud of you.’

I stared into his dark eyes and felt a sob catch in my throat. I couldn’t handle him like this – when he was sweet and charming and caring. The arrogant asshole who fucked like he was born for sex and sin, I knew where I stood with. But this man was someone else.

‘Wrap your legs around me,’ he said softly. ‘I’m going to fuck you like you deserve tonight.’

I wrapped my legs around his waist and he pushed himself inside me in one swift movement. I was so wet from his earlier teasing that he slid in easily, making me groan his name.

Then he started to fuck me slowly. So slowly that I felt every single millimeter of him as he moved in and out of me. He sealed his mouth over mine and kissed me at the same time, deeply and fiercely, while he continued the slow and steady pace with his hips.

I whimpered into his mouth as I clung to him. Every nerve ending in my body was screaming for release. His unhurried, yet deliberate rhythm kept me right on the precipice of ecstasy. This was like nothing we’d ever done before. One of his hands fisted in my hair while the other roamed over my body as he continued leisurely fucking me.

When he broke our kiss, he whispered in Spanish in my ear. And while I had no idea what he was saying, the sound of his voice vibrated through my body, as though he was perfectly tuned to its frequency.

I felt worshipped and adored by him. But surely that was all in my head?

Because this was Alejandro Montoya.

This was the man who had bound me to him through fear and intimidation.

This was the man who didn’t do love.

But this was the man I was losing myself to, and I didn’t know how to stop.

I felt my climax building and building and he kissed me again, even

deeper than before. His tongue swirling against mine.

He kept me teetering on the edge of oblivion for what felt like an eternity as he maintained his steady pace, continuing to rub against that place inside of me that made me feel completely helpless to resist him.

I felt the tears rolling down my cheeks as my body took everything he could give it. This was like nothing I'd ever experienced before. If there was a heaven, then this was it.

I wrenched my lips from his as I felt my orgasm bursting through me like a river breaching a dam. There was a rush of warm liquid, stronger than anything I had ever felt before. It gushed out of me, soaking the two of us and the bed sheets. I gasped for air as my entire body shook and my head started to spin. What the hell was that? It was so freaking intense!

'Fuck, Alana,' Alejandro hissed through gritted teeth and for a second, I was worried that I'd done something wrong. 'As if I don't spend enough of my time fucking you, or thinking about fucking you, and now I find out you're a squirter. Jesus Christ, princess, you're going to be the fucking death of me.'

'Is that good?' I breathed as I tried to regain some sense of reality.

'Good? It's fucking incredible.'

He picked up his pace then, the wet sounds of him moving in and out of me reverberating around the bedroom.

A few moments later, he growled and cursed in Spanish as he found his own climax. I smiled as I watched him coming apart for me, his eyes rolling back into his head and his mouth open in ecstasy. He had lost complete control and I loved that I could do that to him.

As we lay together, catching our breaths, Alejandro draped one of his heavy arms over me and pulled me closer to him. He nuzzled my neck and I ran my hand through his thick, dark hair, curling a lock of it around the tip of my index finger.

'So, fucking my girl nice and slow makes her squirt?' he said with a soft sigh. 'Does this mean I'm going to have to change my position on fucking as a whole now?'

'No, I love the other way too.'

He groaned out loud before sinking his teeth into my neck. I threw my head back to give him easier access. 'I'm going to fuck you every single way there is, princess, don't worry,' he growled. Then he moved his head to look into my eyes. 'How the fuck did you end up with a monster like me, Alana?'

‘You stole me, remember?’ I said with a smile.

‘Hmm. And I’m never giving you back.’

‘Good,’ I whispered. ‘I don’t want to go back.’

I don’t know what flashed through his eyes when I said that, but it looked like a mixture of pain and sadness and I wondered if I could take back my words.

‘Lo eres todo para mi,’ he said softly. Before I could ask him what that meant, he silenced me with one of his deep, breath-taking kisses.

The following morning, Alejandro had left early for work. I looked at the empty space in the bed beside me where he should be and felt an aching for him that took me completely by surprise. The previous day had been incredible, and I wasn’t sure that any of my defenses against the king of L.A were still intact.

I walked into the kitchen to see Magda taking some fresh pastries out of the oven. ‘Magda, your cooking is going to make me fat,’ I said with a grin as I walked over and inhaled the delicious smell.

‘Dulce niña, you will never get fat. Magda will not let you,’ she said with a wag of her finger.

I laughed as I helped myself to a cup of coffee. Magda was sixty three years old and as fit as a fiddle. She did yoga every afternoon in the garden, and sometimes I joined her. Although I preferred Bikram to her Hatha.

‘Hey, Magda, can you tell me what *lo eres todo para mi*, means?’

She looked at me and her whole face softened as she smiled. I often asked her to translate the snippets of Spanish conversation that I heard around the house. I was going to learn the language eventually, but I hadn’t found a class yet.

‘It means, *you are everything to me*,’ she replied.

I felt my heart leap into my throat. That was what Alejandro had said to me last night?

Surely, I had misheard him? Or if I had heard him right, he must have been caught up in the moment. That was what I told myself, but despite that, I walked out of the kitchen with a huge smile on my face and a spring in my

step.

I was everything to him.

Chapter Thirty-Five

ALEJANDRO

I WAS FLICKING THROUGH SOME PAPERWORK IN MY STUDY WHEN THE DOOR opened. I looked up and frowned. Nobody walked in here without knocking. But then I saw my father walking through the door and smiled. My father never sought permission to do anything.

‘Papa,’ I said as I walked towards him and he pulled me into a giant hug before kissing me on each cheek.

‘You look good, mi hijo,’ he said in his deep gravelly voice. ‘Marriage must suit you?’

‘I think it does, Papa,’ I said as I indicated a chair for him to sit on. ‘What brings you down here? I didn’t know you were coming to L.A?’

‘Business,’ he said with a shrug.

‘Anything I should know about?’ I frowned.

‘Nothing for you to be concerned about for now. Your uncles and I have it all in hand. However, I think it’s about time you had a meeting with your influential father in law. I’m having some trouble with some permits in New York and I need them handling.’

I nodded as I sat behind my desk. ‘I’ll arrange a meeting with him next week,’ I replied.

My father and my uncles handled the dirtier side of our business, while I handled the more legitimate branches of our operations. At least that was how it worked for now. In a few years, I would take over the whole corporation while my father eased into retirement. Not that you could ever truly retire from our family business.

‘Is that all you needed to see me about?’ I asked him.

‘No,’ he shook his head. ‘I couldn’t stop by without visiting my favorite

son,' he said with a flash of his eyebrows.

'I'm your only son,' I reminded him.

'Semantics,' he said with a wave of his hand. 'So, how is that wife of yours working out? Have you managed to tame the spoiled little rich girl yet?'

I chewed on my lower lip. 'Actually, I'm not sure she needs taming, Papa.'

'What?'

'She's nothing like what her father described. She's nothing like him at all. She's ... She reminds me of mama in some ways.'

My father stared at me, his eyes narrowed in suspicion. 'Oh, Alejandro?' he said with a shake of his head.

'What?'

'You have fallen in love with this girl? Idiota!' he snapped.

'I never said I'd fallen in love with her,' I snapped back.

'No. You don't have to. I can see it all over your face. I warned you about this, hijo,' he frowned at me. 'I thought you were smarter than this!'

'What? You can't force me to marry someone, Papa, and then berate me if I start to care about her,' I argued. I wasn't prepared to admit to him that I was in love, I wasn't even prepared to admit that to myself.

'But you were supposed to be the clever one, Alejandro. You were supposed to be above all of this. Love is messy. Love complicates things. Love makes you weak!'

'Weak? You really think that your love for mama makes you weak?'

He pushed back his chair and stood quickly, his hands planted on my desk and his face turning purple with rage. 'We are not talking about me and your mama,' he snarled.

I glared at him. All of my life he had taught me that me and my mother were his greatest weaknesses. I suspected it was why he kept me at a distance. He claimed that he wanted me to be the legitimate face of the Montoya Corporation, but I knew otherwise. It was because every time he looked at me he was reminded that he was only a man. And men could be hurt. Men could have the things they loved taken away from them.

'You chose her for me, Papa. Perhaps, you should have chosen better?' I said with a cock of my eyebrow.

'You agreed to this one, Alejandro. I gave you a choice, and this was the woman you agreed to marry.'

I sighed and placed my hands behind my head. It was true that Alana was one of three women whom my father had presented me with. But Alana had been by far the most attractive prospect of them – if only because she was the only one who didn't actually want to marry me, and was also supposed to be the one I would have least in common with.

'I'm not in love with her,' I insisted.

He cursed under his breath and then he walked around to my side of the desk and signaled me to stand up.

When I did, he took his face in my hands. 'You are lying to yourself, mi hijo. And while love will be your greatest weakness, it will also bring your greatest blessings,' he said and then he kissed my forehead.

It was a rare show of emotion from him and I wasn't sure how to respond.

'You will understand when you have a child of your own, Alejandro,' he said with a sigh. 'Now, how about you introduce me to this woman who has stolen my son's heart?' he slapped me on the back then as he returned to his usual self.

I nodded. 'She's around here somewhere. Come on and we'll find her.'

We walked out of the room and headed down the hallway.

Chapter Thirty-Six

ALANA

I WIPED MY EYES AS I FINISHED CHOPPING THE ONIONS AND POPPED THEM INTO the pan.

‘Here she is,’ I heard Alejandro’s voice from behind me.

I spun around to see him walking into the kitchen with his father, Mateo. I’d never met him before but I’d seen pictures of him. He was an imposing figure, dressed smartly in a suit and possibly the shiniest shoes I had ever seen in my life.

Alejandro looked just like him. I wiped my hands on the towel before self-consciously tucking a strand of hair behind my ear. If I’d known Alejandro’s father was stopping by, I’d have worn something a lot smarter than a tank top and a skirt. Not to mention the fact that I was following the no panty rule to the letter these days. I blushed as I realized that fact, and thanked the Lord that my skirt was a maxi.

‘Alana, this is my father,’ Alejandro said as they walked towards me.

‘Mr. Montoya, it’s so lovely to finally meet you,’ I said, extending my hand, my voice barely a whisper.

He ignored my outstretched hand and grabbed me by the shoulders before planting a kiss on each cheek. ‘Please, call me Mateo. You are family. Family don’t call me Mr. Montoya.’

‘Mateo,’ I said with a nod.

‘Papa just stopped by to see us on his way back to Nevada,’ Alejandro said as he walked to the refrigerator and took out a jug of fresh lemonade that Magda had made earlier that morning.

I smiled at him. So he hadn’t been expecting his father either then. ‘Will you be staying for dinner, Mr ... I mean, Mateo?’ I asked, suddenly aware

that I was making cheeseburgers for dinner. I bet he was used to much finer dining than that.

He turned to Alejandro who nodded subtly while he poured three glasses of lemonade. 'Of course. I'd love to. What are we having?'

I blushed to the roots of my hair. 'I was going to make cheeseburgers. But I could do something else?'

He frowned at me and then at Alejandro. 'Doesn't Magda cook for you?'

'She does most nights, but I like to cook too,' I replied.

He nodded appreciatively. 'And you make your own cheeseburgers?'

'Yep,' I said with a smile.

'And they taste better than any burger you've ever eaten before. I guarantee it,' Alejandro added and I blushed further. He had never complimented my cooking like that before.

'Well, if that is true, you'd better not tell your Uncle Phillipe, or he'll be finding excuses to visit you every weekend.'

Alejandro laughed as he handed each of us a drink.

'Thanks,' I said and he slipped his arm around my waist, skimming across my ass as he did.

Mateo was temporarily distracted by Magda walking into the kitchen. It was clear she had worked for their family for many years and she and Mateo had a brief but animated conversation in Spanish.

Alejandro took the opportunity to whisper in my ear as he squeezed my ass. 'You have permission to go and put some panties on.'

Two hours later, Alejandro, Mateo and I had eaten our dinner and were sitting at the dining table. 'That was delicious, Alana,' Mateo said as he patted his flat stomach. 'Where did you learn to cook like that?'

'My grandma,' I said with a smile. 'I lived with her and my grandpa until I was fourteen. She used to cook all of her meals from scratch. We never had much money, so if I ever wanted a burger, it had to be home-made. I used to get so embarrassed when my friends came around, but once they tasted my grandma's burgers, they used to come round every Friday night for some.'

Alejandro and his father stared at me and I felt my cheeks flush pink. 'Sorry. Was I rattling on?' I asked. I couldn't help it. I had such lovely memories of my grandparents.

'You weren't,' Mateo replied. 'But, I didn't realize you were raised by

your grandparents?’

I shrugged. ‘My mom and dad were always on the campaign trail. So, my dad asked his mom and dad to look after me. It was better that I stayed in Brooklyn with them.’

‘You were raised in Brooklyn?’ Alejandro asked.

‘Uh-huh. Queens. Until my grandma died anyway and then I moved to Manhattan with my folks.’

Alejandro and his father shared a look that I couldn’t quite fathom but then they quickly changed the subject and started talking about the plans for the upcoming wedding of one of Alejandro’s cousins.

We lay in bed, my head on Alejandro’s chest and him tracing his fingertips up and down my arm. This was my favorite post-sex position, our warm bodies pressed together – his hard and mine soft, and nothing to do but fall asleep.

‘I had no idea you were raised by your grandparents,’ he said softly.

‘Well, why would you? I think we’ve already established you know very little about me, Mr. Montoya,’ I said as I ran my fingertips across the tattoos on his chest.

‘There’s nothing about that in any of your bios.’

‘You read my bios?’ I looked up at him and laughed softly.

‘Yes. I always research people I’m going into business with,’ he said with a flash of his eyebrows.

‘Well, your research into me was pretty shocking to say the least. Everyone knows those bios are a crock of shit.’

He ran his thumb across my lower lip, pulling it downwards so my mouth was open slightly. ‘Careful, princess,’ he warned. ‘So, why don’t you tell me what I’m missing then. Who is the real Alana Carmichael?’

I blinked at him. I wasn’t sure I wanted him to know. That would feel like the last of my defenses were gone. ‘Who do you think she is?’ I purred as I ran my hand down his chest towards his groin.

He grabbed my wrist, stopping me from going any further. ‘Stop trying to distract me with sex. Why did you live with your grandparents, and why is that a secret?’

‘It’s not a secret. Anyone who actually knows me or my family knows the truth. But living with my grandparents is just not something that my family

advertise, that's all. My dad is all about the importance of family so it was just better for his campaign not to mention it.'

Alejandro frowned at me. 'You mean politically, he's all about family?'

'Not just politically,' I snapped.

'But, he sent you to live with your grandparents? Not to mention he ...' he shook his head and trailed off.

'I loved living with my grandparents. They were the best,' I said, feeling annoyed that I felt like I had to justify my childhood to him. 'My mom and dad travelled a lot on the campaign trail. My grandparents were able to give me stability and security that travelling with my parents wouldn't.'

'That sounds suspiciously like a sound bite,' he said.

'It's not a sound bite. It's true,' I insisted. 'My grandma and grandpa were the best.'

He reached up his hand and tucked a strand of hair behind my ear. 'You already said that. Besides, I'm not suggesting that they weren't. I'm just shocked that your father bleats on about how family is so important to him, yet he dumps his only child on his parents.'

'He didn't dump me,' I snapped. 'It was for my own good.'

'Yeah, you keep telling me that. But I don't buy it.'

'You're an asshole,' I said as I tried to push myself away from him but he held me tight.

'You keep telling me that too. I don't doubt that you had a great childhood and your grandparents loved you very much, but you said you never had any money either?'

'I said we never had *much* money. We had enough. Not everybody grows up in a gated mansion, Alejandro.'

'I know that,' he frowned. 'But your parents have always had money.'

'Not always. They've always created the illusion of having a lot of money, but when I was growing up, most of the money went on my father's campaigns.'

He nodded as though something suddenly made sense to him. 'Why are you so loyal to a man who would give you away – twice?'

'He didn't give me away!' I snapped. Why was he being so cruel? 'He had no choice.'

'Is that what he told you?' he scowled at me.

'Isn't that true?' I hissed.

'We always have a choice, Alana. Even if it's a difficult one.'

‘Yes, well sometimes people make choices because they’re desperate –’

‘And sometimes, they make them because they are blind to the truth,’ he replied.

I was about to argue with him, but he rolled on top of me and crushed his mouth over mine. I bit on his lip and he stopped kissing me, grinning at me instead.

‘Feisty tonight, princess?’ he said and then he was at my neck, biting and sucking. I wanted to tell him to stop but my body had other ideas. ‘Stop trying to distract me with sex,’ I snapped.

He chuckled softly. ‘I think we both need a distraction,’ he kissed my neck again. ‘Because for some reason, asking you about your past has made you pissed.’

‘You accusing my father of giving me away to you has made me pissed,’ I snapped.

‘Hmm. We’ll revisit our different understandings of how this contract between you and I came to be, Alana. But not right now,’ he said as he moved lower and sucked one of my nipples into his mouth. ‘Right now, all I want do is make you forget why you’re so pissed at me.’

‘I’d like to see you try,’ I panted as his hand slid slower until his fingers were between my thighs. Even as I said it, I knew I was fighting a losing battle. My body responded to his of its own volition even when my brain was telling it otherwise.

‘It certainly feels like you’d like me to try,’ he growled as he slipped two of his thick fingers inside me.

My legs parted for him and he took the opportunity to move his head southwards before he settled between my thighs and I groaned in desperate need of him. ‘You know I can make you come so hard, you’ll forget what day of the week it is, don’t you, princess?’ he growled against my pussy making my legs tremble.

I wanted to tell him he was wrong and accuse him of being an arrogant asshole, but the truth was, he was right.

‘Yes,’ I breathed instead and then I pressed my head back against the pillow as I concentrated on the miracles this devil could perform with his tongue.

Chapter Thirty-Seven

ALEJANDRO

I WALKED THROUGH THE BAR AND TOOK A SEAT NEXT TO JAX. HE SLID A glass of Scotch to me and I took a swig, the smooth rich malt burning my throat as I swallowed.

‘So, what did you find out for me?’ I asked him.

‘Martin Carmichael was a marine. Worked his way up to petty officer and left at the age of fifty-one with a stellar record. He opened his own butchers store in Brooklyn, did a lot for his local community. He ran the store until he died twelve years later in a car accident.’

‘And Alana’s grandmother?’

‘Beverly Carmichael was a high school teacher. She left her job when she was fifty-one too and never went back to work.’

‘She left to raise Alana?’ I asked as I downed the rest of my whisky.

Jax nodded. ‘Yup. She was heavily involved with the church and did a lot for the local homeless shelter and soup kitchen. But she never had paid employment again. She died two years after her husband.’

‘How?’

‘Cancer.’

I grimaced as I thought about Alana losing the two people she had been raised by so close together and at such a difficult age too. ‘Why didn’t any of this come up before?’

‘Well, before, you looked into Alana yourself and you didn’t ask me to,’ he said with a grin.

I scowled at him and he laughed. ‘The official story is that Alana was very close to her grandparents and so she stayed with them a lot while her parents travelled around the country. But, the truth is she lived with them

permanently from the age of one. The reason that's such a well kept secret is because she lived in a small, close knit neighborhood, and her grandparents were very well thought of. They treated Alana like their daughter and though everyone knew that she wasn't, they weren't going to question it. Martin and Beverly Carmichael were pillars of the community and from what I could gather, they had very little money because they helped out so many local families. Martin's shop made little profit because he kept his prices so low for people to afford to eat well.'

'Wow,' I shook my head. 'So, Alana's childhood was nothing like I imagined then? Nothing like what her bios would have people believe?'

'Nope. At least not until she was fourteen. Then she went to live with her folks. Went to a fancy private school and then on to college before she started working on her father's campaign.'

I was about to reply when I became aware of someone sitting next to me. Jax rolled his eyes and I turned in my seat to see Kiera Bennett sitting beside me.

'Hi, Alejandro,' she purred. 'It's not often we see you in here these days. That new wife of yours got you on a short leash?' she fluttered her eyelashes.

I should have smiled gracefully and given her some vague answer, but I remembered the horrible shit she and Michaela had said about Alana a few weeks earlier.

'Not at all,' I leaned in close to her ear. 'But, you see, I don't think I've ever been with a woman who I actually enjoyed spending time with before. I could fuck her every single second of every day, and I still wouldn't spend enough time with her. So, do me a favor, take your fake tits and your fake smile and get the fuck away from me.'

She blinked at me, but then she slipped off her stool and walked away. I turned back to Jax and he grinned at me. 'Ouch!' he said with a laugh.

'She deserved it,' I said with a shrug.

'I don't doubt it, amigo.'

'Now, tell me, is there anything else I need to know about Alana?'

'Not a lot to know. Seems she was quite a popular kid when she lived in Brooklyn, but then once she moved to Manhattan, her father made sure she was kept too busy for friends and all the other normal stuff teenagers do. She became a cog in the Carmichael administration machine.'

I shook my head. 'Foster Carmichael is a Cabrón!' I snarled. 'He's done nothing but manipulate and use Alana for her whole life.'

Jax nodded his head. 'That's politicians for you,' he said as he downed his Scotch. 'You fancy another, amigo?'

I shook my head. 'No. It's late. I need to get home.'

Jax patted me on the back. 'I'll see you tomorrow.'

Chapter Thirty-Eight

ALANA

IT WAS HUGO'S DAY OFF, SO I HADN'T GONE TO THE SHELTER. I HAD SOME calls to make later in the day, but I'd decided to have a lazy morning and was relaxing by the pool with a good book when my cell phone started vibrating on the table beside me. I glanced at the screen and saw it was Lucy calling. She had my number and she texted me often, but she'd never called me before.

I pressed the phone to my ear. 'Hello?'

'Alana,' she sobbed quietly. 'I need your help.'

I felt my heart lurch into my throat. I still hadn't had a chance to speak to Kristen about what I'd discovered or figured out a way to help Lucy out of the mess she was in yet.

'What is it, sweetheart? Where are you?' I asked as she sobbed down the phone.

'I'm not sure. I'm near to the shelter. It's Blake. He's found me,' she whispered.

I knew that Blake was her ex-boyfriend. 'Lucy. How far from the shelter are you? Can you get back there?'

'No,' she sniffed. 'He'll be watching for me coming back. He's in a car. He'll take me away. And I can't put any of the other girls in danger, Alana. Please. Can you bring Hugo and come get me?'

'It's Hugo's day off, sweetheart. He's visiting his mom in hospital. I won't even be able to get hold of him,' I was thinking out loud more than talking to her now as I tried to figure out the quickest way to get to her.

'Alana, what am I going to do?' she pleaded.

'I'm coming for you. Stay where you are, and stay out of sight. Does

Blake have you your phone details?’

‘What?’

‘Your cell. Does he have the number?’

‘No,’ she cried.

‘Good. Then drop a pin and I’ll come find you. I’ll be there as soon as I can, sweetheart. Okay?’

‘Okay. Please hurry.’

I ended the call and ran into the house. Jacob had taken the car for a maintenance check. Alejandro had a garage full of cars, but he didn’t keep the keys in there with them.

Damn! I had no idea where he kept the keys. Hank would probably drive me, but then I’d have to explain to him in minute detail what was going on and I didn’t have time for that.

I could get a cab. But I would have to sneak past the guards or I’d get the third degree about where I was going and that would delay me getting to Lucy too.

I dialed a cab as my heart hammered in my chest. I asked them to pick me up down the street and then I ran back into the garden and round to the front of the house before sneaking out of the gate. The guards were more concerned checking for people getting in than they were getting out, and fortunately nobody saw me.

A few minutes later, I was in the back of a cab, my palms sweaty and my blood thundering in my ears as I made my way to Lucy’s location.

Chapter Thirty-Nine

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ALANA
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‘CAN YOU WAIT HERE WHILE I FIND MY FRIEND?’ I ASKED THE CAB DRIVER AS we pulled up near Lucy’s location.

He rolled his eyes but he nodded his agreement.

‘Thank you. I’ll be back as soon as I find her,’ I said as I handed him a fifty.

That seemed to satisfy him and he smiled. ‘I’ll be right here.’

I grabbed my purse and jumped out of the cab as I looked up and down the street for any sign of Lucy.

I dialed her cell but it went to voicemail. The neighborhood wasn’t a great one. The street was full of boarded up storefronts. I saw an alleyway and ducked inside it. If she was here, then she’d be hiding. Then I heard a scream. I ran in the direction of the sound until I found her, pressed up against the wall by a huge man with his hand around her throat. I saw her phone in pieces on the floor beside her.

‘Hey!’ I shouted. ‘Get your hands off her!’

He turned and glared at me and I ran towards him, the adrenaline coursing through my body. He slapped Lucy across the face with the back of his hand and threw her to the ground.

‘Stay out of this lady,’ he said as he advanced towards me. ‘This is between me and her.’

‘The hell it is,’ I spat. ‘Now leave her alone and get out of here before I call the cops,’ I said as I unlocked my cell.

He moved faster than I’d expected him to, grabbing my phone, he threw it against the wall and it smashed into a hundred pieces.

Shit! What was I going to do now? I’d taken some self-defense classes at

college, but all I could remember was what to do if you were attacked from behind. This guy was huge and suddenly his hands were coming at my throat.

‘Lucy! Run!’ I shouted as he made a grab for me. I ducked out of his way and he stumbled forward giving me time to shout to Lucy. ‘There’s a cab in the street. Run to it. Tell him to call the cops.’

By this point, Blake had regained his footing and he grabbed me by the throat, squeezing the air from me as Lucy ran past us both with tears streaming down her face.

She would see the cab. Then they would get help.

I could hear Blake shouting at her to stay where the fuck she was, and then I heard her.

‘Alana. There’s no cab here,’ she wailed.

I tried to turn but Blake held me firmly.

‘The street is empty,’ she cried.

Suddenly, I remembered the first rule of self-defense – always go for the nut-sack. I brought my foot up and kicked Blake in the balls as hard as I could.

He let go of my throat and doubled over, clutching his groin in pain.

I turned to Lucy. ‘Run!’ I screamed at her and she stared at me for a few seconds, her eyes wide with shock and fright. But then she started running.

I did too, but Blake was back up and running after me. He grabbed me by the hair and pulled me backwards, and then he slapped my face.

His face was purple with rage and his anger was making him clumsy. I ducked away from him again and he lunged at me, but all he could grab hold of was my purse. I shrugged it loose and ran into the street, screaming for help at the top of my lungs.

There was no-one around, but Blake didn’t know that for sure.

I looked back at him as he stood still in the alleyway, deciding whether I was worth getting arrested for. He obviously decided that I wasn’t and he took my purse and ran the other way, which was fortunately in the opposite direction to Lucy.

Chapter Forty

ALANA

I RAN ALONG THE ROAD AND INTO THE FIRST OPEN PLACE I FOUND, WHICH happened to be a diner. I chose a quiet booth and looked around me. I didn't think Blake had followed me but my heart still pounded in my chest and my blood thundered in my ears.

I had to get home. And, I needed to call the shelter and make sure Lucy was okay. But now I had no cash on me. I had no cell phone. What the hell was I going to do? I didn't want to risk walking the few blocks back to the shelter in case he was out there, waiting for me.

Just then the waitress approached me. 'You okay, sweets?' she asked.

I nodded and blinked back the tears. 'I need ... do you have a phone I could use?' I asked.

She tilted her head to one side and looked at me, as though measuring me up. 'Sure, honey. Here take mine,' she said as she took out her cell and keyed in her passcode before handing it to me.

I dialed the only L.A number that I knew by heart – the hotel. I had a bunch of promotional pens from the place on my desk in work and I spent so much time on hold to potential donors that I'd memorized the number printed on them.

I got through to the receptionist, who made it clear she had no intention of connecting me to Alejandro, until I told her I was his wife, and that he'd be incredibly annoyed if he found out she hadn't at least checked with him if he wanted to take the call.

A few moments later, Alejandro was on the other end of the line.

'Alana?' he said.

'Yes, it's me. I'm really sorry to bother you at work. But I'm ... Could

you send a car for me? I'm at Betsy's Diner, downtown near the shelter.'

'Why do you need a car? Why didn't you call my cell? Where is Hugo?' he demanded.

I took a deep breath to stop myself from crying. 'I ... someone took my purse. I don't have any cash or my cell,' I sniffed.

'Stay right where you are. I'll be there as soon as I can,' he said and then ended the call before I could tell him that all I needed was a car. The last thing I wanted was him storming in here and shouting at me for leaving the house without a bodyguard. God, what if he spanked me right in the middle of this restaurant for disobeying him?

'Is someone coming for you, honey?' the waitress asked, and I realized I was still holding onto her phone.

'Yes. Thank you,' I said as I handed it back to her. 'Am I okay to stay here until he gets here?'

'Of course. You want a coffee while you wait? On the house?'

'That's really kind of you,' I said as a fat tear rolled down my cheek.

She leaned down and squeezed my hand. 'Not a problem, honey.'

I looked up expectantly every time the diner door opened, looking for either my attacker or Alejandro. Less than half an hour later, Alejandro walked through the doors. He looked so fierce that I almost wanted the ground to open up and swallow me whole. He was going to be furious with me for sneaking out of the house.

His eyes scanned the room quickly until he caught my eye and came storming across the diner. He slid into the booth opposite me. I assumed there must be a mark on my face because he reached out his hand and touched it gently.

'Who the fuck did that to you?' he snarled.

'Some guy. He's the ex-boyfriend of one of the girls at the shelter.'

'The same guy who took your purse?'

I nodded.

He sat back in his seat and took a deep breath. I saw the rage in his body. His hands were clenched into fists.

'I'm sorry,' I said. 'I didn't mean for this to happen.'

'How many times have I warned you about leaving the house without protection, Alana? Sometimes, it feels like you want to get yourself killed.'

Do you?’ he scowled at me.

‘Of course not.’

He shook his head and I saw him wrestling with his emotions. ‘Half of me wants to put you over my knee right here in this diner and spank your ass so hard you won’t be able to sit down for a month.’

‘And what about your other half?’ I asked.

‘The other half is just glad you’re safe,’ he said with a sigh as he looked around the diner. ‘Let’s get out of here. You can explain yourself in the car.’

He stood up and I stood too, feeling like a runaway teenager who was about to get a telling off from my father. Then he reached for my hand and squeezed it and I felt a rush of love for him that completely blindsided me.

He looked at the empty coffee cup on the table. ‘Who bought you the coffee?’ he asked. ‘And whose cell phone did you use?’

‘Marlene, the waitress at the cash register there,’ I said as I pointed her out.

Alejandro nodded and rubbed a hand over his jaw. ‘Come on, let’s go,’ he said as he took my hand and led me through the diner. We passed Marlene on the way and Alejandro stopped her.

‘Marlene,’ he said with his charming, killer smile. ‘I really appreciate you helping my wife out this afternoon. You have my deepest gratitude.’

‘It was my pleasure, honey,’ she said with a smile.

Alejandro nodded and then took something from his pocket and handed it to her. ‘Well, thank you,’ he said and then we walked out of the diner.

‘Thank you, Sir,’ Marlene shouted after us.

‘What did you give her?’ I asked him.

‘Just a couple of hundred bucks,’ he said with a shrug.

‘That was very generous of you.’

‘Well, she helped you out, so ...’ he didn’t finish his sentence and instead he steered me towards his car. He was driving his new Maserati today and I smiled. I wasn’t really into material things but I loved this car. He opened the door for me and I slid into the expensive leather seat and inhaled.

A few seconds later, Alejandro climbed in too, pressed a button and the car roared to life.

We’d been driving for a few minutes when he finally spoke. ‘Are you okay?’ he asked me.

‘Yes,’ I said as I touched my face.

‘Do you know the name of the guy who did that?’

‘Blake someone. He’s Lucy’s ex-boyfriend, do you remember that young girl you met at the shelter?’

Alejandro nodded.

‘That’s why I went out alone. She called me and she was scared and in trouble and Hugo was on his day off. Jacob had taken the car to the garage,’ I rambled on. ‘I need to speak to the shelter and make sure she’s safe.’

He handed me his cell.

‘Thank you,’ I whispered.

‘The number is in there already. It’s saved as princess work,’ he said and for some reason, the fact that he had my work number programmed into his phone, made me incredibly happy.

I dialed the number and when one of the staff answered, I asked to speak to Lucy. My heart almost burst out of my chest with relief when they told me she was there.

‘Alana! Are you okay? I’ve been so worried. I went back with one of the girls to look for you, but you’d gone. I’m so sorry,’ she sobbed.

‘Lucy, I’m fine. I promise. Are you okay though?’

‘Yes.’

‘Promise me that you won’t leave the shelter until I can figure out what to do about your situation. We’ll need to speak to Kristen.’

‘I know,’ she sniffed.

‘But you’ll stay there? Promise me!’

‘Yes. I promise.’

‘And if you see Blake anywhere near the place, then you call the cops, okay? We’ll deal with everything else, but you need to keep yourself safe.’

‘Okay,’ she agreed.

‘What is Blake’s full name?’ I asked, knowing that Alejandro would need that information to find him more quickly.

‘Blake Fielding.’

‘Blake Fielding?’ I repeated.

‘Yes.’

‘Okay. I have to go, but I’ll speak to you soon, okay?’

‘Okay. And thank you, Alana.’

‘You’re welcome, sweetheart,’ I said.

We said goodbye and I hung up the phone and handed it back to Alejandro.

‘What the hell is going on, Alana?’ he snapped.

I rubbed my temples. 'It's a really long story. Can I tell you when we get home?'

Alejandro sighed. 'You shouldn't have gone out alone.'

'I know that. And I'm sorry that I've inconvenienced you –'

'Inconvenienced me?' he snapped. 'You think I'm mad because I had to drive a few miles to pick you up?'

I shook my head. 'I don't know.'

'I'm pissed because you almost got yourself killed, Alana! Do you have any idea how reckless you've been?'

'All I'm trying to say is that, this life is a big adjustment for me. I've never had to worry about leaving the house or had to ask permission to do anything before. I'm a grown woman –'

He turned and scowled at me before I could finish my sentence.

'I know that's not the issue, Alex. I just mean that sometimes, it's not easy to be unable to make a decision on my own, on the spur of the moment. I feel like I have absolutely no control over my life any more,' I sniffed as a tear rolled down my cheek and I swatted it away.

He looked at me and I looked out of the window because I couldn't meet his eyes. I knew he was disappointed in me. I stared out of the window and listened as he made a few calls. He spoke mostly in Spanish but I gathered that Blake Fielding was now a wanted man. As we drove along, I noticed that we weren't headed home.

'Where are we going?' I asked him.

'You'll see.'

'Are you going to punish me for going out alone?'

He turned to me. 'Yes.'

'Is that where we're going?' I said, the tremor in my voice audible.

'No,' he said and then he reached for my hand and lifted it to his mouth, brushing the backs of my fingers lightly across his lips until I felt a warmth spreading through me.

Alejandro made another call, this time to his second in command, Jax, whom he always spoke to in English.

'Hey, amigo,' Jax said. 'Everything okay? You ran out of here like your house was on fire?'

'Someone attacked Alana,' Alejandro replied and I blushed. Jax was going to think I was pathetic now too.

'Shit! Who? She okay?'

Alejandro squeezed my hand. 'Some Cabrón. He's being handled. She'll be fine. She's here with me now.'

'You need me to do something?' Jax asked.

'Yeah. I'm going off grid for a few days. Can you cover everything?'

'Of course, I can, amigo. When will you be back?'

'Two days.'

'Not a problem. I've got you covered.'

'Thanks, amigo,' Alejandro said before ending the call.

Then he did something, I'd never seen him do before, he switched off his mobile phone before slipping it back into the inside pocket of his jacket.

'Now, we're both uncontactable,' he said with a flash of his eyebrows and I wasn't sure whether to be terrified or delighted.

Chapter Forty-One

ALEJANDRO

I LOOKED SIDWAYS AT ALANA AS WE DROVE ALONG THE COAST. THE RED mark beneath her eye was now turning into a purple bruise and I felt a surge of anger at the man who had dared to put his hands on her. It was coupled with my frustration that she had been reckless enough to put herself in danger like that.

I didn't know the full story yet, and I would wait until we got to the house before I got the truth from her.

I'd been in a meeting when the receptionist had interrupted me to tell me my wife was on the phone. I'd thought it was someone playing a prank at first. Why would Alana phone the hotel rather than my cell? But, I couldn't take the chance of ignoring it. Then as soon as I'd heard her voice, I'd known something was wrong.

I'd left the hotel without a second thought, leaving Jax to finish my meeting for me. I'd thought of nothing but getting to her and making sure she was okay. The fear that someone had hurt her because of me, only eclipsed by my anger.

Then I'd walked into that diner and saw her sitting there – hurt and alone, nursing a cup of coffee and my heart had almost stopped beating in my chest.

I'd been so fucking angry with her. But when she'd told me about how difficult it had been to adjust to her new life, I'd realized that I'd never even considered the fact that she had given up her whole life and identity to marry me.

It was something I hadn't wanted to think about and I'd never intended to. When I'd married her, I couldn't have cared less about her, but this woman was worming her way into my affections and my heart and I couldn't

do a thing to stop it.

And while I knew that she hadn't made those sacrifices for me, she had made them because she was a woman who was loyal to the people she loved. And even if her father didn't deserve her loyalty or her love, she gave it anyway.

I'd decided in that moment that I'd take her away from it all. I would be the husband, and give her the life, that she deserved - if only for a few days.

Chapter Forty-Two

ALANA

WE'D BEEN DRIVING ALL AFTERNOON AND I WAS STARTING TO FEEL A LITTLE less uneasy about where we were going. Alejandro seemed to get more relaxed the further we drove from L.A. We'd stopped for lunch at a diner, and then he'd stopped at a gas station a few miles back to fill up again, and had also bought a few bags of groceries. I'd offered to help, but he'd insisted I stay in the car.

We listened to the radio and I enjoyed watching the scenery go by. When we hit Santa Cruz, I wondered how much further up the coast we'd be going. I must have fallen asleep because it was dusk when I opened my eyes at Alejandro's prompting.

'We're here, princess,' he said as he gently squeezed my thigh. I blinked as I looked around me. We were parked next to a beautiful little house on a beach.

'Where are we?' I asked as I rubbed my eyes.

'If I told you, I'd have to kill you,' he said with a wicked grin. Then seeing the look of bewilderment on my face, he added. 'This is my secret hideaway. Nobody knows about the place. I don't get out here as much as I'd like. But one day, I'm going to come here and never go back,' he said as he stared out of the windshield at the ocean.

'You sure you could just up and leave everything and everyone behind?' I asked him.

He turned in his seat and stared at me. 'Not everyone,' he said. Then he shook his head. 'Daydreams. That's all they are. Come on. Let's get inside.'

He unclipped his seatbelt and climbed out of the car and I followed suit.

As I walked around the side of the car, he grabbed me by the hand and

pulled me towards him. Then he pushed me against the car door, pressing the full weight of his body against me so I could barely move. It was as though that brief moment of vulnerability had made him determined to remind me who was in control.

He grabbed my chin with one of his large hands and then kissed me roughly. 'Turn around,' he growled.

I obeyed. What choice did I have? Alone with him in the middle of God knows where. At least that was what I told myself – that I had no choice. But, in my heart, I knew that I did. I submitted to him because I wanted to.

I placed my hands on top of the car and he pinned his body against mine again until my breasts were pressed against the drivers side window. His fingers reached lower until they found the hem of my dress. He lifted it slowly, over my thighs, my hips and then all the way up my body and over my head until I was standing in my bra and panties.

The chill of the evening breeze danced over my skin and I shivered. I felt his warm fingers on my back as he expertly unhooked my bra and then he slid it down over my arms, letting my heavy breasts fall free. When he pressed me back against the car, I gasped at the cold glass on my skin.

'I think part of your punishment should be that you have no panties to wear for this entire trip, princess. What do you think?' he whispered in my ear. Before I could protest, he hooked his fingers into each side of my lace panties and tore them over my soft flesh, shredding them easily with his strong hands.

I whimpered as I stood naked and pressed to the car. This beautiful machine that I was about to be fucked against.

'Open your legs,' he barked and I obviously didn't respond quickly enough because he kicked at my ankles to hurry me along.

His hands roamed over my back and ass and he growled. Despite the cool night air, my body felt like it was on fire and I writhed beneath his touch.

'I'm going to give you your punishment now, so we can enjoy the rest of our trip without you worrying about it. Okay?' he breathed in my ear.

'Yes,' I whispered.

Then his hands were gone and I looked around to see what he was doing.

'Face forward,' he barked and I turned my head back to the car, looking out at the dark ocean.

I heard the metal jangle of his belt buckle opening and then the sound of the leather moving quickly against fabric.

I swallowed. He was going to spank me with a belt right here. Right out in the open.

Suddenly, the thought of someone walking by and seeing us made me feel incredibly embarrassed. 'Alex, what if someone sees us?' I whispered.

'Do you think I'd let anyone see me spanking and fucking my wife, princess?' he said softly. 'This beach is private. No-one here but you and me.'

Then he drew his hand back and his leather belt whipped across my ass cheeks. The sting was instantaneous and I cried out, but I'd barely had time to feel it when the second lash hit me.

Then the third.

Then the fourth.

I writhed as the pain and heat seared across my ass, but he just kept on going. When the tenth one hit me, I saw stars.

'Alex,' I sobbed. 'I'm sorry. I won't do it again.'

I waited for the next stroke, but it never came. I heard the belt dropping to the floor and breathed a sigh of relief. Then his hands rubbed over my burning skin, soothing the sting and igniting a whole different kind of fire in me.

He leaned his body against mine, his hot mouth at my neck. 'Don't ever disobey me again, Alana.'

'I won't.'

I heard his zipper opening and then a few seconds later, he was pushing his rock hard cock inside me. I groaned as I was filled with him, and pinned to the car with his thrusting.

'If you don't like my belt, princess, then why are you so fucking wet for me? I swear you enjoy these spankings as much as I do,' he said and my pussy clenched around him. 'Fuck! You need to stop milking me with that tight little concha or you're going to make me come before I can get you off.'

That spurred me on. Suddenly, I wasn't interested in my own orgasm, but only the desire to make him lose himself in me.

I realized it was one of the few ways I had any control over him, and I was going to use it to the best of my ability.

Using my hands on the car as leverage, I rocked back against him, taking him as deep as I possibly could. Then I squeezed my pussy muscles around him, clenching and releasing over and over until I felt him groaning in my ear.

‘Fuck! Alana!’ he shouted and I felt him release, hot and heavy inside me. I smiled triumphantly as he ground the last of his climax out in me. He leaned his body against me and pulled my hair to one side, trailing soft kisses up my neck until he reached my ear.

‘Don’t think I don’t know what you just did, princess. It’s a good thing your ass is already red from that spanking or you’d be getting another one.’

My smile stayed in place. ‘I have no idea what you’re talking about.’

‘Hmm,’ he mumbled against my skin as he pulled out of me. ‘Now let’s get you inside before you catch a cold.’

Then he spun me around and hoisted me over his shoulder like a caveman claiming his mate. I giggled and he tapped my ass lightly.

He opened the door and walked me straight through to the bedroom, throwing me down on the bed. ‘Bathroom is through there,’ he indicated the doorway in the corner of the room. ‘Run yourself a tub, clean up and soak those ass cheeks while I fix us some dinner.’

‘I’d rather you joined me in the tub,’ I said with a flutter of my eyelashes.

He leaned close to me and cupped my chin with his hand. ‘That is a very tempting offer, princess, but we need to eat. And I still need to know what happened this morning.’

I swallowed. ‘Are you going to punish me again?’ I asked. He was right about me enjoying his spankings, but my I wasn’t sure my poor ass could take any more tonight.

He frowned at me. ‘No,’ he said before sitting on the bed beside me. ‘I promise you that nothing you are going to tell me will change that. You were punished for disobeying me. Period. The how and why you disobeyed me are irrelevant to that. But, I still need to know.’

I nodded. ‘Okay. I get that.’

He stood up and kissed the top of my head. ‘Good. Now bathe. I want that beautiful ass taken care of just in case you decide to disobey me again,’ he said with a wink before disappearing out of the door.

Chapter Forty-Three

ALEJANDRO

I WAS SERVING THE DINNER ONTO PLATES WHEN SHE WALKED OUT OF THE bedroom. With her damp hair brushed back from her face, and wearing one of my t-shirts – she looked good enough to eat. And I could hardly wait to taste her. But, first we needed dinner, and a conversation about what had happened today.

‘I hope you don’t mind,’ she said as she indicated my t-shirt. But I literally have no clothes.’

‘Of course not. It looks better on you than it does on me anyway.’

‘I doubt that,’ she purred and my cock twitched to life.

‘I brought your clothes in from the beach anyway. We can wash them later. But in the meantime, you’ll have to wear mine.’

‘I don’t have any panties though,’ she said as she bit her lower lip.

Fuck, she was doing this on purpose. She knew I wanted to talk to her and she was trying to distract me with her gorgeous body.

I put the plates onto the table and walked over to her, grabbing her hair at the nape of her neck, I tilted her head to look at me. ‘I know you don’t. But you won’t be needing any. So, don’t worry about it. Now, sit your pretty little ass down, and eat your dinner.’

I released her from my grip and she sat at the table, looking up at me with those huge brown eyes of hers. My cock was desperate for her and now I was as hard as iron. I squeezed my dick and rearranged myself, but it didn’t really help.

‘If you keep looking at me like that, princess, you’re going to have my cock in your mouth instead of your dinner. So, eat up, before it gets cold.’

She chuckled and picked up her silverware. ‘I didn’t realize you could

cook,' she said as she speared a shrimp on her fork.

'There's a lot you don't know about me,' I said and she looked down at her food.

I felt much better when I'd eaten and watched her eat too. I loved to see a woman enjoy her food.

She looked up at me, with those fuck-me eyes and I realized I needed to take control of this conversation and evening, or I'd bury myself in her for the rest of the night and never get any answers.

'Tell me what happened today,' I said to her.

'Promise you won't get mad again?'

I shook my head. 'I can't promise that. But I do promise that I won't punish you. I want you to be able to be honest with me, Alana.'

She took a breath and started talking. 'I'd just got out of the shower when I got a call from Lucy. She's been having so much trouble from her ex. I probably should have told you this, but she confided in me a couple of weeks ago and I promised her I wouldn't tell anyone until I'd figured out a way to help her. But, she's a runaway. She's only sixteen, not eighteen like she told us at the shelter. She had false papers.'

I frowned. False papers weren't that easy for a sixteen year old girl to get her hands on. I kept my thoughts to myself though, and she went on. 'And not only that, she's pregnant too. Blake is the father of her baby, but from what she'd told me, he sounded really abusive. Incredibly possessive and controlling,' she looked up at me when she said that and her cheeks flushed pink again. 'And I don't mean in a good way.'

I couldn't help but smile. 'Go on.'

'I think he'd beaten her up a few times, although she never told me that. But from the way he acted with her today,' she shook her head and wiped a tear from her eye. 'This morning, she was walking to the store when he found her. I'm not sure what happened but she ran away from him. She didn't want to go back to the shelter and risk anyone finding out the truth, or putting any of the other residents at risk, so she hid and she called me for help.'

She looked up at me, her brown eyes wide and tearful. I said nothing so she carried on talking.

'She sounded so desperate, Alex, that I just wanted to help her. I went to see Jacob but he'd taken the car for a service. It was Hugo's day off, and the

only guard I could find was Hank, and he's always so horrible to me. I didn't have time to explain everything to him, so, I called a cab and I went to her.'

'You called a cab?'

'I don't know where the keys to your cars are.'

'But how didn't anyone see you leave? Why didn't they see the cab pulling up outside the gate?'

She swallowed. 'I knew if they saw it, they'd stop me from leaving, so I snuck out through the gate when no-one was looking and told the cab to wait for me down the street.'

I gritted my teeth and sucked in a breath.

'I'm sorry. But she's just a kid. She was scared and alone. I just wanted to get to her as fast as I could.'

'I understand that you wanted to help her. But, it was so fucking reckless, Alana. Sneaking out like a teenager and not telling anyone where you were going. What the fuck were you thinking?'

'I wasn't thinking,' she said and I saw the tears in her eyes.

'What happened next?'

'The cab dropped me off and I looked for her. When I found them, he had her pinned against the wall by her throat. I distracted him and told her to run. He turned on me then and slapped my face. I kicked him in the groin and started to run as he was doubled over, but he came after me and grabbed my purse. I shouted for help and he must have gotten spooked and he ran. I made my way to the diner, and then I called you.'

She looked up at me. I felt the anger raging through me and I willed my heart to stop racing.

'You're angry,' she whispered.

'I'm fucking furious,' I growled. 'But not with you. With that piece of shit.'

'Oh?' she said and then she stood up and walked around the table.

I pulled her onto my lap and brushed her damp hair from her face. 'You should have told me when you found out about Lucy. I could have helped.'

'I know,' she nodded. 'But I wasn't sure how to do that. This thing between us has been so difficult to navigate, Alex. I never know what you want from me. Sometimes, I feel like you would do anything for me, and other times, it feels like you're doing all you can to push me away.'

I looked into her eyes and realized the truth in her words. I did push her away because I was terrified of letting her get any closer to me than she

already was. ‘You know you’ll need to tell Kristen. And the authorities? Especially if she’s pregnant?’

‘I know. But what will they do with her?’

‘Probably take her into care,’ I shrugged.

‘But, she might not be safe. She wants to stay here in L.A, Alex? She’s terrified of going back to Chicago.’

‘I know some people who might be able to help. We’ll make sure she gets placed with a good family. And as for Blake Fielding, he is a fucking dead man walking,’ I growled, feeling the anger surging again. I had given his name to a team of my best men and was confident they’d find him by morning.

She opened her mouth to reply, but then obviously thought better of it. ‘Okay,’ she whispered.

I buried my face in her hair. ‘If anything ever happened to you, Alana ... Lo eres todo para mi,’ I breathed. ‘I don’t force you to have a bodyguard for no reason. It’s for your own protection.’

‘I know.’

‘You know? So, why do you insist on defying me?’

‘I just wanted to help her. I didn’t think about putting myself in danger.’

I tucked her hair behind her ears. ‘Promise me, you won’t do something so reckless again?’

She bit her bottom lip. ‘I didn’t think you’d be so angry. You said your mom used to sneak out all the time with you when you were a kid. You almost seemed proud of her for it.’

‘And I was. But things are different now. My father’s enemies are not the same breed as mine. Back then there was a code. You never went after women and children. Or if you did, you were ostracized. But the world is different now, princess. My enemies would think nothing of hurting you to get to me.’

‘Would you ever do something like that? Hurt innocent women and children?’ she asked me, her eyes wide.

‘No,’ I told her truthfully. ‘Never.’

She must have liked that answer as she gave me one of her genuine, killer smiles.

‘Enough talking,’ I said as I stood up, lifting her in my arms. ‘It’s time for dessert.’

‘Ooh, what are we having?’ she asked.

‘You’re not getting any dessert. But I’m going to be eating pussy for mine.’

‘You have a filthy mouth, Mr. Montoya,’ she said, her mouth open in mock indignation.

‘It’s about to get a whole lot filthier,’ I said as I walked her into the bedroom.

I threw her down on the bed and peeled my t-shirt over her head. I could hardly wait to get some part of me inside her.

‘Open those legs, princess, and let me see you,’ I said as I unbuttoned my shirt.

She spread them wide for me and her pussy was already dripping wet. I pulled off the rest of my clothes as quickly as I could and walked over to the bed, dropping to my knees at the foot of it.

I hooked my hands behind her thighs and pulled her towards me, until her pussy was only an inch from my face. The smell of her sweet cream had my cock throbbing already.

‘Alex,’ she groaned and I closed my eyes and breathed her in. This woman was too fucking good for me, but I didn’t care. She was mine. No other man would ever touch her.

I dipped my head and lapped at her opening, drinking her juices. She moaned my name again and I doubled my efforts before moving up to her clit. I loved how she lost control when I sucked and nibbled on the tender bud of flesh.

I sucked and licked her until she was begging me to let her come. Sliding two of my fingers inside her, she clenched her pussy around me and I could feel her on the edge of her climax. I loved keeping her there – on the precipice of ecstasy – because when she was there, all she could think of was me and how good I made her feel.

I pressed in further, searching for that sweet spot that made her whimper and squeal. When I found it, I rubbed hard and sucked her clit harder and she rewarded me with a scream of my name and a rush of her sweet cream.

Chapter Forty-Four

ALANA

I LAY ON THE SOFA WITH MY HEAD ON ALEJANDRO'S LAP WHILE WE WATCHED a movie. I was wearing one of his t-shirts, which dwarfed my frame, and nothing else.

I smiled to myself. We'd had the most incredible day together. I'd wanted to go swimming in the ocean earlier, and I'd asked him if I could borrow some of his boxer shorts and a t-shirt, but he had refused, insisting that I go swimming naked and assuring me this was his own private beach where no-one would see me. I'd agreed, on the understanding that he would come skinny dipping with me.

He'd pulled off his clothes and chased me out into the water before I'd even finished the sentence. Afterwards, we'd had sex in the wet sand with the water lapping at our feet.

We'd spent the rest of the afternoon and evening eating, reading and watching TV. I had never seen Alejandro so relaxed. He was like a different person here. There was no trace of the devil I knew he could be.

My thoughts were interrupted by a warm hand on my ass, squeezing gently. 'Are you ready for bed, princess?'

It wasn't even nine pm, but I knew that bed meant much more than sleep. 'Yes,' I said as I stretched my limbs, so the t-shirt lifted up over my hips. I heard him groan and I suppressed a smile.

'You pretend to be all sweet and innocent, but you know exactly what you're doing to me, don't you?' he growled.

I sat up and looked at him. 'I have no idea what you mean.'

'Come here,' he ordered as he took hold of my hand.

I moved to straddle him and he slipped his hands between my thighs and

started to rub my clit. ‘Wet already, princess? You’re always ready to be fucked, aren’t you?’

I groaned as the waves of pleasure started to roll over me.

‘You’re always ready for me to slide myself inside you,’ he said as he pushed two of fingers inside and I moaned his name loudly.

‘Take off the t-shirt,’ he growled as he continued to pump his fingers in and out of me. I complied, tossing the offending item onto the floor.

As soon as I was naked, he bent his head and sucked one of my nipples into his mouth and began sucking greedily. His other hand moved around to my ass and he pulled me closer to him. I was overwhelmed by the sensations coursing through me and I started to buck my hips against his fingers. I ran my fingers through his hair as I felt my orgasm building quickly.

‘That’s it, Alana. Come for me, princess. I need you nice and loose,’ he said as he lifted his head and kissed me deeply.

The hand from my ass moved to the back of my head and he crushed me to him. When my orgasm crashed over me, he held me firm so I was groaning into his mouth.

When he finally let me go, I wrenched my mouth away and gasped for air.

‘Was that a good one?’ he chuckled.

‘They’re all good ones,’ I panted. ‘But you already know that.’

He ran the back of his knuckles across my cheek. Luckily Blake’s assault the previous day had only left a faint bruise and it was no longer painful. ‘Do you trust me, Alana?’ he asked seriously.

I blinked at him, wondering where this had come from. I studied his face and considered his question. I could lie, but I suppose he deserved the truth. ‘Yes,’ I said.

He smiled at me. A genuine one that went all the way to his eyes. ‘Good,’ he growled and then he stood, easily lifting me as he did.

He kissed me while he walked us to the bedroom and then he lay me down gently on the bed. His eyes roamed over my body as he slid his shorts down his muscular thighs and stepped out of them.

‘I think it’s about time I claimed every last part of you for my own, princess.’

His eyes burned into mine and I swallowed. I had a feeling I knew what that meant. When he walked to the nightstand and pulled out a bottle of lube from the drawer, I definitely knew.

‘Why do you have lube here?’ I asked. ‘I thought you’d never brought anyone to the house before?’

‘I haven’t. I come here alone, but a man has needs, princess.’

‘Oh? And why do you need it now?’

‘Why do you think?’ he growled and I felt my stomach contract.

‘Because you want to fuck my ass?’ I bit my lip as I looked up at him.

‘Exactly. Now turn over and stick that sweet ass in the air for me.’

I flipped over until I was on all fours and then dropped to my forearms, so my head was resting on the bed. I felt Alejandro behind me, his hands skimming over my cheeks before he slid his fingers between my thighs, through my wet folds and then up to the seam of my ass. He fingered my asshole gently, coating it with my own juices.

‘This will be cold, princess,’ he said before squeezing some of the lube there.

I flinched instinctively from the sensation of the cold gel, but it was soon warmed from the heat of Alejandro’s fingers as he slid the tip of one inside me. I gasped out loud at the unfamiliar feeling. He slipped it back out slightly before pressing in further and I groaned out loud.

It felt incredible and I wanted more. I pushed my ass back towards him and heard an animal like growling sound from him as he pushed his thick digit all the way inside me.

‘Alex,’ I groaned loudly.

He slid his finger out of me, and then his hands were on my hips as he pressed his cock at my dark opening. He pushed the tip inside and I bit down on my lip to stop from crying out.

It burned as he stretched me open but he was patient, remaining still until I adjusted to his size, and in a few seconds, the burning feeling gave way to a delicious feeling of fullness. He edged inside me further, slowly stretching me until he was almost all the way in.

I could hear his ragged breathing. His fingers dug into the skin on my hips as he grasped them harder, desperately trying to maintain some control. The low growling sounds he was making were vibrating through my body.

‘Alex,’ I groaned loudly. ‘Please?’

‘You like that, princess?’

‘Yes,’ I panted as he started to slowly thrust in and out of me. The sensation was like nothing I’d ever felt before, and just when I felt like I was on the edge of losing control, he slipped his hand between us and slid two of

his thick fingers into my pussy until I felt like I was going to lose my mind. I whimpered at the feeling of being so full of him.

‘That’s it, Alana, squeeze me,’ he groaned as I clenched all of my muscles around him. Then he fucked my ass while he finger fucked my pussy to the same intense rhythm.

I felt the orgasm building and building until it felt like it was going to burst through me like a river breaching its banks. The pleasure was so intense, I could hardly form a coherent thought. I pushed back against him so I could take more of him and he responded by giving me everything he had.

‘Alex,’ I groaned. ‘I love you.’ I hadn’t mean to say it, but in the heat of the moment, the words had tumbled out of my mouth. I didn’t even have time to regret them as my orgasm tore through my body.

‘Fuck, Alana,’ he growled as he pumped himself into me and his own orgasm hit.

When he pulled out of me, we collapsed onto the bed and he pulled me into his arms. ‘That was fucking incredible,’ he gasped.

‘I know,’ I agreed.

‘You’re fucking incredible, princess,’ he said with a kiss on my head as he wrapped his arms tighter around me.

‘You’re not so bad, yourself, Mr. Montoya.’

When we’d caught our breath, Alejandro sat up. ‘Come on, let’s get cleaned up,’ he said as he stood up and pulled me with him.

Half an hour later, we were lying in bed again, fresh from a very long shower, during which Alejandro had tenderly washed every part of my body.

I lay with my head on his chest, listening to the sound of his heartbeat.

‘So, are we going to talk about what you said to me before, or are we going to pretend it never happened?’ he asked.

Shit!

‘What did I say?’ I asked, feigning my ignorance.

‘You don’t remember telling me that you loved me when my cock was buried in your ass?’ he said with a laugh.

‘Oh, that?’ I felt the skin on my cheeks flush pink.

He placed his index finger under my chin and tilted my head so he could look in my eyes. ‘Did you mean it, or was it the orgasm talking?’

‘Do you want the truth?’ I asked him.

‘Of course I do,’ he said with a frown.

‘Then yes. I meant it.’

I wondered if he’d be angry with me for complicating things, or laugh at me for being so foolish. Alejandro Montoya didn’t do love.

‘I love you too, princess,’ he said before bending his head to kiss me softly.

I felt like my heart was going to burst out of my chest with happiness. Was this for real? ‘I thought you didn’t do love?’

‘That was before I met you.’

‘But why me? All of those women you’ve dated, why do you love me? The woman you could barely stand to look at on our wedding day?’

He ran his fingertips over my cheek. ‘When your father and I came to our business arrangement, one of the reasons I agreed was because I thought you were a spoiled little rich girl who was too wrapped up in herself to consider anyone else. I knew I could never even like someone like that, let alone fall in love. I thought that you were marrying me for the lifestyle I could offer you, and the money. I hadn’t realized that you did it only out of love for your father.’

‘But why did you want to marry someone like that?’ I blinked at him.

‘Because I wasn’t supposed to fall in love with you, Alana. Love is messy and complicated, and I didn’t have time for that. But you are nothing like the woman I thought you were. I may have stolen you, but you have stolen my heart, princess. You are the most precious thing in the world to me.’

I blinked at him. This really couldn’t be true, could it? It was like some kind of fairy tale. ‘You love me while we’re here, in this place where nobody can reach us. But when we get back to the real world, what if you feel differently?’

‘I won’t, because I didn’t feel differently in the real world. But I didn’t tell you that, because I thought you could never love a monster like me.’

I placed my hand on his cheek. ‘You’re not a monster. Not to me.’

He pulled me tighter to him and kissed me so hard I almost forgot my own name.

Chapter Forty-Five

ALANA

WE'D LEFT EARLY IN THE MORNING AND DRIVEN THE WHOLE DAY. ALEJANDRO had even let me drive his Maserati and I'd put my foot down so hard on the gas that he'd warned me I'd get a spanking if I didn't behave.

He'd turned on his cell phone and I'd expected him to have a flurry of messages and notifications of missed calls, but he only had one from his mom, telling him to have a good time and that she'd speak to him when he was back online.

It seemed that Jax really had handled everything in his absence, as Alejandro had known he would. I got the impression he disappeared like this every now and again.

It was a lovely drive back to L.A. We had talked and laughed and stopped for food and listened to cheesy eighties music. But it felt like the closer we got to L.A, the more tense Alejandro became and I wondered again if the end of our trip would be the end of this thing between us.

When we were an hour outside L.A, Alejandro called Jax and told him that he was back, and since then, his phone had rang almost off the hook. He'd answered each call and barked orders at people - sometimes in Spanish and sometimes in English. I learned that Blake still hadn't been found and that seemed to enrage Alejandro all over again.

I looked out of the window as the evening turned to dusk and choked back a sob. It felt like I had lost him already. There was no way we could be that same couple from the beach house out here in the real world. He wasn't the carefree man who had run barefoot on the sand and made love to me in every room in the house. He was Alejandro Montoya again – the King of L.A.

As soon as we pulled up at the house, Jacob came out to take the car and to tell Alejandro that Jax was waiting for him in the den. Alejandro turned to me as though he was about to say something.

‘You go see Jax. I’m tired anyway,’ I spoke first and forced a smile. ‘I’m going to grab a quick shower and then head to bed.’

He nodded and then he followed Jacob into the house and I walked through to the bedroom alone, wondering why life could be so unfair to give me a taste of something so special and then snatch it away.

I was in the shower washing my hair when I saw the door opening and Alejandro walking inside the room.

‘Any room in there for me, princess?’ he said with a smile as he pulled off his clothes and kicked them into a heap in the corner.

‘Of course,’ I replied as he stepped under the running water with me. Running his hands over my hips and onto my ass, he pulled me to him, pressing his cock which was already semi-hard against me. ‘What about Jax?’

‘Jax? I’m not letting him shower with you, princess,’ he said with a flash of his eyebrows.

‘I mean, I thought you were meeting with him?’ I shoved him playfully in the chest but he didn’t budge an inch.

‘I did. He just wanted to give me a run down of what I’ve missed. He’s gone now.’

‘Oh?’ I said as I chewed on my lower lip.

He placed his index finger under my chin and tilted my head so he could look into my eyes. ‘What is it?’

‘Nothing. It’s silly.’

‘It’s not silly if it’s bothering you. What’s up?’

‘I thought ... you seemed so tense when we got back to L.A. I thought, maybe the beach house, how happy we were ... maybe, it wasn’t real?’

He pressed his lips against mine, pushing me up against the cool tiled wall as he did. His hands roamed over my body as he devoured my mouth with his own. Then he cupped my ass and lifted me until my legs were wrapped around his waist.

And then he was inside me. I groaned into his mouth but he didn’t let up. He nailed me to the wall until I was coming apart around him.

It was only when he pumped his own orgasm into me that he broke our kiss. ‘Was that real, princess?’ he growled.

I nodded as the water spilled over his face. ‘Yes,’ I breathed.

‘This isn’t the beach house. I wish that it was. I wish that I had nothing to do all day but swim, eat and fuck you. But I have responsibilities here, and yes they make me angry and tense. But, never with you. *You* are my beach house, Alana. You’re what makes me happy – here, or the beach, or anywhere else we may be. Wherever you are, is where I am content.’

I squeezed my legs tighter around him as I felt the emotion swelling in my chest until it felt like it would burst out of me. ‘I love you, Alex,’ I whispered.

‘I love you too, Alana.’

Chapter Forty-Six

ALANA

LUCY AND I SAT IN KRISTEN'S OFFICE AS SHE BUSIED HERSELF MAKING US both a cup of sweet tea. Lucy glanced sideways at me. She had been fidgeting and chewing her lip since we sat down. I took hold of her hand and squeezed.

We were about to tell Kristen the truth, and later that afternoon we had a meeting with a lawyer that Alejandro had arranged.

As a minor, Lucy would have to go into the care system, but Alejandro had paid for the best lawyer in L.A, who would make sure that she got placed with a good foster family who could look after her.

Alejandro had sounded so confident that it would all work out, that I believed it would, and that was how I had managed to convince Lucy that what we were about to do was for the best. I could understand her feeling anxious though, and I could feel it coming from her in waves.

Eventually, Kristen sat down and handed us each a cup of tea. 'So, you had something you wanted to chat about?' she said, with her trademark wide smile as she sat at her desk.

I looked at Lucy. 'Go on,' I said.

Lucy cleared her throat and then told Kristen the truth about her only being sixteen and the fact that she was also three months pregnant.

Kristen listened intently, never interrupting or showing judgement. Lucy was crying by the time she had finished and I handed her a paper tissue.

'Well, that's quite the pickle,' Kristen said as she leaned back in her chair. 'But nothing we can't handle, eh, Alana?' she said with a smile.

'Of course not. Alejandro's lawyer is going to meet us this afternoon when Lucy contacts the authorities.'

Kristen nodded. 'Good. I wish you could stay here with us, Lucy. You fit

in so well here and everybody loves you, but you're too young sweetheart.'

'I know,' Lucy sniffed. 'And I'm sorry that I lied to you all. But I was just so scared. And I can't go back to Chicago. I can't,' she said, suddenly her eyes were wide with fear, making me wonder what had happened to her there.

'That's okay,' I said as I squeezed her hand. 'We'll make sure that you get to stay nearby.'

Kristen nodded. 'And have you decided what you want to do about the baby? You have options?'

Lucy's hands flew to her stomach. 'I want to keep it. They will let me, won't they?'

'Of course,' Kristen and I responded together.

'Good,' she said with a sigh.

'But, you'll have to go to school and get your GED. Did you go to school in Chicago?' I asked her.

Her face turned pink and her eyes filled with tears. 'Yes. Until my parents died anyway.'

'When did they die, sweetheart?' I asked her.

'A little over two years ago,' she sniffed.

My heart broke for her. For two years, she'd had no-one to turn to. No-one except Blake who was considerably older than her and had obviously taken advantage of her vulnerability.

She started to sob then and I put my arm around her shoulders. She leaned into me, pressing her face against my shoulder until her tears were soaking my shirt. Kristen and I exchanged a look that conveyed we would do everything we could to help this sweet girl and make sure she got to live the life that she deserved.

Chapter Forty-Seven

ALEJANDRO

I WAS LATE GETTING HOME. I'D CHECKED IN WITH MY LAWYER A FEW MINUTES ago to see how his meeting with Lucy and Alana had gone.

Evan Goldman was the best lawyer money could buy, and I trusted his instinct as much as I trusted his considerable skills in the courtroom. He had made sure that Lucy was placed with a decent family in a good neighborhood and that had made Alana happy. But, like me, Evan believed that there was something not quite right about Lucy Callaghan's story.

I walked through the quiet house, expecting to find Alana in the den, but she wasn't there. I checked my watch. It was only a little after nine and that was too early for her to go to bed - unless she was waiting there for me with plans other than sleep. My cock twitched in anticipation at the thought.

I walked through the to the bedroom and opened the door. She wasn't in there, but the balcony doors were open. I crossed the room and heard her outside. She was on the phone to someone and despite her speaking quietly, her voice travelled on the breeze.

'I know.'

'I don't.'

'Yes, I promise.'

'I love you too,' she whispered.

Then a few seconds later she walked into the room with her cell phone in her hand. She blinked when she saw me. 'Alejandro?'

'Not expecting me so soon, princess?' I growled.

'I didn't realize the time, I was reading on the balcony.'

'Sounded like you were on the phone?'

'Oh, I was. My parents just called me.'

‘Really?’

‘Yes, really!’ she frowned at me.

‘They have anything interesting to say?’ I asked as I walked closer to her.

‘Not really. They were just checking in. Making sure I’m okay, that’s all.’

I nodded and glanced over her shoulder. Sure enough, there was a book on the table beside her chair on the balcony, beside a half empty mug of chamomile tea.

I took another step until my body was only inches from hers. She took a deep breath and fidgeted with the sleeve of her sweater.

‘If that was only your parents, why were you talking so quietly? And why do you look so suspicious?’ I asked as I glared at her, searching her eyes for the truth. But, I already knew she was a good actress, remembering the displays she’d once put on for my mother and the paparazzi.

‘I was talking quietly because I was outside and it was a private conversation. You have guards patrolling this place twenty-four hours a day. I’m not acting suspicious,’ she snapped, her jaw tilted up in defiance.

‘Looks like you are to me. Almost as though you didn’t want me to hear you?’

She shrugged. ‘Well, I suppose you’re right about that. You and my father aren’t exactly friends, are you? I just didn’t want us to get into a discussion about him, that’s all. I’m not hiding anything,’ she held her arms out wide. ‘I’m an open book.’

I tucked a strand of hair behind her ear. ‘Your father is no enemy of mine, princess. After all, he gave me you, didn’t he?’

She smiled at me and leaned her body closer to mine, pressing her breasts against my chest and sending all of the blood from my brain rushing straight to my cock. ‘I suppose so,’ she purred.

‘If you’re lying to me, Alana –’

‘I’m not,’ she insisted. ‘I wouldn’t lie to you. But I did lie to my father.’

‘Oh? Why?’

She looked up at me with those huge brown eyes. ‘He asked me not to trust you and I told him that I don’t. It was easier than arguing with him.’

‘So, you do trust me then?’ I growled, feeling all the blood from the rest of my body rushing to my cock now too.

‘You know I do,’ she frowned. ‘I can, can’t I?’

‘As much as you can ever trust a devil, princess,’ I said and then I bent my head and trailed soft kisses up her neck. She smelled of vanilla and

cherries and suddenly, I was desperate for her.

I pulled her sweater off over her head and was pleased to see she was wearing no bra. I moved my head lower and sucked one of her nipples into my mouth and she moaned softly as she ran her fingers through my hair.

My hands travelled southwards, to the band of her yoga pants. Pulling them down over her ass, I was very happy to discover she wasn't wearing panties either.

'Buena chica,' I mumbled against her skin.

I dropped to my knees, pulling her yoga pants down and off over her feet. I buried my head between her thighs, inhaling the scent of her sweet pussy. I gave her a quick kiss there before I stood again and lifted her up so she could wrap her legs around my waist. I carried her to the bed and threw her down onto it before pulling off my clothes as fast as I could.

'Spread those legs for me, princess. I want to see what belongs to me,' I growled and she obeyed instantly.

As soon as I was naked, I crawled over her and pinned her arms above her head. I knew she was already wet and ready for me and I pushed myself inside her, making her groan out loud.

I'd had a shitty day and I was angry and suspicious about the phone call I'd just overheard, and the best way I knew to make that better was to bury myself in her.

So that was what I did.

Over and over again.

I was too rough with her. I fucked her harder than I'd ever fucked anyone in my life. I bit and sucked on her tender flesh, marking her skin with my very own brand. With each thrust, I tried to get further inside her until there wasn't anywhere left for me to go. And she took it all – without a whimper of complaint. She clawed at my back as though she needed more.

When I finally made her come, she screamed my name out so loud, I thought the people in the next house must have heard.

I lay in bed and listened to Alana's soft breathing beside me. She'd been asleep for hours but I was still wide awake. Lucy Callaghan was playing on my mind and the phone call I'd overheard when I got home had me suspicious.

I believed Alana when she told me it was her father on the line, and while

I trusted her, I didn't trust him. He was a lying snake, and he was fucking good at it too. What if she was just like him? What if she was playing me for a complete fool?

I looked at her. She was facing away from me, her long, dark hair splayed out across her pillow. She liked to fall asleep on my chest but then she always got too hot and rolled over onto her side.

I had to believe that she was nothing like her father. Everything about her was good and pure. That couldn't be a lie. Everything that we'd done and said these past few weeks couldn't be a lie.

I turned on my side and planted a kiss on her shoulder as I slipped my hand over her hip and down between her thighs.

'Alex?' she groaned sleepily.

I pressed my body against hers and my mouth against her ear. 'Open your legs for me, princess. I want inside you. Now.'

She obeyed immediately and my cock throbbed at how easily she lifted her leg and hooked it over mine, allowing me better access.

I rubbed her clit slowly and she moaned in pleasure. She winced when I pushed the tip of my cock into her dripping wet heat and I felt guilty because I knew she'd be sore from earlier – but not so guilty that I wasn't about to fuck her again anyway.

'Are you sore?'

'A little,' she breathed.

'I'll take it easy, I promise,' I said as I pushed all the way inside her.

'Alex,' she groaned again as I started to fuck her slowly, rubbing her clit and nuzzling her neck at the same time.

'If I fuck you nice and slow, will you squirt for me again, princess?' I growled in her ear.

'Yes,' she whimpered.

I don't know how long I fucked her for but I felt like I could have gone on until morning. Slow, lazy sex was a new concept for me but I loved it with her.

Burying myself in her tight, wet, pussy, my body pressed up against hers, hardly moving and just rocking us both while my hands roamed over skin, was as incredible a feeling as when I nailed her hard and fast.

I felt her orgasm building over and over as she squeezed my cock with her tight channel, but I kept her on the edge for as long as I could. I wanted her to coat me in her juices again. I wanted her to lose complete control.

Because that was when I truly owned her.

She rewarded me a few moments later with a torrent of her cream, soaking me, her and the sheets and I was so fucking turned on I found my own release straight after.

Chapter Forty-Eight

ALEJANDRO

THE FOLLOWING DAY, I LEFT THE HOUSE EARLY TO GET TO MY MEETING. I watched Jax as he stood beside me, leaning against the car and chewing a piece of nicotine gum. I glanced at my watch. ‘Carmichael is late,’ I snapped. I fucking hated lateness.

He nodded his head. ‘He’s a prick, amigo. You already know this. He’s playing with you.’

I looked around the waste-ground we’d agreed to meet at. Foster Carmichael had offered to stop by L.A on his way back from Vegas, but I didn’t want him anywhere near my wife. He may have been her father but he had given up any right to her love or her loyalty when he sold her to a monster like me.

I looked at the SUV parked nearby that contained two of my men. I didn’t expect any trouble from Carmichael, at least none that I couldn’t handle myself, but I didn’t trust this Cabrón one bit.

‘Looks like he’s decided to show up,’ Jax nodded towards the distance and we saw the two black Sedans pulling onto the dirt track and rolling towards us.

A few moments later, my father in law, Foster Carmichael climbed out, with his security detail by his side. He smiled as he crossed the empty space between us and we met in the middle of the circle of cars.

‘Alejandro,’ he said with an outstretched hand and a smile that was as fake as his personality.

‘You’re late,’ I snapped.

He shrugged. ‘Traffic.’

I didn’t shake his hand and a few seconds later, he dropped it. ‘How is my

beautiful daughter doing? I hope you're looking after her,' he said.

'Alana is fine.'

'Is there a reason that I'm meeting you here and not at your house? Does she know we're even meeting today?'

'No, she doesn't and she's not going to. She stays out of any business between you and me. You got that?'

He scowled at me. 'What's crawled up your ass this morning?'

I resisted the urge to punch him in the face. My father still needed his services and for that reason alone he was valuable to me.

'My father needs your help with some permits. The city are blocking some of the proposals for our hotel expansion and he needs you to fix it,' I said as I pulled an envelope from my inside pocket and handed it to him. 'Everything you need to know is in there.'

He nodded and took it from me. 'Feels a little light,' he said as he held the envelope in his hand.

'Well, it's only a small favor I'm asking. Besides, I gave you three million bucks not so long ago. Remember?'

He grinned at me. 'I bet she's worth every cent though, isn't she?'

I lunged for him, grabbing him by the collar of his jacket causing two of his bodyguards to run towards us.

'Get your hands off me,' he snarled. 'I think you forget who you're dealing with.'

I let him go before I did something I regretted. 'No. I think you forget who you're dealing with, Cabrón,' I hissed. 'You seem to think you're untouchable, but I'll remind you that my family have much more important men than you in their pockets.'

He started to laugh. 'Maybe so. But we're family now, aren't we? And if you want it to stay that way, I'd suggest you keep me on side. My daughter might have been your wife for a few months, but she will always be my daughter first and foremost. And that means her loyalty will always be to me. How do you know I haven't already had her finding out all of your little secrets for me, Alejandro? All I'd have to do is snap my fingers and she'd come running back home to me.'

'You really think?' I laughed at him now. 'You have no idea who your daughter is.'

'You think you know her?' he shouted at me. 'You know nothing about her. Nothing!'

‘I know that she’d disown you if she ever found out about Bethany Cooper.’

I watched the color drain from his face and even his lips turned white. ‘What?’ he stammered.

‘You heard me. Bethany Cooper. Remember her? Of course you do. Tell me, Foster, did you tie the noose around her neck or did you have one of your hired help do it for you?’

‘I’ve got no idea what you’re talking about,’ he snarled as he regained his composure.

‘Well, your daughter is a smart woman. I’m sure if I presented her with the evidence, she’d be able to figure everything out for herself.’

‘Fuck you!’ he snapped. ‘You do that and I’ll blow your whole New York hotel scam wide open.’

I shrugged my shoulders. ‘That would hurt my business, but we’d recover.’

‘So, what the hell do you want from me?’ he snapped.

‘I want you to stay out of your daughter’s life. When we have children of our own, I want you nowhere near them, you sick fuck!’

‘She’ll never accept that.’

‘She will. I’ll make sure of it. But I won’t tell her about the schoolgirl you raped and murdered. Deal?’

He scowled at me. ‘You think that she belongs to you, but she is *my* daughter, Alejandro. And for that reason alone, you will never be able to trust her. I taught her well, my friend. My Alana is a chameleon. You will have to live every day not knowing if she is speaking the truth or lies. You will always be wondering if she is spying on you and reporting back to me.’

I glared at him. ‘Well, I guess I’ll have to take that chance. Make sure the permits are approved, Carmichael,’ I said and then I turned and walked away from him.

Jax opened the door to my car and I climbed inside. My jaw was clenched so firmly that I thought I might grind my teeth to stumps.

‘Drive,’ I snapped to my driver as soon as Jax was inside the car too.

‘Everything okay, amigo?’ Jax asked.

‘Carmichael is a fucking snake,’ I hissed.

‘Well, I could have told you that,’ he said. ‘What happened?’

I leaned back in my seat and relayed most of my conversation with Foster Carmichael, all except what he’d said about how I would never be able to

trust Alana.

Chapter Forty-Nine

ALEJANDRO

WALKING INTO THE WAREHOUSE, I NODDED A GREETING TO JAX, WHO STOOD smoking a cigarette near the entrance.

‘Are they all in there?’ I asked.

‘Yup. And suitably shitting their pants, amigo,’ he said with a flash of his eyebrows.

‘Good,’ I growled. They’d be doing more than that by the time I was finished with them.

I walked into the warehouse, with Jax following close behind me. He flicked the end of his lit cigarette into the distance and the four men standing in the center of the room turned when they heard our footsteps. I could smell the fear even from thirty paces away.

As they stepped aside, the sight behind them came into view. A single chair with a naked man strapped to it. There was also a single table, full of all manner of surgical instruments. I took off my suit jacket and placed it on the table before removing my cufflinks and putting them down beside it.

The man tied to a chair let out a muffled cry through the rag stuffed into his mouth. The four men who were standing moved to form a line directly in front of me as I started to unbutton my shirt. They stared at me, their eyes wide with fear as they watched me. These men weren’t my enemies, but they feared me just as much, and they had every reason to.

‘Can any of you tell me why the fuck that isn’t Blake Fielding tied to that chair?’ I asked them.

‘He’s disappeared, Boss,’ Anton said.

‘He was in the wind before we could get a lead on him,’ Kain added.

I nodded as I slid my shirt over my shoulders and placed it beside my

jacket. I looked up at them, searching each of their faces for something that might make me any less angry, but I found nothing. ‘So, you’re telling me, that some low-life, scum-sucking Cabrón from Chicago, has avoided four of my best fucking men?’ I barked.

‘We’ve got his cousin, Boss –’ Anton started.

‘His cousin? I don’t want his fucking cousin. I want him!’ I snarled. ‘And the fact that you have brought me here tells me that his cousin knows fuck all, or you would have extracted that information from him yourselves, wouldn’t you? Or are you all so fucking incompetent, you can’t even do that now?’

‘He’s given us some other leads to chase, Boss,’ Anton said.

I stepped towards him, pressing my face closer to his. ‘Leads? It’s been a fucking week and all you have is leads? Are you fucking shitting me?’

The four of them shuffled uncomfortably, looking at the floor and their feet, while Blake’s cousin continued to whimper in the background.

‘Fucking look at me when I’m talking to you,’ I snarled.

They lifted their heads until their eyes met mine. ‘You do realize that this hijo de puta threatened my wife? He put his hands on my fucking wife!’ I shouted, the noise echoing around the empty warehouse. Three of them visibly flinched but Anton remained steadfast. He had worked for me for longer than any of them. He was loyal and he was trustworthy, and usually he was good at his job.

‘You have fucking let me down,’ I glared at him.

He simply nodded. ‘I know, Boss.’

He had barely finished his sentence when I punched him square in the jaw. He staggered backwards and fell onto the floor.

‘We’ll find him, Boss,’ Kain said as he stepped forward.

‘Oh, I know you fucking will. Because, I you will not set foot back in this city until you have that fucker with you!’

I walked past them and towards the man tied to the chair. ‘What is this Cabrón’s name?’

‘Calvin,’ Kain replied.

I looked him over. He was covered in welts and bruises and his left leg was obviously broken. I grabbed a handful of his hair and tilted his head up to look at me. His eyes were glassy, the pain making him lose focus and slip in and out of consciousness. I took the rag from his mouth and tossed it onto the floor.

‘Pass me the epinephrine,’ I snapped and someone handed me the hypodermic needle from the table. I injected it into a vein in Calvin’s arm and his eyes focused on me and he started breathing heavily. I slapped his face. ‘Hey. Focus. Where the fuck is Blake?’

He started to shake his head violently from side to side. ‘I don’t know, I swear. I don’t know.’

I held out my hand and Jax placed a small scalpel into it. I pressed the sharp blade against Calvin’s chest. ‘Where is he?’ I repeated.

‘I don’t know!’

I sliced through his chest, ripping open his pectoral muscle and slicing his nipple in half. He screamed in agony as I took hold of his hair again and leaned down to him. ‘The next cut will be your balls. Now tell me where the fuck I can find your cousin.’

He tried to shake his head as tears and snot ran down his face, but I held him in place. ‘I don’t know,’ he sobbed. ‘You need to speak to his girlfriend. She’s not who she says she is —’

I lifted my foot and kicked him hard in the groin and he vomited bile onto the floor. ‘You think I don’t already know that, mal nacido! You think I don’t know who Lucy Callaghan really is? You think I’m fucking stupid?’

He shook his head as his body convulsed with sobs.

I held the scalpel close to his face. ‘You’re going to die, Calvin. But, I can make it quick and end your suffering right now, or I can drag it out for days. It’s up to you. Tell me what I need to know.’

He blinked at me, his eyes full of defeat and I knew that he didn’t have the information I needed. I could go on torturing him but it wouldn’t get me any closer to finding Blake Fielding. The old me would have tortured him anyway, just for the hell of it, and because I was fucking raging. But, I thought about Alana, and all I wanted to do was get home to her.

I turned around and looked at Jax. ‘End him. Now,’ I said as I walked back towards my employees. Taking one of chlorine soaked rags from the table, I wiped my hands clean of Calvin’s blood. A few seconds later, the sound of a gunshot echoed around the warehouse.

I pointed to the four men who were standing in front of me. ‘Find me Blake Fielding, or the next time I see any of you, it will be you strapped to a fucking chair, and I will personally castrate the fucking lot of you!’

They nodded. ‘Yes, Boss,’ they replied in unison.

Grabbing hold of my clothes and cufflinks, I walked towards the exit and

Jax walked behind me . 'Clean this fucking mess up,' I shouted as I shrugged on my shirt.

Chapter Fifty

ALEJANDRO

IT HAD BEEN TWO DAYS SINCE MY MEETING WITH CARMICHAEL AND I HAD been on edge ever since. I had snapped at everyone around me, including Alana.

I sat in my office looking out at the L.A skyline and wondering what she was doing. She was probably in the shelter. I checked my watch and sighed. I had another two meetings to go to before I could get home to her.

I heard the office door opening behind me. I knew it would be Jax. Everyone else knocked.

‘You okay, amigo?’ he asked in his soft southern drawl as he walked into the room. I spun in my chair to face him. ‘You seem a bit wound up lately. A bit more than usual anyway,’ he said with a half-smile.

‘That meeting with Alana’s father has me rattled, Jax. He’s such a fucking snake. He makes my fucking skin crawl.’

‘So, do something about him then?’ Jax said with a shrug.

‘He’s my wife’s father! You suggesting I just make him disappear and lie to her face every day?’

‘You’ve lied to every other woman you’ve ever dated.’

‘But I’m not dating her, am I? She’s my fucking wife, Jax.’

He nodded. ‘I know. But I thought the point of marrying this chick was business. I seem to recall you swearing that this was purely a business deal, and she wouldn’t change you or your life in any way. And now...’

‘Now what?’ I scowled at him.

‘Now ... you’re different, Alejandro. More considerate? And I’m not saying that’s a bad thing. But you have changed, amigo. Six months ago, you would have squashed Foster Carmichael like a bug for the way he spoke to

you.'

'You think people will start to think I'm weak?'

Jax shook his head. 'I never said that. I think the new, slightly more mellow you, is good for business. But, these past few days, you've been distracted and you've been pissed. All I'm saying is that if this is just about Carmichael, then let's deal with him. But is it?'

I shook my head. 'No.'

It was true that my meeting with Alana's father had been the catalyst for my current bad mood, but it was more than that. It was the phone call I'd overheard a few nights ago. It was that I wasn't one hundred percent certain I could trust her. And I refused to share my bed with a woman for the rest of my life if I couldn't share my secrets with her too.

'I thought that it wouldn't matter, Jax. As long as she was with me, I thought it wouldn't matter why. But I can't do this half-assed. I need all of her. I need to know whether this is for real or whether it's all an act and she's waiting for the right time to fuck me over. I keep wondering if she and her father are just waiting for the right opportunity to screw me. What if she's a plant?'

Jax ran a hand over his jaw and shook his head. 'I don't know what to say, Alejandro. What does your gut tell you?'

'My gut tells me that it's real. The way she looks at me, Jax, I don't deserve it. But, I know that she's such a good actress and it might all be a big fucking act with her. She grew up with that narcissistic prick parading her in front of the cameras for every photo opportunity that could make him a quick buck or win him a few votes.' I shook my head. 'Besides. I'm not sure I trust my gut around her. She messes with my head, amigo.'

Jax sat back in his chair and laughed softly.

'Just what is it about this situation that is so fucking funny to you?' I snarled at him.

'The invincible Alejandro Montoya, in pieces over a woman. I never thought I'd see the day,' he laughed again.

I smiled at him as I realized he was right. There were only four people in the world who could get away with laughing at me – two of them were my parents, another one was this man here, who was like a brother to me, and the fourth person was Alana.

'So, what the fuck am I going to do?' I asked him with a sigh.

'She needs to prove to you somehow that you can trust her.'

‘And how does she do that, Jax? I can’t keep testing her. If she is for real, it’s not fair. And I can’t bear the look on her face when she’s hurt.’

‘Well, that, amigo, I can’t answer for you. Only you know what she can do to prove that. And only you know if you’re prepared to do whatever that is.’

I licked my lower lip. I knew what I had to do – the trouble was, I wasn’t sure I wanted to do it. There was every chance I’d lose her if I did.

I left the hotel as soon as my last meeting had finished and drove home as fast as I could. I’d taken the papers that I needed from the safe in my office. I wondered if I’d regret what I was about to do, but I hadn’t been lying earlier in my office – I needed Alana for real.

I walked into the bedroom to see her sitting on the bed brushing her beautiful, dark hair and my cock twitched at the sight of her.

She turned to me and gave me one of those killer smiles and my heart leapt into my throat.

‘What have you got there?’ she asked, indicating the envelope in my hand.

I walked towards her and handed it to her. ‘I need to talk to you.’

She blinked at me as she took the envelope from my hands. ‘Alex, what’s wrong?’

‘I need you to know that your father is not the man you think he is, Alana.’

‘What?’ she said, her beautiful face pulled into a frown.

‘That is everything I have on him. Everything he told you that I’ve been holding over him to make you agree to marry me.’

She glanced down at the envelope and then opened the top, peering inside. ‘Why are you giving this to me now?’

‘Because I want you to have it. You can do whatever you like with it. Destroy it ... or keep it, it’s up to you.’

‘Why would I keep it? Let’s get rid of it now.’

I sat down on the bed beside her. ‘I think you should at least look at it before you make a decision. And I think you need to talk to him about this arrangement between us.’

She placed a hand on my face. ‘Why don’t you tell me instead?’

I took hold of her hand. ‘This is a conversation you need to have with

him. I need you to know the truth.'

'Then tell me the truth,' she insisted.

'You wouldn't believe me.'

'So, what are you suggesting?' she said and I saw the tears in her eyes.

'I'm releasing you from this contract between us. You're free to go whenever you choose. You should go home and speak to your father and then decide what you want to do next. But that information in your hands hurts my business almost as much as it hurts your father. So, I want you to think about that and why I would ever release it.'

'Alex,' she started to say. 'I don't know ... what are you talking about?'

'I've booked you on the red eye to New York tonight. Hugo will drive you to the airport and then one of your father's men will pick you up from JFK.'

'So, that's it? I can just go? Just like that? You and me are done?'

I took her face in my hands. 'You and me will never be done, Alana. I hope you come back to me. I hope that you weren't lying when you told me that you love me. But, yes, you are free to go, princess.'

She looked up at me, with tears in her eyes and a look of confusion on her face. I wanted her to go and see her father and find out the truth, but I also wanted her to wrap her arms around my neck and tell me that of course she loved me and that she couldn't stand to be without me.

But she said none of those things. Instead she uttered two words, and they broke my ice-cold heart.

'Thank you.'

Chapter Fifty-One

ALANA

I WALKED UP THE FEW STEPS OF MY PARENT'S OLD BROWNSTONE AND RANG the doorbell. My pulse raced as I waited for the door to be answered. I had pored over the papers that Alejandro had given me last night, and they had made for very interesting reading indeed.

If they were genuine, then my father's explanation for my forced marriage to Alejandro just didn't make sense. If what I'd read on those papers was true, it seemed that my father had an entirely different reason for marrying me off to the King of L.A and the heir to the Montoya family business.

Of course, I knew that paperwork could be faked but I had an awful feeling that it hadn't been, and that Alejandro was the only one telling me the truth.

I took a deep breath.

I could do this!

I was about to confront my father, the man I had always looked up to, and accuse him of something so heinous, it was unthinkable.

Cassandra, my father's PA, answered the door to me. 'Alana?' she said with a look of surprise on her face. 'What are you doing here?'

'I've come to see my father, Cassie. Is he home?'

She nodded and stepped aside as she opened the door wider. 'Of course. Come in, come in. He'll be so happy to see you.'

I followed her into the kitchen, where my father was sitting drinking coffee and reading the morning papers. I wondered briefly why Cassandra was here so early in the morning, but dismissed the thought from my mind. I had enough to confront him with without wondering if he was having an

affair with his PA.

‘Sweetheart,’ he said as he looked up from his newspaper. ‘What are you doing here?’

I shrugged. ‘I just needed to see you, Daddy.’

He folded his paper and stood up, crossing the kitchen and placing his hand on my shoulder. ‘Is everything okay, Alana?’

I blinked back the tears. How the hell was I going to do this? ‘Where’s mom?’ I asked.

‘In bed. She’s having one of her migraines,’ he replied with a roll of his eyes. My mother spent more time in her bed than any other person I’d ever known.

She always had some ailment or other. I thought about asking him to go get her, or marching up the stairs and waking her myself, but I thought better of it. I wondered if she knew what her darling husband had done.

She had always taken his side over mine. He had always been the most important person in our family. Everything had always been about him and his career, and until that moment, I had never even thought to question it.

I looked sideways at Cassandra and thankfully she read the situation like a pro. ‘I’ll leave you two to it. You must have lots to catch up on and I need to prep for our interview later. I’ll see you for lunch?’ she said to my father.

‘Yes. I’ll see you there, Cassie,’ he said warmly and I noticed the way their eyes locked for just a fraction longer than they should have.

It was as though I was suddenly seeing my father without the filter of being his adoring daughter. Maybe my mother’s constant illnesses were due to something more than her being a hypochondriac?

‘It was nice to see you, Alana,’ Cassandra said, snapping me from my thoughts.

‘Yes, you too,’ I nodded politely and watched her walk out of the door.

‘Is anyone else here?’ I asked.

‘Only Paulo. Why?’ he frowned at me.

Paulo was my father’s personal security detail and had worked for him for the past two years. I knew that my father trusted him implicitly and I doubted there was much that went on in my father’s world that Paulo wasn’t privy to. ‘I just have something delicate to discuss, that’s all.’

‘Well, Paulo won’t bother us,’ he said with a wave of his hand. ‘What is it, sweetheart?’

I sat down at the table and he did the same.

I looked at him. His hair was greyer than I remembered, and he didn't seem as tall either. I used to find him formidable and intimidating, but now he just looked like an old man. Still, he was my father, and I loved him, and what I was about to ask him wasn't easy.

'I want to know the real reason why you asked me to marry Alejandro,' I said, my voice trembling.

He frowned at me. 'You know why. I would have gone to jail for the rest of my life, sweetheart. He threatened to expose me.'

I shook my head. 'But with what, Dad? The information he has on you could damage his business beyond repair. Why would he ever expose it?'

His frown turned to a scowl. 'For lots of reasons, Alana.'

'Such as?'

He snorted and shook his head. 'You wouldn't understand. I've always protected you too much, and in doing that, I've failed you. I can see that now. You don't have a clue how the real world works, sweetheart.'

I wondered if he actually believed any of that bull-crap. 'But that's just it, Dad. I do. And what you told me just doesn't add up. Not to mention that two days before my wedding, your campaign received a three million dollar donation from The Montoya Corporation. So, I'll ask you again. Why did you force me to marry Alejandro Montoya, because it sure as hell wasn't to stop him from ratting you out to the Feds like you told me?'

He scowled at me. 'He's been filling your head full of lies about me. And like a stupid little girl, you believe him?' he hissed.

'I've seen the papers myself, Dad. And I am not a stupid little girl.'

'I can't believe you would believe that animal over your own father!' he spat.

'You think he's an animal?'

'I know he is!'

'Then why the hell did you sell your only daughter to him?' I snapped.

He jumped up from his chair. 'How dare you come into this house and accuse me,' he shouted, spittle flying from his mouth. 'You ungrateful little bitch. I tried to give you a better life. And it was no easy feat either, convincing him to take you on.'

'What?' I looked up at him as my legs started to tremble.

'Yes, that's right. I had to do a real sales job on him. I convinced him you were some fun-loving Manhattan socialite who would be able to hold her own in his world, instead of a boring bookworm who would rather spend her

Saturday nights working than going out with her friends. But of course, you don't have any friends, do you, Alana? You never did have.'

I stood up until I was staring him in the face. 'I never had friends because you insisted on making me work on your campaign every spare hour I had.'

He laughed in my face. 'I did that to give you some purpose in your life, Alana. Without me, you would be nothing. I arrange your marriage to the King of fucking L.A and even that's not good enough for you. And now that he's seen you for who you really are, he's tossed you aside. So, you've come crawling back to me trying to blame me for the fact that he doesn't want you. I hope he realizes he doesn't get a refund for returning you. You're used goods now, sweetheart!'

I felt the sting of his words like a slap to my face. I choked down a sob. He would never see me cry.

I was Alana fucking Montoya!

'You couldn't be more wrong. Alejandro loves me because of who I really am, not because of who he tries to make me be, or who you tried to convince him I was. You sold me to him, Dad. You sold your only daughter to a man you knew to be a ruthless killer. You call him an animal, but you are a monster.'

He raised his arm and brought the back of his hand crashing down against my cheek so hard that my head snapped backwards. 'You ungrateful little whore,' he raged at me.

I backed away from him as he advanced towards me with his fist in the air.

Paulo came through the kitchen door so fast that I hardly had time to process the fact that he was in the room until he had my father in a choke hold.

My father struggled. 'Get off me,' he sputtered as he flailed against Paulo's superior strength.

'If I let you go, are you going to sit your ass down?' Paulo snarled.

'Yes,' my father choked.

Paulo released him and my father stumbled to a chair, rubbing his throat. 'What the hell are you doing. You work for me,' he rasped.

I looked at Paulo and he nodded at me. 'Actually, I work for Mr. and Mrs. Montoya,' he said as he glared at my father.

'What?' my father snarled. 'But you're *my* security.'

'I am. But I am employed by The Montoya Corporation. I was selected by

Mr. Montoya himself to protect you, and also to keep an eye on his investments.'

'You've been spying on me?'

'Keeping an eye on Mr. Montoya's interests,' he replied.

'Does that mean me too?' I asked Paulo.

'Not until today, ma'am, when Mr. Montoya told me that you were coming into town. He asked me to make sure no harm came to you. I'm sorry I didn't respond sooner,' he looked down at his feet and I wondered if he was worried about Alejandro's reaction when he saw my cheek, which was sure to be bruised after the smack my father had given me.

'There's no need to apologize. I appreciate you intervening when you did,' I said and then I glared at my father. 'You sold your own daughter and you tried to convince me that Alejandro was the monster. You made me marry a man because I believed he was blackmailing you, all for a campaign donation. You make me sick,' I spat. 'And I never want to see you again.'

He glared at me and I could tell he wanted to respond but he was still sitting under the heat of Paulo's intense gaze.

'Does Michael work for my husband too?' I asked Paulo, recalling the driver who had picked me up from the airport and brought me here.

'He does now, ma'am,' he said with a nod. 'Would you like me to call him for you?'

'Yes, please,' I said. 'I'll wait outside for him.'

I sat on the steps of the Brownstone while I waited for the driver to return for me. I felt the hot tears streaming down my face but I didn't bother wiping them away. My whole world had been turned upside down.

I had never really known my father at all. Everything I believed about my life and all that I'd done had been a lie. He wasn't a good man. He wasn't a good father.

He was the monster.

I looked up at the blue New York sky and watched a bird swooping overhead. Suddenly, I realized that I was free. For so long, I had lived my life out of a sense of duty and responsibility, and now I was completely free to do whatever I chose and not what anyone else wanted or manipulated me into doing.

I wiped the tears from my eyes and smiled to myself, because for the first

time in my life, I knew exactly what *I* wanted.

Chapter Fifty-Two

ALANA

I STEPPED OUT OF THE TAXI CAB AND PRESSED THE INTERCOM AT THE MAIN gate. I'd lied and told Alejandro that I was on the later flight. I didn't want Jacob waiting for me at the airport. I just wanted to get into a cab like a normal twenty-five year old woman. Because that's what I was now – that's what I would be.

Jacob's voice crackled over the intercom. I knew he could see me on the camera, but I felt the need to announce myself anyway.

'Hi, Jacob, it's me,' I said.

'Alana,' he stammered. 'We weren't expecting you this early. I was supposed to pick you up.'

'I know,' I replied.

I wanted to walk into this house under my own steam, and of my own free will. I had to get this over with before I changed my mind. 'But I'm here now. Can you let me in?'

'Of course,' he replied and then the electronic gates slowly opened.

I walked through the courtyard and to the front door which had already been opened by Magda who was waiting for me. 'It's good to have you back, Alana,' she said with a smile.

I nodded at her as I passed. I'd been gone for less than a day but even to me it felt like longer. 'Where is he?' I asked her.

'In the master suite,' she replied.

A moment later, I walked into the master bedroom and saw him standing with his back to me, looking out of the doors leading to the balcony. He was dressed in only a pair of black sweatpants and I took a moment to admire him. He had a body that looked like it had been sculpted by Michelangelo

himself.

He must have sensed me in the room because he turned and looked at me.
'Alana?'

'Hi,' I said quietly.

'You're back?'

I nodded. 'I spoke to my father. He confirmed everything.'

'I know. Paulo told me what happened. Are you okay?'

I nodded and unconsciously rubbed my fingertips over my cheek. 'I told him I never want to see him again, and I meant it. I know you'll be angry with him, but I need you to promise me that you won't go after him, Alejandro.'

He stared at me for a few moments, looking at the bruise on my cheek but then he nodded. 'Okay. If that's what you want?'

'It is. He's not worth it. I'd rather leave him and my mother to rot in their own little web of deceit they've woven around themselves.'

'Is that why you came back? To plead for your father's life?'

'No. I came here to tell you that I want out of this ridiculous contract between the two of us.' I watched his face fall and my heart almost broke in two, but this had to be said.

'My father will never return that three million dollars, but you don't get to buy me, Alejandro. I was never his to sell. You don't get to buy love. Besides, mine is worth a hell of a lot more than that.'

'I know that, Alana,' he said as he stared at me with what I could have sworn were tears in his eyes.

I walked towards him until our bodies were just inches apart. I reached my hand to his face and brushed his jaw with my fingertips. 'I want out of this contract, but I don't want out of this marriage.'

He looked at me, his eyes searching my face. 'What?'

'You can't buy my love, but you have earned it. I want to be your wife, Alex. But only for real. Not because it's good for business, but because you can't bear to wake up one more day without me by your side. Because the thought of living without me would be like living without air.'

He lifted his hand and gently tucked my hair behind my ear. 'Then you already are my wife – for real,' he growled.

I smiled at him. 'Good. Because I love you, Alejandro Montoya.'

He didn't answer me. He sealed his mouth over mine with a kiss so intense that it almost took my breath away. Then he was scooping me into his

arms and carrying me to the bed. I giggled as he pulled off my skinny jeans and tossed them onto the floor.

‘You know that I love you more than anything in the world, don’t you, princess?’ he growled.

‘Yes, but I think you might have to stop calling me princess, now that you know I’m really not one.’

He crawled over me, holding himself up on his forearms. ‘You’ll always be my princesa, Alana, even when I fuck you like a puta.’

I knew what that word meant! I closed my eyes as his words washed over me. I loved his filthy mouth.

‘But never forget, that in my heart, and to everyone the outside world, eres mi reina.’

‘What does that mean?’ I blinked at him.

‘You are my queen,’ he whispered.

‘Hmm, Alana Montoya – Queen of L.A. I could get used to that.’

‘You’d better,’ he growled and then he kissed me again and I wondered what I had ever done to deserve the love of this incredible man.

EPILOGUE

Alana

I LOOKED AT MY HUSBAND AS THE LIGHT FROM THE TV SCREEN FLICKERED over his handsome face and couldn't help but smile. It had been four days since I'd returned from my trip to New York. In that time we hadn't left the house.

We'd both done some work from home, sharing the desk in his office and barely being able to go a few hours without him pulling me onto his lap or bending me over his desk. When we weren't working, we swam in the pool or made love in every room and on every surface of the house.

Now, we were sitting together on the sofa in the den watching TV. I absent mindedly curled a strand of his hair around my finger and he turned to me.

'You okay, princess?' he asked, his voice as smooth as chocolate, sending shivers down my spine.

'Yes,' I said and leaned towards him, pressing my lips softly over his. He ran his warm hand up my thigh, beneath my dress and up to my ass cheek. He pulled back and scowled at me. 'Panties?'

I stifled a giggle. I'd put them on half an hour earlier and was waiting for him to discover them. 'Oops!'

'Are you deliberately defying me, Alana?' he narrowed his eyes at me.

I tilted my head and grinned at him. 'Maybe?'

He moved so quickly, I barely had time to take a breath as he had me pinned to the sofa, his forearms either side of my head as he held onto my wrists. 'Oh, Alana, you're playing a very dangerous game,' he growled, his eyes full of fire and a wicked grin dancing across his lips.

'Ahem?' a loud cough disturbed us and Alejandro scowled but my heart

almost stopped. His staff never interrupted us.

Alejandro pushed himself up onto his knees, so he was still straddling me on the sofa. ‘What?’ he snapped.

‘There’s a young lady at the gate, Boss. She refuses to leave,’ I heard Jacob say.

I sat up, my mouth open in shock. *Young lady? What the hell?* ‘Who is she?’ I asked.

‘She said her name is Lucy and actually, she is demanding to see you, Mrs. Montoya,’ he replied.

I felt the relief wash over me that it wasn’t some ex-girlfriend of Alejandro’s, quickly followed by a wave of panic that Lucy might be in more trouble.

‘Tell her to go home,’ Alejandro barked.

‘What? No,’ I said as I sat up and tried to wriggle from beneath him. ‘It’s late, and there must be something wrong if she’s come here. Let her in, Jacob.’

‘I said tell her to go home,’ Alejandro growled and then he turned and glared at me.

‘What? Why?’ I asked.

‘Alana!’ he hissed.

I pushed him away from me and jumped off the sofa. ‘She’s sixteen years old and she’s alone and scared. We are not sending her away on her own, Alex.’

He sat back against the sofa and glared at me, his eyes full of fire and anger. ‘Take her home in one of the cars, Jacob!’ he barked.

‘Don’t you dare,’ I said to Jacob who was standing there with his fingers on the door handle and his mouth hanging open, wondering whose orders to follow. Alejandro stood up and turned to him. ‘I said take her home!’

Jacob looked at me.

‘Let her in!’ I insisted.

‘What the fuck are you waiting for?’ Alejandro shouted. ‘Take her home.’

‘But Mrs. Montoya said she should come in,’ Jacob stammered and my heart almost burst with admiration for him.

‘Since when do you listen to Alana over me?’ Alejandro scowled at him.

‘Since you told me to run all of the house decisions by her, Boss?’ he said with a shrug.

I smiled to myself and Alejandro blinked in surprise. He had told his staff

that very thing when I'd returned from New York, and now it was biting him on the ass already.

'I am telling you this isn't a house issue, Jacob,' he snarled. 'You are not to let that girl inside the gates.'

Jacob nodded solemnly. There was only so far he was willing to push Alejandro and he'd obviously reached his limit.

I stepped towards Alejandro. My heart was racing. What the hell was I missing here? Why had he taken such an aversion to a pregnant sixteen year old girl? 'Then what is it?' I asked him. 'Why won't you let Lucy in here?'

He turned back to me. His tongue darted out of his mouth, and he licked his lower lip before running a hand through his thick dark hair in exasperation. 'Because her name isn't Lucy for a start. She is not who you think she is, Alana.'

I stared at him, blinking in shock. 'Then who is she?'

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