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# MY Maven, MY Everything

Sons of  
THANATOS



# Joyce Flynn

## Sons of Thanatus 1

# My Maven, My Everything

Madden "Mad" Forrest is a Son of Thanatus, a secret order rumored to be descended from gods. The members possess the ability to hear the souls of the dead, and they travel the country speaking for those without a voice, helping to lay them to rest. After a particularly stressful job, Mad heads to New Orleans and picks up a hot twink in the hotel bar.

Josh McGreggor is out for a night of pleasure before heading off to a new job. The perfect man who invites him over to his table is the answer to his desires. What neither expects is the strength of their feelings after one night's passion or that, come the light of day, they can't bear to part.

Can these two men navigate through the minefield that arises from their roles to find love, or will they be destined to continue their lives all alone?

**Genre:** Alternative (M/M or F/F), Paranormal

**Length:** 35,438 words

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EROTIC ROMANCE



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**A SIREN PUBLISHING BOOK**

IMPRINT: Erotic Romance

MY MAVEN, MY EVERYTHING

Copyright © 2011 by Joyee Flynn

E-book ISBN: 1-61034-408-1

First E-book Publication: March 2011

Cover design by Jinger Heaston

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## **DEDICATION**

To Perpetua & the Yahoo Group: Thanks for all the help doing the research for the series. And to you especially Perp for coming up with the Ankh... it was perfect for the mythology. I swear we were having a mind meld or something. Love y'all lots!!

# MY MAVEN, MY EVERYTHING

*Sons of Thanatus 1*

JOYEE FLYNN  
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## Chapter 1

“Oh well just fuck me hard,” I groaned as I almost got to the location of the body and heard the soul. This was officially one of those times I was up shit creek without a paddle and there was a hole in the boat. I leaned in to whisper over to Officer Sanchez since he seemed like the guy who’d believe me most. “Who called me in on this assignment?”

“Chief Handy—Wwwwwhy?” He eyed me over and I saw the recognition of my distress click. “I’ll call him here immediately.”

“Thank you,” I said, showing my relief. He stepped off to the side to make the call as I turned and faced the other two officers. I made sure to make eye contact only with Tim Meyers and not Mike Boyle. Why? Because Mike Boyle was the one who killed not only the guy whose body I’d been called in to find, but the guy’s wife as well.

I’d come across this a couple of times before. Someone called me in and basically was going to use me as a scapegoat for the murder they committed when I found the body. Needless to say, *not* a position I ever wanted to find myself in. But when someone had the ability to find the dead, suspicion was bound to us, and that made us an easy target.

I belonged to the Sons of Thanatus. It was a secret society dating back to the late 1700s, but our kind went back even further than that. How far? No one really knew because at one point and time we were labeled warlocks or wizards. And while accepted and held to a high esteem for many centuries, when Christianity starting spreading through Europe we became persecuted.

Overnight many of my kind went underground, hiding who they were and what they could do. Over the years and generations, the knowledge of the gift of being able to help the dead was lost to some of the people who had it. Many were no longer taught how to deal with that gift and learn what to do with it.

We couldn't help what we were, any more than shape shifters or vampires could. I was one of many born from a lineage that could see the dead. Or more specifically could find the dead and see their soul. They called to us like a homing beacon. I could sense this soul as soon as I entered the small town in Louisiana. What I hadn't been prepared for was to finding two souls. But when they were right next to each other like this, I wasn't able to differentiate the two until I was right on top of them.

There was a catch, and there always was with anything paranormal. We didn't come into our abilities until we had a brush with death. Until then, they lay dormant. The restless souls didn't bother us and we couldn't sense them.

Souls don't leave the area of their bodies until they are laid to rest. No matter the religion or rights that were observed, it didn't matter how. They just had to be allowed to find peace and move on to the other side. Until then, they stay within a small radius close to where they were.

The souls can give a basic message, like a loop recording. The more time the body's been there, the soul starts to lose it since it is basically watching their own body decompose. The longer it's been there, the harder it is to understand the message from the soul. These

two bodies had only been there for a week, so their message was coming in loud and clear.

And they were telling me that Mike Boyle had been the one to murder them. Mike, it seemed, had had a long affair with the woman. A few days ago the woman's husband, the dead guy I'd been called in to find, had come home to catch them in the act. The best part? Mike was married. He also had an ironclad prenuptial agreement that if he cheated on his wife he got nothing in the divorce.

So he killed them both for money. He killed them so they wouldn't go tell his wife and ruin his plush little life. I can't say I ever found a good reason for murder, but I hated the ones where it was something as petty as money. What kind of animal could take another human's life just for that?

"What's the hold up?" Mike growled at me as his hands fisted at his sides. "I knew you were a fake. You're just yanking our chains and laughing at us."

"Not at all, Officer Boyle," I answered calmly as I held up my hands in surrender. "I simply thought since Chief Handly called me in he'd like to be here for this. It's not only professional courtesy, but I find it alleviates any possible misunderstandings that might have the finger pointed at me for the deaths."

"You said deaths," Mike said, his eye twitching as some of the color drained from his face. "You were called in to find Officer Garrett. Who else do you think is out there?"

Oh yeah, I forgot to mention the part where it was a fellow officer this piece of shit had killed. His partner, to be exact.

"I'll wait until the Chief gets here to discuss this," I replied, swallowing nervously as Mike's cold eyes focused on me. I was really glad I always insisted to never go out to find a body without more than one witness. It also made other witnesses so no one wasn't there to see if something thing happened to me. And I knew right then if it had been just Mike and me, I'd be very dead already.

“I should arrest you for impeding an official investigation,” Mike said with a snarl as he took a step towards me.

“Whoa, man, chill out, Mike.” Tim Meyers stepped in between us and put his hands on his fellow officer’s chest. “I know Garret was your partner, but don’t take it out on this guy. Madden’s here to help us, okay? We all want answers just as much as you do.”

*Not really, he knows the answers. He’s looking for someone to pin it on.* I thought to myself as I was careful not to roll my eyes.

“You know he’s a part of this somehow, Meyers,” Mike growled as he tried to reach for me. “Come on, man! He’s probably one of those serial killers who gets his rocks off by playing cops and coming out looking like the good guy.”

“And people wonder why I demand witnesses,” I grumbled to myself as I ran my fingers through my shoulder-length black hair. I knew I was so gonna tie one off when I got back to my hotel room after this shit.

“Fuck you!” Mike made a lunge for me, but I stepped to the side as Tim grabbed his arm. “You’re just a fucking nut job who thinks he sees dead people! Next you’re going to tell us that you can talk to them, too.”

“No he’s not, Boyle,” Chief Handly said calmly as he joined us with Officer Sanchez right behind him. “I called him in here. Are you questioning my orders and ability to be a cop?”

“No, sir.” Mike got himself under control then as Handly gave him a nod and then waved me to follow him. We walked about twenty feet away before the Chief turned to stare daggers at me. He was shorter than me, but only by a few inches. I was six-six, which helped people not fuck with me often, given what I did.

“Start talking, Forrest.”

“I need to know a few things before I risk you killing me for what I’m about to tell you,” I said slowly, eyeing the man over. He raised an eyebrow as he crossed his arms over his chest before giving me a

nod. "How did you find out about me, or I guess who to contact for help?"

"A buddy of mine who works for the FBI. He and I served together in the Army years ago. When I told him about my missing officer, he told me who to contact and what you guys did. I'll be honest, I'm not sure I'm buying what you can do. But if he believes it and he's one jaded son of a bitch, I'm willing to take a leap of faith."

"Did he tell you that we can do more than just find a body?"

"Yeah," Handly answered slowly, his eyes starting to go wide. "He said you can hear the last thought the person had before they died. Something like the soul repeats it over and over and cannot rest until it's heard."

"That's about right," I said, rubbing my hands over my face in frustration. "How long have you had Mike Boyle in your department, Chief?"

"A long time. Are you getting at what I think you are?"

"Yeah, and it's not just Garrett over there, it's his wife too."

"Why would Boyle—" Chief started to ask but then cut himself off. "He was banging Garrett's wife, wasn't he? Did Garrett find out?"

"Garrett walked in on them and Boyle killed them both so he didn't lose his plush life when his wife divorced him. I guess she's got a nice prenup."

"Fuck, fuck, *fuck*," Handly swore, his voice raising in volume each time. "I can't prove this off of what you're saying, Madden."

"No, but it gives you a step in the right direction on how to solve it. And it also makes me think I'm his planned scapegoat. So that's why I asked Sanchez to get you in here."

"You didn't tell any of them where you were staying, right? You got a hotel in a different town?"

"I always get one at least a county over. As soon as I show you, I'm getting the hell out of dodge," I answered firmly. This wasn't my

fight and I wanted no part in it. I was about to do what I was sent here for, and only that. “You ready for this?”

“No, but let’s do it anyways.” I felt bad for the Chief. This was a mess I wouldn’t want to clean up either. He suddenly looked older as he shook his head and turned to walk back to his men. I followed him, feeling the urge to help the two poor murdered souls get stronger the longer I was around.

Once we got back to the group, I took the lead and led them to Garrett and his wife. As soon as they were visible, Mike made his move and launched at me. He was lucky that Meyers stepped in because I had no problem laying the asshole out. And again, with what I do, knowing how to defend myself was a must. I had black belts in several forms of martial arts, as well as an accomplished marksman.

“Sanchez, escort Madden back to his car,” the Chief ordered as he and Meyers restrained Boyle. He turned to me then. “I’ll be in touch. Thank you for your help.”

“You’re welcome,” I replied with a solemn nod. We didn’t get paid for what we did from law enforcement or most people who contacted us. It was more a trade of favors. The Chief knew if one of our people were ever falsely accused of a murder when we were called in, he’d be asked to step in and attest to what we could do. It wasn’t blackmail or asking for the police to be in our pockets. It was about having credible references.

Policemen trusted other policemen. If I ever had a problem with some Sheriff somewhere else or whatnot, a call from the Chief would go a long way. And we’re not talking about helping me with parking tickets. I’m referring to when someone didn’t believe my abilities and thought I’d murdered someone. It was basic CYA, or cover your ass, techniques.

“I don’t know how you did what you just did, or what the fuck is really going on,” Sanchez said as we got to my car. He stuck out his

hand for me to shake. “But thank you. Garrett was a good guy, and no one deserves to just get dumped like a bag of trash like that.”

“I agree. It’s why I do what I do.” I shook his hand and got in my rental car. I know it might seem cold to find two murdered people and leave like that. But given everything that was going on with Boyle being involved, I wanted to get the fuck out of there for self-preservation.

It took me about an hour and a half to get out of the county and to New Orleans. One of the many things I’d learned in the ten years I’d been doing this was bigger cities were my friend. There was no getting locked away in a nowhere backwater town if you didn’t stay there when traveling on business.

Plus, the nicer hotels were in cities. And while I didn’t get a paycheck—what I did was more of a calling than a job—there were perks at times. Like a very large expense account and the encouragement to pamper ourselves when on assignment. The chain of command didn’t want us burning out or losing our minds. Given the intense stress we could be under and our abilities, it was a definite possibility.

I checked in, headed to my room, took a quick shower, threw on some clothes for going out, and found the hotel restaurant. The hotel bar was attached to their steakhouse, so I had an interesting view of all the goings-on. As my food arrived, along with my second Manhattan, I saw exactly what I wanted. And he was hot. I officially added getting laid to the agenda for the night.

I was partial to hot little twinks. After my brush with death, I finally admitted to myself the type of person I was really attracted to. Men. The man I was eyeing over I wanted to sink my teeth into as much as the steak I was eating, and he was breathtaking. He had longer blond hair that he had in a French braid, bright green eyes that were decorated with smoky gray eyeliner, and a smile that went right to my cock.

What I wanted to see was his body. Taking a chance, I waved the waiter over.

“Is there something else I can get you, sir?”

“Yes, would you send that man over there whatever he’s drinking and tell him I’d be honored if he’d join me?” I asked, pointing to the object of my desires.

“Of course,” the waiter answered with a wink. I ate a little faster, hoping my desert would be coming over soon and didn’t want my dinner to be in the way. The waiter did as I asked, and I made a mental note to give him a nice big tip, because whatever he said, it worked.

Moments later the hot twink was sauntering over to me with a shit-eating grin that told me I might have just become the prey instead of the predator. He had an iridescent, see-through polo shirt on that didn’t quite cover his navel ring. And the jeans he had on were so tight and so low on his hips, I wondered if he had to paint them on.

“So you’d be honored, huh?” He asked as he eyed me over and licked his lips. “I think I might be thanking you for noticing me before the night is over.”

“Have you eaten?”

“Yes, but I’m thinking I’m still hungry for more meat.” I just about choked on my drink at how forward he was being, but instead gestured to the seat next to me. He sat with a wink and I caught a glimpse of his tight little ass as he pulled out the chair.

“I’m sure you hear this all of the time, but you’re stunning.” I leaned in and whispered in his ear as I covered his hand with mine.

“You should see me naked and on my knees.” He purred and licked my earlobe. Holy fuck! And then I started to worry that he might be a professional.

“Are you always this forward?” I leaned back so I could see his eyes as he answered and took another bite of my dinner.

“Not in the slightest.” He chuckled before taking a sip of his martini. “I start a new job tomorrow, a very intense internship, and I

find myself wanting to have a wild night of fun before it begins. I wasn't really sure what I was looking for until a Greek god of a man bought me a drink and invited me to his table. Now I know it means I'm going to be screaming in pleasure until I lose my voice from him fucking me into every surface of his room."

"Check, please." I signaled the waiter as my cock almost exploded in my pants. The waiter nodded and went to get it as I finished my drink and turned to my dirtiest dream sitting next to me. "Would you like some drinks sent up to my room?"

"Are you planning on getting me drunk and taking advantage of me?" The little imp asked as he raised an eyebrow and gulped his drink.

"I think you're going to be corrupting me in every way possible." I chuckled as I took the last bite of my dinner.

"Whatever do you mean?" He batted his long, mascara-covered eyelashes at me innocently and then knocked back the rest of his drink. "Any chance you have handcuffs? I like to play rough."

"No, but I'm sure we can figure out something." I groaned. The waiter came over then, and I quickly signed the bill and ordered another round of drinks to be sent up to my room and added to my bill. I was up and out of my seat the second I was done. Extending a hand to the man I was going to see naked in mere minutes, I was very ready to experience all he had to offer. "Shall we?"

"Many times tonight if I'm lucky." He purred as he took my hand. "I'm Josh."

"Allan," I said, giving my middle name as I always did for random hookups. His smaller hand felt perfect in mine and I practically dragged him out of the restaurant and to the elevator. The second we were inside and the doors closed I was on him. I mashed my mouth down to his, letting out a growl of approval when he moaned and opened up for me. Swiping my tongue inside his mouth I could taste his cranberry martini and Josh.

“You’ve got to be awesome in bed if that’s how you kiss,” Josh panted as we parted for air when we got to my floor. He followed me to my room as I tried to hold onto control.

“If you like those clothes I suggest you remove them immediately before I rip them off your hot little body.” I informed him as I slid the keycard into the door. He whimpered as I hurried us into the room. The second the door was closed I lifted him up off the ground and pushed him against the door. His small, lithe five-five frame fit nicely in my arms as he wrapped himself around me.

“I’m not going to last, it’s been a long time for me.” Josh panted as I licked and sucked on his neck. “No visible marks. I can’t go to a new job with a hickey.”

“Fine, but I’m marking you where no one can see if you have clothes on,” I replied as I yanked off his shirt. “Oh sweet heaven and earth.”

Josh not only had the navel ring, but both of his nipples were pierced. I’d never been so fucking turned on in my life. I latched onto his nipple, flicking the hoop with my tongue as I carried him to the bed. He cried out, and as much as I wanted to see his body and turn on the lights, I needed him now.

“Get naked,” I growled as I tossed him on the bed. He nodded, his mouth partially open as he panted. The fact that he was that turned on and raring to go after a few minutes of kissing made me feel about ten feet tall. We both yanked off our clothes in record time. He spread out on the bed, stroking his cock, watching me as I retrieved lube and condoms.

While I knew I was immortal and unable to transmit or get any diseases, I had to keep up appearances. It was another reason people like me were thought to be warlocks in the olden days, we couldn’t die. No one knew why, but there were myths that we were the children of Thanatus, the god of the afterlife, and that’s how we were immortal.

Right then I didn't care about any of that. I only cared about the hot twink I'd be pleasing all night. I stalked over to Josh with my supplies, dropped them on the bed, and went back to kissing him. Fuck, could this man kiss.

"Fuck me, please, just fuck me," he begged as he wrapped his arms around my neck. "You are a fucking god, and I want everything you can give me."

"My pleasure," I hissed in his ear before nipping on his earlobe. I wanted everything he had to give me as well, even if it was only for tonight. And that started with my fingers in his hot little ass.

## Chapter 2

“Do you want me to roll over?” Josh asked me moments later after I’d slicked up my hand and cock and was rubbing my fingers against his hole. “How do you want me?”

“I want to see you,” I answered, shocking myself down to my very core. It was a very intimate position, one I normally shied away from. But I wanted to see the gorgeous man, not just close my eyes and fuck him. “And then you’re going to ride me later. And then I’m going to figure out a way to play how you want without handcuffs.”

“Three times? You can go three times in one night?” He gasped and then moaned as I pushed a finger in. “I like the burn, I like a little pain.”

“Good to know,” I replied before latching back onto his nipple and biting down hard. “And I guess we’ll just have to see, won’t we?”

“Personally, I think we should go for four rounds. We started early, it’s only after ten.”

“Whatever you want, baby.” I slid a second finger as I squeezed his ass hard and went back to torturing his nipples. They seemed to be a major hot spot for him, because he went wild under me.

“So close, I’m so fucking close,” Josh groaned as I quickly stretched him out.

“Do you want to come now or while I’m fucking you?”

“Both. I recover quickly,” he begged. I angled my fingers to rub over his sweet spot as I scissored them back and forth. Staring at his face, I thrust into him harder and faster. Josh’s eyes went wide a second before he threw back his head and arched his back, screaming as he came. I almost froze in shock as I witnessed the most beautiful

thing I'd ever seen. Part of me wanted to grieve, because one night with Josh was not enough.

"Jesus, you're gorgeous," I groaned as I slid in a third finger and made fast work of opening him up. His orgasm was just starting to ebb as he was ready for me. I pulled my fingers out of his hole and he moaned quietly and just that was almost enough to have me coming. As quickly as I could, I tore open a condom and rolled it on, wishing desperately that I could ride his sweet ass bareback. "Are you ready for me, baby?"

"Oh, fuck yeah." Josh gasped and pulled his knees to his chest. "Hard and fast, my Greek god, hard and fast."

"Why Greek?" I had to ask as I lined up my cock to his pretty pink hole.

"Long dark hair, olive skin, tall and muscular with deep dark eyes? Yeah, you scream that you're from Greece or European." He snickered. He was fairly accurate. My lineage did date back to Roman times, but that really made me more Italian than anything.

"Glad you like." I didn't give him time to reply, pushing my cock in his ass instead. Sweet hell, he felt like nirvana. The further I pushed into him, the more I never wanted to leave his tight hold. We both moaned as I bottomed out inside of him, and he wrapped his legs around my hips.

"I've never been this full." Josh gasped as he ran his hands up my arms. "Just how big are you? I didn't get a chance to really look."

I leaned over him further, pushing more of my cock inside of him as I went to answer. "Over ten inches. Us Greek gods have big cocks."

"I can tell." Just to feed my ego, I pulled out and thrust back into him hard. Josh gasped, smiling and squeezing the muscles in his ass. I knew it was his own way to drive me insane, and it worked.

"You want it hard and fast right?" I asked, silently begging that he wasn't just teasing me.

“Oh yeah, pound that meat into my ass so I can feel you all week.”

I groaned at the image of him walking funny tomorrow from my being inside of him tonight. Then I took him at his word, fucking him harder than I can ever remember having sex before. Josh made the prettiest sounds while I slammed into his hole over and over again.

“Come for me right now,” I growled when I got close. I grabbed his cock and started stroking him in time with my thrusts. “I want your cum.”

“Fuck!” He cried out as he came, arching his back as his eyes fluttered. I’d never found makeup attractive on a man before, but on Josh it accented his features so perfectly that it made my mouth water. The second his ass clamped down on my cock, I followed him over, roaring out my orgasm as I thrust inside of him.

“I’m so glad you accepted my invitation.” I chuckled in his ear minutes later as I started to come back down from my orgasm.

“You’ve still not accepted mine.” He purred and thrust his hips up. “I’ve offered to let you tie me down and blow you on my knees.”

“Which do you want first?” I groaned as I pulled out of him. I left him to think it over as I took care of the condom in the bathroom and cleaned myself up. Normally I would have cleaned up my partner as well, but we were far from done for the night. I gasped as I came back to the bedroom and walked into another breathtaking sight. Josh was on his knees next to the bed, still naked as he eyed me over like I was his own personal wet dream.

“I figure I should get you hard again if I’m demanding more sex,” he winked up at me.

“Very considerate of you, baby,” I replied as I walked to him. Leaning down, I gave his soft, plump lips a kiss before sitting on the bed. I spread my legs wide as he moved in between them. I leaned back on my hands as he licked the head of my cock. Yeah, that’s all it took for me to get hard again.

“Maybe you can go three times in one night.” He swallowed me down then, taking almost half of me before pulling back off. “Oh, and I keep my hair longer because I like it to be pulled.”

“Fuck, baby,” I moaned from his kinky ways and his hot mouth as he swallowed me back down. He gave me a world-class blow job, greedily drinking down my seed when I came. We napped for a bit, and again I was shocked at how much I wanted to snuggle with him. I curled up along his back, spooning his smaller frame as I laid my head in his neck.

He woke me up by impaling himself on my cock. Then he rode me, and it was everything I could ever have imagined and then some. It was something else I added to the most beautiful sights I’d ever seen. His eyes never left mine as he moved his hips, his hands braced on my chest. My hands never left his firm ass as I squeezed and massaged the perfect size cheeks. They filled up my hands to the point I wondered if he really was made for me.

We didn’t even nap after we were done that time. We lay there together, caressing and petting until we were ready to go again. This time I tied him down with a tie I had in my suitcase. Part of me screamed to never untie him, that he was mine. He hadn’t been kidding, he liked to be tied down. Josh was on his back, hands tied over his head to the bed frame, begging me to fuck him. And did I ever.

“One night of you is never going to be enough,” I whispered in his ear after we were done with round three and back to spooning. “I’ve never felt anything like this, Josh. It’s like you’ve crawled inside of me and I don’t think I’ll ever get you back out.”

“I feel the same, and it’s scary, but one night is all we have.”

“Because of this internship?”

“Yeah, but it’s more like the family business. I don’t have much of a choice,” he answered with a sigh.

“I know the feeling, baby.” I ran my hand over his hip, trying to memorize his body. I wanted to remember everything, all of him forever.

“Take me again, my Greek god,” Josh said as he pulled his knee up.

“Baby, we’ve already fucked like rabbits three times. I don’t want to hurt you,” I moaned, trying to control myself as he lay there like an offering.

“I’ll feel you for the next few days and that’s what I want. When things get rough in my new job and life, I want an ache or sore ass to remind me of the fun I had with you.”

“You sound like you’re going to the death squad tomorrow, Josh,” I whispered as I reached over and grabbed the lube and condom. “It can’t be that bad.”

“It might not be, but I just don’t know if that makes sense,” he said as he looked at me over his shoulder. I knew he was of age, since we’d talked about that. But right then, his eyes shined with an innocence I wanted to protect instead of a man of twenty-five. “No condom this time. I’m clean, and want to feel every inch of you if this is going to be my last time.”

“How do you know that I’m clean?” I asked, not liking that he’d take chances with himself like this.

“Are you?”

“Yes, but how do you know that I’m not lying?”

“Because you just asked me that question,” he snickered. Josh reached back and stroked my slicked-up cock. “I want to remember this forever. I don’t want a condom separating us, and if you weren’t clean you wouldn’t have cared enough to push about it. Now make love to me like we’ll never forget.”

“As my baby wishes.” I moved over him, pushing his knee up to his chest with my forearm as I lay over him while he was on his side. Again it was incredibly intimate as I held him. I entered him slowly,

working my cock into him inch by inch. Going bareback with Josh was even more addictive than it had been with a condom.

We didn't say a word as I made love to him, truly made love to him, not just sex. The entire time Josh stared at me and I never broke his gaze. I kept the pace slow and loving, giving him soft kisses as I thrust into his willing body. When we came together, I felt my heart and soul pour into Josh as his did mine. There were no words to explain what I felt.

I slid to the side of him, my cock never leaving his ass as we listened to our rapid hearts beating. Then I wrapped my arms around him, keeping myself inside of him, as if hoping he'd never have to leave me. And that's how we fell asleep, as close as two people could ever get.

\* \* \* \*

My cell phone woke me up, and I groaned as I rolled over to get it. Checking the clock I saw it was just after seven in the morning. Josh and I had barely gotten two hours sleep, and the alarm he'd asked me to set wasn't due to go off for another hour.

"Yeah?" I grumbled as I picked up my phone.

"Well aren't we just Mr. Sunshine," my friend and boss Raven snickered on the other line. "I wouldn't have to call at the crack of fucking dawn if someone had answered his phone last night."

"Fine, you got me," I whispered into the phone as I got out of bed slowly so I didn't wake Josh. Once I was in the bathroom I continued. "What's up, Raven?"

"You've got a meeting this morning at nine a.m. your time in the lobby with your apprentice."

"You sent him here? For god sakes why?" I asked. It wasn't normal to send an apprentice of our order out into the field to meet their assigned maven, or master.

After five years of intense training at one of the Sons of Thanatus compounds, each apprentice was given a maven to follow, learn from, and use as a resource for the rest of their lives. The apprentice/maven relationship was sacred in our world. A maven only ever took on one apprentice in all of his years. It wasn't just a teacher/student relationship.

Once a maven, which was our term for master in our order, was given an apprentice it was the same as adopting a younger brother. This would be someone who would be in my life always, even after he became his own maven. I still spoke to my maven from time to time when I needed council.

I became a maven not too long ago, way faster than normal. I did my five years of intense training and learning, and then four years as an apprentice before my maven sent me to take my tests early. I'd been on my own for a little over a year.

"I still don't understand why I'm getting an apprentice already, Raven," I sighed into the phone. Normally people didn't take an apprentice until they had years and years of experience in the field. "I've been on my own for a year. Why me? And why now?"

"The Patriarch said it was now and had to be this apprentice, Mad," he replied softly. "That's all I know, man. That, and we've got an assignment for you in New Orleans anyways so it's not like you'll be coming right back home. I emailed you the specs and who you're contact is."

"You know, you only call me Mad when you're afraid I'm going to yell," I snickered, knowing full well why it was my nickname. I was known for having a temper, not that I'd ever yell at the Patriarch. That was the term given to the head of the order for each continent. He was the main man in charge who had more gifts than most of us did and you did *not* question his orders.

"Yeah well, I'm kinda waiting for it," he grumbled. "Just be nice to this kid, he's had it rough, okay? All I know is the Patriarch said he

had a vision and knew you two would be more than apprentice/maven, that you would heal each other.”

“Okkkkay, that’s vague and kinda creepy.” I said slowly, trying to wake up enough to listen to all of this when all I wanted was the man in my bed. “I’ll check my e-mail and get to work on the next case after breakfast. So who am I meeting?”

“You’re looking for a shorter guy with blond hair.” Raven rustled through some papers and I knew he was reading the guy’s file. “Right, here we go, Josh McGreggor.”

“Who?” I gasped, suddenly needing more air than was available. “Say that name again, Raven.”

“Josh McGreggor,” he answered, confusion in his voice. “Mad, what’s wrong?”

“I—I think I just,” I replied, swallowing loudly and trying again. “Raven, I’m pretty sure I picked my apprentice up at the hotel bar and spent all last night fucking him.”

“Oh sweet hell,” Raven groaned. “Wait, what do you mean, *you think?*”

“I don’t know the guy’s last name, just Josh. But how many Josh’s can there be in this hotel?”

“Well, go check, Mad,” he said gently. I nodded even though Raven couldn’t see me and snuck out of the bathroom and back to the bed. Josh was sprawled on his stomach and I gasped at how ethereal he looked in the early morning sun peeking in through the curtains. I pulled down the sheet over his ass and saw all I needed to know.

“Motherfucker!” I yelled without even meaning to. Josh jumped, turned around, and scrambled to the headboard with his eyes wide.

“So you fucked your apprentice,” Raven growled into the phone. “How did you not notice the Ankh birthmark on his ass?”

“We didn’t do it that way,” I mumbled into the phone. The Ankh was an ancient Greek symbol of eternal life. It was said the gods used it as “the breath of life” they would need in the afterlife. It was

basically the Christian cross, with a loop above the transverse bar.  
“What do I do now?”

“You train him, Mad,” Raven sighed in the phone. “There’s no rule against being intimate with your apprentice, and he’s of age. I have a feeling the Patriarch knew this was going to happen. Let me find out whatever I can, but Josh may just be your soul mate, my friend.”

“Call me back,” I said and ended the call.

“Please tell me you’re not really Madden Forrest?” Josh whispered as he reached for the sheet and pulled it over his naked body. “Please tell me I didn’t just fuck my maven all night long.”

“Allan’s my middle name,” I answered instead. “I didn’t know I was meeting my apprentice today until Raven just called me now.”

“Fuck, fuck, fuck,” Josh chanted as his eyes went wider. “I—I’ve never seen a picture of you. I didn’t know, you didn’t tell me your real name.”

“I didn’t know it would be like this between us,” I sighed as I flopped down on the bed with my back to him.

“This can’t be happening,” he whispered from behind me as I heard rustling. Seconds later he raced past me and into the bathroom with the large sheet wrapped around his naked body. I simply stared after him, having no idea what to say or do. When I heard the shower turn on I knew at least I had a few minutes to collect my thoughts.

I wanted more than one night with him and I got it now, didn’t I? Isn’t that the part we should both be focusing on? But it just wasn’t that simple. I was his teacher, his maven for god sakes. And what we did wasn’t exactly safe like a desk job.

Glancing at the door, I knew I had a decision to make. Everything I’d ever wanted in a partner was in my shower right then. So why was I sitting on the bed sulking? I could either put my feelings aside and only be his maven, or we could be everything to each other if we played our cards right. The more I thought about it, I knew I’d never be able to let Josh go after what we’d shared.

I got up and headed into the bathroom, completely ready to beg Josh to give me a chance if that's what it took. I opened the shower stall door, getting the cutest squeak from Josh as he spun around and covered himself up.

"Please get out, Madden. You're my maven. This can't happen," he whispered as he intentionally looked anywhere but at me.

"There's no rules against it, Josh," I said gently as I approached him slowly. I lifted his chin with one hand while I slid the other around his back. "I think there are definitely some things we need to discuss, but I don't want this to end between us. I've never felt like this, Josh. My heart was breaking at the idea of only having one night with you. But now it's like fate has smiled on us and it doesn't have to be only that."

"Good point." Josh nibbled on his lower lip and that one simple gesture had me rock hard and wanting him.

"Can you still see me and respect me as your maven if we're together intimately?" I whispered in his ear as I took a chance and moved closer to him, wrapping both my arms around him as I nuzzled his neck. "Will you listen to me in everything concerning the order?"

"Yes," he hissed as I felt him get hard against my leg. Nice to know he was just as affected by my naked body as I was his. "Will you be able to turn off being the boss when it's our time and we're in bed?"

"I thought you liked me being the boss in bed," I growled playfully, running my hands down to his ass.

"Madden, I'm being serious."

"I know, sorry. Yes, I can. And if something comes up and we're not keeping to that agreement, then I think we just need to be open with each other."

"My feelings for you scare the shit out of me, Madden," he whispered as he placed soft kisses along my neck and shoulder. "I've never wanted someone to hold me after sex. I want all of you,

everything that can be between two people. I feel this need to beg you to keep me forever.”

“I’m feeling the same and yes, I’m frightened.” And I was, I was terrified. But feelings this strong for another person with the type of chemistry we had was too rare to pass up in my book. “But the desire and need to be with you is stronger than my fear, Josh. I think we can make this work.”

“I trust you, Madden.”

“Mad, everyone just calls me Mad,” I chuckled. Now that we’d decided we were going to try a relationship, I felt free to stop the teasing and get down to the water sports. I grabbed the soap off the ledge and ran it over his ass, sliding it between his glorious tight butt cheeks.

“Do we have a temper?” He panted, his eyes wide as he tilted his neck to stare up at me.

“Oh yeah,” I answered with a feral grin. “And I have a feeling with you I’m going to be very territorial. No sharing or others, agreed?”

“You fucked me four times last night.” Josh giggled as he nipped my lower lip. “How would I have time for anyone else, or the strength?”

“I’ll fuck you six times a day if that’s what it takes to keep you in my bed alone.” I growled before mashing my mouth down to his. At the same time I pushed two slicked-up fingers into his ass as I lifted him against the shower tile.

“Three, give me three,” Josh begged, breaking this kiss. He wrapped his legs around me as he held onto my shoulders. “I want to feel you, Mad.”

I did as he asked, trying to be gentle. I know Josh liked a little pain and some burning, but after all the sex we had, I was concerned about him. He threw his head back and moaned, his long blond hair brushing my arm. It was then I realized it wasn’t in a braid, flowing

freely as the water ran down it. “You are never to cut this gorgeous hair off, baby.”

“Really? You like it?”

“Yes,” I hissed and leaned to suck a mark on his collarbone since I knew clothing would cover it. “I actually demand you wear it loose around me at all times when we’re not working. I’m willing to beg and bribe to get it, Josh. And I’m dying to run my fingers through it while we make love.”

“Yes please,” he whimpered as he thrust his hips forward against my stomach. “Take me, Mad. Be my everything, my maven, my lover, my partner.”

“Music to my ears,” I moaned as I pulled my fingers from him. With a slight balancing act, I was able to soap up my cock so I wasn’t just fucking him with water. Water wasn’t the same as slick or lube.

“Is it wrong that part of me is glad I didn’t know who you were last night?” Josh asked me as I pressed against his hole. I thought about it as I worked my cock into him, not having the full amount of blood in my brain.

“No, I feel the same way. We could have lost out on this if we’d only kept it professional.” I finally answered when I was seated all the way inside of him. “Though I have a feeling the first time I saw you in those tight little jeans I would not only have crossed that line, but leapt over it while doing a victory dance.”

“You’re a goof,” he whispered, kissing me softly. “Just think of all the teacher/student fantasies we can play out together.”

“Oh sweet hell. You’re my kinkiest dirty dream sometimes.” I didn’t give him a chance to answer. I took him hard but at a slower pace, loving the gasping sounds he made as I thrust up into him. We traded soft kisses as I tried to be subtle in my marking of his body where anyone would see if he wasn’t wearing a shirt.

Josh dug his short nails into my back, screaming my name as he came. I followed him right over. Pumping not only my seed into him,

but my heart as well. We stood there trying to gulp back down air as we came down from our climatic bliss.

“I’m going to get a large butt plug,” Josh purred as he licked my lips before I lowered him to his feet. “And I’m going to put it in after you fuck me one morning so I keep your cum inside of me while we’re working. I want to drive you insane with desire all day long so you take me like a caveman when we are alone.”

“Shit, baby,” I groaned, starting to get hard again. I was only in my early thirties, but I’d never had this type of recovery time before. Josh seemed to me my own living, breathing Viagra. As if just to tease me more, he bent over, pulled the cheeks of his ass apart, and let me see my seed run out of his hole I’d just fucked. Not letting the opportunity pass by me, I shoved three fingers back inside of him. “Two can play that game, Josh.”

“Oh sweet hell,” he panted and braced his hands against the wall. I reached down and stroked his cock as I thrust my fingers hard and fast inside of him. When he was getting close, I turned them up and rubbed his prostate as I bit into his shoulder. Josh screamed so loudly as he came I wondered if hotel security would be coming to our room shortly.

“My kinky little apprentice.” I cooed as I finished milking his cock. “You’re mine now, Josh. I’m never going to let you go.”

“I’m okay with that,” he gasped as I pulled my fingers back out. We hurried and finished our shower after that. He let me wash and condition his long hair as I made love to his mouth with my tongue. When we were done, we dried off, and went to figure out what we could order from room service. I also extended the length of time I’d be here with the front desk.

Then we went to go pack up Josh’s room and move him into mine while waiting for room service. It worked out perfectly. They arrived moments after we got back to my room. We inhaled our food as I booted up my laptop for our new assignment. And all of it felt so right

with Josh at my side. I knew I'd do anything in my power to keep it that way.

## Chapter 3

A few hours later I was done reading over our new assignment and going over with Josh how to set up the meeting. He sat there, eating up my tutelage and being an exemplary student. I made the call to the contact on speaker phone so he could hear exactly how I handled any concerns.

“You never, ever want to meet just one person alone.” I explained after I’d hung up with the contact, Gabe. Then I went on to tell him about everything that had happened the night before, knowing it was a good learning experience.

“So you just left?” Josh asked a few minutes after I was done, his eyebrows drawn together.

“I know that can seem kind of cold,” I answered slowly, thinking about how I wanted to phrase what I wanted to say. “But you have to be wary of all potential downfalls in our line of work. The murderer was not only there last night, but a cop of that town. I called in the Chief, who was the original contact, and covered my ass. You do *not* want to be the fall guy for a murder, Josh. It’s a huge mess and hassle. And the real murderer could get away while they’re busy with you.”

“Okay, that makes sense.”

“I think we should also go over some rules.” I waited until he nodded before I continued. “Ask me anything you want as long as we are alone. When you ask in front of people it can look as if you are questioning me. Most people don’t understand our powers much less the maven/apprentice relationship. Fair enough?”

“Yes, very,” he answered as we got up and went to get dressed. “I tend to be a note taker so I don’t forget. Is that acceptable with you?”

“Of course, as long as you’re not distracted from what’s going on while taking the notes. I cannot stress enough the importance of covering your ass and being careful while in the field.”

“I know how important it is, believe me,” Josh whispered as he pulled his suit out of the closet. “How much do you know about me, Mad?”

“Only what you’ve told me.” I raised an eyebrow as I felt a pit growing in my stomach that he was going to tell me something bad.

“I grew up in the order. I’ve lived at the California Compound since I was a baby,” he said softly as he pulled on a dress shirt. “My parents were killed during a case and I was left an orphan. I don’t even remember them I was so young.”

“Fuck, Josh, I’m so sorry.” I went to him, hugging him tightly as I kissed his exposed neck. We were immortal, but we could die. You just didn’t ever hear of anyone in the order dying from a heart attack, cancer, or anything like that. It had to be massive trauma, blood loss, gunshot wound to the heart or brain to kill us.

“It’s okay, I’ve dealt with it.” He patted my hip and I let him go. I started to get dressed as well, glancing over at him every so often. “I’m really fine, Mad. I don’t even remember them. The order’s all I’ve ever known, but I thought you should know.”

“Not all of us go out into the field, Josh,” I said slowly. I didn’t want to lose him, but I felt it was right to hint that he could work at one of the compounds instead of being in danger at times. “There’s no shame in being behind the scenes.”

“I know, and maybe that’s where I’ll end up one day. But I want to see what it’s like in the field before making any decision. I’m not a big guy like you, but I can handle myself if the time comes.” He shrugged and pulled out the tiniest thong I’d ever seen. I just about swallowed my tongue as he bent over to step into it.

“Shit, I’m going to be hard all day knowing that’s what you have under your suit, baby.”

“Why do you think I’m wearing it and letting you see me put it on?” He winked at me over his shoulder as he made a show of shimmying into the scrape of satin. “I’ll be as professional as you want in the field, and I want to learn everything, but you’re my Greek god, Mad. This will help remind you that I’ll be naked in your bed or anywhere else you want me as soon as work is over.”

“I couldn’t forget that even if I tried,” I groaned as he turned around to show me the result. His cock was barely covered and his sac was peeking out on the sides. Instantly he was in my arms as I cupped his groin with one hand and traced the satin in between the cheeks of his ass with the other one. “And we’re finding a place to buy handcuffs after this meeting, baby.”

“Don’t bother, I have several in one of my bags,” he panted and thrust into my hand. “Though I do have the desire to get that butt plug and maybe a few other toys you could torture me with. I like to play.”

“I hadn’t noticed,” I snickered as I let him go. Josh was completely hard now, his cock sticking up over the edge of the thong. For someone as small as he was, I was impressed at the six inch plus dick he had. I tried to act casual as I pulled on my own black boxer briefs. “What exactly are you into?”

“Well, I told you handcuffs,” he said, his eyes watching my movements as he licked his lips. “I loved to be spanked. I’m rarely dominant and like to be bottom and more submissive. Fucking in public places just flat does it for me and having people watch makes me hot sometimes. I’ve only done that once, but I’d like to try one of the sex clubs while we’re here if you’re okay with pounding that huge cock into me while others watch.”

“You mean I’d get to show you off?” I smiled as I rubbed my aching dick through the suit pants I’d just put on. “I’ve never done it in public or in front of people, but the idea seems to appeal to me.”

“I also love to give head,” Josh purred as his gaze met mine. “If I don’t have your cock in my ass I will always want it in my mouth.”

“Okay, we need to stop before I fuck you into the mattress and we miss our meeting.” I groaned as I pulled on my shirt and turned away from his hot body, trying to get my own back under control.

“Would you ever let me use a vibrator on you while I rode you?”

“Oh sweet hell,” I moaned and just about came right then. The images he was putting into my head were killing me. “Yeah, I think I’d be up for trying that.”

“Sweet,” he giggled as I hurried to finish getting dressed. Part of me hoped if we got away from the bed, I might be able to control my body south of my belt. After I was done and slipping on my shoes I got my first look at Josh in his professional attire.

He was stunning, just as much as he had been when I’d met him last night. He had a gray pinstripe on, custom tailored to fit him perfectly. The green silk tie matched his eyes, which were makeup free today. Josh was just finishing up the touches on his hair which he had braided and tucked up so that it wasn’t obvious that he had hair down to his mid back. I could see his face in the mirror and it gave the illusion that he just wore his hair in a combed back style.

“I guess I don’t need to set any rules about appropriate work clothes,” I said, clearing my throat. He glanced at me in the mirror, smiling widely.

“No, they took care of that in training. You met me when I was dressed up to go out. No worries, Mad, I know how to behave. I promise I’ll only wear tight and skimpy clothes when it’s play time.”

“Clothing’s optional when it’s play time,” I mumbled as I grabbed my wallet, keys, and card for the door as I left the room.

“I heard that!” He called after me with a laugh.

Twenty minutes later we were pulling up at St. Louis cemetery in the heart of New Orleans. It was a famous tourist attraction and a great place to hide a body. I’d been here once before with my own maven a few years ago working a case. Gabe had been the contact at the time. He worked in the Mayor’s office and helped with the

tourism. It was bad for business when people went missing and turned up in hot spots that would make national press.

“Gabe, good to see you again,” I said after we’d gotten out of the car and found him. We shook hands as I covertly eyed over the men with him. “This is my apprentice, Josh McGreggor. He’ll be observing and taking notes.”

“A pleasure, Josh.” Gabe shook his hand with a wink and too long of a look at Josh’s body. I grinded my teeth and realized I’d have to get used to this with the way my man looked. “You couldn’t have been assigned to a better maven, Madden’s amazing.”

“So I’m learning,” Josh replied politely as he finally got his hand back. I didn’t miss the side look I got from my apprentice and fully understood the innuendo. “I’m excited to get my training from the best.”

“Why are we at this location, Gabe?” I asked, wanting to get back to business.

“The woman believed to be dead fits a certain MO,” Gabe explained as we entered the cemetery. Normally you had to be part of a guided tour to enter the property but these were special circumstances. “We’ve found bodies here of other victims. It’s high profile and it seemed better to call in help immediately before someone stumbles upon her if she’s here and everything blows up.”

“I understand.” As soon as we were fifty feet into the grounds, I felt the soul. “You feel it, Josh?”

“Yeah,” he breathed. Glancing I saw his chest with heaving and his eyes were darting in the direction she was at and somewhere else. “She’s not the only one here though.”

“Give us a moment, Gabe,” I said with a business smile and led Josh away from everyone else. “I only feel her. Tell me what else you feel, Josh.”

“Three souls,” he replied with a shiver. “None of them went well and all by the same man. I have a stronger gift than most. I can hear and feel the soul, but I also see the last several moments of their life.

The Patriarch thinks it's because my brush with death was when I was a baby."

"You were out on assignment with your parents when they were killed, weren't you?" I wanted to start cussing because that was something I needed to know.

"Yes, but I thought it was wrong to tell others about when you had your brush of death?" He stared at me with wide eyes, reading the signs of my anger. I took several deep breaths as I gathered my thoughts. This wasn't Josh's fault, he hadn't known.

"Not to your maven," I finally answered. "Do not tell them what you can do. I'll ask Gabe if he's got a suspect already. If not, can you see the guy clearly enough to work with a sketch artist?"

"Yes, but isn't that crossing a line over what we do?"

"Usually yes, and normally I wouldn't want you to do this, but this is special circumstances. Our job is to help people, that's basically what we do. If there's a serial killer loose in New Orleans and the police have no leads, wouldn't you want to help?"

"Of course," Josh answered firmly with a nod. "Tell me what to do, Mad. I'll follow your lead."

"Good, just keep quiet until I say so, baby." With that we went back to the group and I spoke quietly to Gabe. "Do you have a sketch or picture of the man doing this?"

"No, not even a fucking lead," Gabe grumbled.

"My apprentice's gift is very strong," I hedged, studying Gabe's reaction. When I saw he was hopeful, but not overly interested, I continued. "He can see the last several moments of the person's life along with finding bodies and hearing souls. You've got three dead in this cemetery, Gabe."

"Fuck, this guy is moving faster. It started as one here and there. The police weren't even sure it was the same guy, now all of a sudden it's people left and right." Gabe scrubbed his hands over his face in frustration. "I'll keep his involvement to me and the Mayor. But yes, I'd like his help. We can tell the police force we had a potential eye

witness account. I can send a sketch artist to your hotel later, and no one will ever know it was Josh.”

“Works for me,” I agreed after a moment. “Josh, lead the way to the first victim.”

“Yes, Madden.” We followed him and I was proud of myself for not just watching his firm bubble butt as he walked. But then again, where we were and what we were doing was not conducive to sexual thoughts.

Josh did an excellent job, finding one and giving the message from the soul before moving on to the next one. I knew in the training he went through that there were anatomy courses that we all took.

It helped us learn to deal with human remains and prepare us for what we might find in the field. Not that it always worked. I could count at least a dozen times when I’d helped find a body and then threw up my lunch. Being in the field wasn’t the same as a controlled classroom where the cadaver died of a heart attack or something. At times the bodies we found were gruesome and smelled foul.

But the training did help and give us some extra credibility. The order had an accredited program that all of us ended up with a Masters degree in Criminology when we completed it. It helped when we came across nonbelievers or skeptics who thought we might contaminate evidence.

Josh found the last body after an hour, and we said our good-byes. Gabe assured us that the sketch artist would be by before five at our hotel and he’d call us with the details. We walked back to my rental car in silence and I could see Josh was processing everything.

“It’s not like it was in class,” he whispered as we drove back to the hotel, staring out the window.

“No, it’s not.” I agreed and waited for him to go on. When he didn’t I decided to share with him. “My first time out in the field with my maven I fainted after we found the body.”

“You’re fucking shitting me.” Josh gasped as he looked at me with big eyes.

“Nope, passed out cold.” I chuckled. “It was a mugging gone bad and the soul said that she was worried about her son that was home alone. He’d been found and taken care of, but she didn’t know that. And when I felt her and saw her poor beaten body I blacked out and almost fell in the crime scene.”

“I felt a little dizzy, but I knew you were there if I needed you,” he said as he took my hand in his. “It actually helped me act more confident than I was feeling. I’m starting to think us being together will help me professionally.”

“I couldn’t tell you were nervous at all, baby.” I raised our joined hands and kissed his softly. Then I saw a billboard and knew where we were going before heading back to the hotel. “I have an idea.”

“Oh?” he asked with a raised eyebrow and a big smile. That was what I wanted, his winning smile. I knew, like sex, the first time in the field could bring up varying emotions, and I wanted to remind him that there was more to life than just death and murder.

I didn’t say anything as I followed the directions I’d seen on the sign, but I had a feeling he knew I was about to be very naughty. Minutes later I was parking the rental car at an adult bookstore.

“I like the way you think, Mad,” He chuckled as he got out. “How the hell do we expense this? I don’t have any money of my own since we don’t really get paid.”

This wasn’t a nine to five job where we got a regular salary. But we did incur bonuses that we could put into our own savings accounts when we continually did a good job and had happy clients. The order paid for everything, and it was never an issue as long as it was all within reason and nothing too extravagant.

“It’s fine as long as it’s nothing too big or raises red flags.” I explained as we entered the store. “The order encourages us to find outlets for stress and even be a tourist where we’re sent on assignment. It’s rare that I don’t spend at least a few days in a city after an assignment just to decompress from the job. And it’s important to do it, Josh.”

“I get that to a point, but it’s what we do. So why the push to have fun?”

“We don’t just travel constantly and live out of a suitcase,” I answered as I headed over towards the male toys section. “Any job that deals with death is hard, but what we see and feel is also draining. It can lead to depression, mental breakdowns, and various stress-related issues. The order understands that and wants us to experience other things in life that reminds us that there is good in the world as well.”

“Makes sense,” Josh said slowly as he picked a butt plug off the shelf and studied it.

“Are you okay, baby? Was this too much for you today? I’m not trying to throw more at you, but I thought some fun would help.”

“No, this is perfect,” he smiled up at me brightly and ran his hand down my chest as he turned to me. “It’s just a lot to process and I’m trying to work through it the right way.”

“Is it inappropriate for me to flirt with you right now?”

“Oh no, I think it would be just right.” Josh purred as he brushed his hand over my groin before turning back to the display. I moved behind him and made sure no one was watching.

“I want you to pick out any three toys you want me to use on you, baby.” I whispered in his ear as my hand went under his suit jacket, into the back of his pants, and pulled gently on his satin thong. Josh let off a soft moan that led me to want to do more. But his pants weren’t baggy and I couldn’t get my hand down further without potentially tearing them. “And I want you to pick something out you’d want to use on me. We’re going for four more times tonight.”

“With handcuffs?” He whimpered as he pushed his firm little ass back against me. “And spanking?”

“My, aren’t we demanding?” I asked with fake shock, trying not to laugh. Then I gave a dramatic sigh as I kept toying with his underwear. “I guess I could spank my naughty apprentice.”

“Take me out to one of those clubs and you can see just how naughty I am, Mad.”

“Hurry, before I fuck you where you stand.” I growled and pulled my hand back out of his pants. While Josh was quickly making his selections I went over to another rack and found a few things of my own. I quickly brought them to the counter and started having them rung up before he joined me.

“What do you have there, Mad?” he asked as he tried to peek into the bag. I quickly slapped my hand down over it.

“A congratulations present for doing an awesome job today,” I answered as the guy rang up the rest of our purchases and paid. When we were done, I grabbed Josh’s hand and dragged him out to the car. We got in and it wasn’t until we were almost to the hotel I realized he’d not said a word. “Josh?”

“Did I really do well today, or is it because we’re together that you feel you have to say that?”

I waited until we were in the hotel parking lot before I threw the car in park, undid Josh’s belt, and dragged him over to straddle my lap. We stared at each other a moment before I answered him very firmly and with all the authority I could put into my voice.

“You did an *awesome* job today, baby. I would never, ever lie or embellish that to you whether we’re sleeping together or not. I don’t ever want you to doubt anything I say to you professionally or I will spank your hot little ass and not just for fun. Are we crystal fucking clear on that?”

“Absolutely,” he said with a bright smile before kissing me. “And can you use that demanding voice in bed? I’m hard as fucking nails here.”

“Get your ass up to the room right now,” I growled as I opened the door. “I want you naked, on the bed with your choice of toy and handcuffs within two minutes of us getting in there.”

“Yes, my maven,” Josh purred with a wink over his shoulder as he sauntered to the hotel. I was so screwed. That man was going to have

me wrapped around his little finger in no time as I begged him to take my heart. And I had a feeling I would love every fucking second of it.

## Chapter 4

“So this is the man you saw?” The sketch artist asked Josh several hours later in our room. They’d been working for over an hour and the guy had to have so much patience to just draw it out like that. I was going nuts just watching all of this.

“Yes, that’s him exactly,” Josh answered as he wiped his palms over his jeans. I’d gotten the call from Gabe with the details as we’d gotten back to the room and then proceeded to distract Josh for the next two hours until the artist arrived. We both agreed the vibrating cock ring Josh had picked out might have become our favorite toy.

I’d never had so much fun and hot sex as I did with Josh. By the time I’d finished my call with Gabe, Josh had been naked, stretched out, and handcuffed to the headboard. It was like walking into my own wet dream. And I’d taken full advantage.

Now I saw it was time to distract him and to have some major fun tonight. I was almost giddy with the information I’d looked up about fun alternative clubs to go to while they’d been working together.

“Thank you very much for coming,” I said to the sketch artist as we wrapped up and I let him out. He informed us he’d get it straight to Gabe and that Gabe would call us in the morning. As soon as the door shut behind him, I attacked my lover. “I have more surprises for you tonight, baby.”

“Oh? And would those be some water sports?” He panted as I made fast work of getting him naked while kissing every inch of his body I could reach. Instead of answering, I dropped to my knees and sucked him off. Josh went wild and his knees gave out as he came.

“How was that for surprise number one?” I purred as I sat back and pulled him on to my lap.

“Awesome, but there were a few things I’ve decided I should tell you before we have anymore fun.”

“Am I going to be upset that you’re only telling me them now?” I asked, feeling cold suddenly as I stopped caressing his skin.

“I hope not,” he whispered as he moved out of my lap and stood. Josh extended a hand to help me up, looking unsure and scared. Fuck! That was never a good look for your partner to have. Taking a leap of faith I slid my hand in his and we went into the bedroom. “Can we have this conversation naked in bed?”

“Why would you want that?” I asked, my eyebrows shooting up from the shock I felt.

“Because I know you can’t just walk out the door then,” Josh answered quietly and didn’t let go of my hand when I went to pull away. “Mad, please? I’m not very good at this and you’ll understand why when I explain, but I need you to promise to just listen until I finish, okay?”

“Yeah, I can do that.” I closed my eyes and took a deep, calming breath before getting undressed and crawling into bed with him. He rolled me onto my back as he lay wrapped around my side and stared up at me. “Okay, I can’t leave, Josh. What do you want to tell me?”

“You’re not the first maven I’ve been in a relationship with,” Josh whispered so softly I barely heard him. “When I was fifteen I started realizing I had powers beyond what the normal Son of Thanatus did. I went to one of my instructors and told him. He said it was best we kept it between us until we knew more. I thought that was weird, but I trusted him, so I did.”

“Tell me you weren’t underage during the relationship,” I said, praying that fate wouldn’t have me falling in love with someone who had issues with older men.

“No, nothing like that,” he replied shaking his head. “But he watched me like a hawk after I told him. He helped me work with my

gifts and constantly told me not to tell anyone that it could be dangerous for me and he was protecting me. When I turned eighteen he told me he was in love with me.”

“Did you love him?” My heart was silently breaking as I thought of Josh ever loving another.

“I thought so at the time. He was my constant friend, companion, teacher, everything to me for years. I thought that was probably what being in love was like, but later I realized it wasn’t love, it was more like Stockholm syndrome. The maven had basically secluded me away from everyone else and while I didn’t realize it, I was a prisoner,” Josh explained and then went quiet.

“You lost your virginity to him, didn’t you?”

“Yeah, big mistake,” he sighed and rested his chin on my chest. “He said he loved me and I melted, thinking how lucky I was to find my soul mate at eighteen. I was like his puppy, following him all the time, doing whatever he wanted, and I lost everything that made me me.”

“What happened, Josh?”

“He wanted my power,” Josh said with a snuffle. “He thought if he had me under this thumb that he could control my gifts and it would help him move up the ladder of the order. I heard him laughing to a friend about the pathetic piece of ass he had on a string and bent over whenever he wanted.”

“Oh, baby, I’m so sorry,” I whispered as I pulled him to lie on top of me and wrapped my arms around him. “He didn’t deserve you.”

“No, he didn’t,” Josh agreed firmly with a half smile. “But that took me a while to figure out. I went directly to the Patriarch and told him everything. He had been a friend of my father’s and said if I ever needed him, to go to him. I’d inadvertently made a huge mess that I had no clue about. It’s okay for mavens to get involved, or even maven and apprentice, but maven and trainee? Oh fuck, I guess that’s bad.”

“The maven got kicked out?”

“Oh yeah, and banished and a bunch of other things,” Josh snickered. “I didn’t know what we were doing was wrong, I just didn’t have any friends to tell about him. I thought he was trying to protect my reputation, but he was covering his own ass.”

“How long did it go on for?”

“Just under a year.”

“And since then?” I asked, holding my breath for his answer.

“Hooked up a few times, few one night stands, nothing real until you,” Josh answered as he hesitantly moved close enough to kiss me. “The question is do you still want me now?”

“Why wouldn’t I?” I was shocked down to my core that he thought I’d drop him after what he’d told me. Rolling us over so I had him pinned down with my hips as I guided his hands over his head, I stared down at him. “I’m falling for you, Josh. I know it already that this is going to be forever for me. You might choose sometime later down the road, maybe when you’re a maven of your own, that you want someone else. But I feel it in my soul that you’re the love of my life.”

“Show me, Mad. Make love to me and show me exactly what’s between us,” he whispered as he leaned up and kissed me. “And I’m falling for you, too, Madden Forrest. You own me, heart, body, and soul. I felt it instantly the first time you kissed me in the elevator.”

There were no more words after that. I made slow and gentle love to Josh as we let our bodies say what we couldn’t verbalize. It was intimate and loving and passionate and more than I could ever have hoped to experience in my life. When we were completely spent and wrapped around each other we made plans for the night.

First on the agenda was a shower and Josh to test out his new butt plug. We’d agreed that we weren’t sure we’d be doing anything at the clubs we were going to, but he wanted to be ready just in case. After we were ready and dressed, we found a great restaurant on Bourbon Street. Josh got lots of stares in his see-through muscle shirt that was

cropped to show part of his stomach and tight, low-cut jeans with tears in them.

“I’ve never thought make-up was hot on a man before.” I purred in Josh’s ear as I groped his ass. We were walking along Bourbon Street after dinner to take in the sights before catching a cab to the first club.

“I don’t wear it all the time, but it’s something fun and different. Besides, if I’m going to be a twink with somewhat girly features like long eyelashes, might as well play them up.”

“There’s nothing girly about you, baby,” I said firmly as I let my hand graze the front of his jeans. “My man is all man.”

“If you don’t quit I’m gonna end up begging you to fuck me in one of the alleys.” He let out a groan and flicked his nipple rings as he stared into my eyes. I couldn’t help but lick my lips as he stood there in a crowded street putting on a little show for me, teasing himself like that.

“Time for the first club?”

“Oh yeah,” Josh answered, taking my hand as he hailed a cab. We got in and rode the five minutes to a leather and chains sex club that was farther away from the main tourist attractions. After I paid the driver and went to wrap my arm around Josh, I could see he was vibrating with excitement. “I doubt this will be my thing, but it’s so fucking cool you’re willing to even check it out. Really I just want to say I’ve gone, ya know?”

“I get it, check it off the list of things to do in life,” I chuckled as we went and waited in line. The bouncer took a very long look at Josh and I started to get pissy, but then he waved us to the front of the line.

“He your Dom?” the bouncer asked Josh, pointing to me.

“In every way,” Josh giggled, batting his eyelashes at the bouncer.

“Keep him close to you,” the guy said, turning back to me. “He’s a hot little thing without a collar and some of the guys here think that means fresh meat. You feel me?”

“Yeah, appreciate the heads up,” I answered, slipping the guy a twenty as he let us in. We walked through the door and neither of us could hold back the gasp. There were half-naked men everywhere and the rest were fully naked and fucking on several surfaces. The club was done in reds and blacks, and everything that could be decorated in leather and chains was. “You sure about this, Josh?”

“Come on, we can have one drink and just check it out. There’s nothing that says we have to do anything or get naked.” He stuck out that plump bottom lip out in the cutest little pout and I melted. I groaned, letting him know he had won as he smiled and dragged me to the bar. After we had our drinks we swirled around on the bar stools so we could face the club and watch.

“I’ve been trained as a submissive for three years,” a cute little twink that wore nothing but a collar around his cock that was attached to a chain said to me. He dropped to his knees, spreading them wide as he held up the end of the leash for me to take. “I can do things for you that he can’t, master. He’s not collared, so obviously you don’t want to keep him. Why not try me out?”

“Because he’s not into dirty little skanks who offer themselves up like used condoms.” Josh said with a snarl as he grabbed the end of the leash and pulled. The sub let out a yelp and stood, going toe to toe with my man. “And learn some fucking manners. You don’t disrespect him or me by propositioning him in front of me. The next person may feed you your balls, douche bag.”

“You’re not a sub.” The guy’s eyes went wide as he tried to get his leash back.

“No, I’m not, but he is mine,” Josh replied slowly and firmly, accented each word. Then he handed over the leash and jerked his thumb at the guy to get lost. He took a few deep breaths before turning back to me, blushing gorgeously. “Sorry about that. I’m not really sure where it came from.”

I stared him over for a minute, loving that he was hopping from one foot to the other as if waiting for me to say something. Instead, I

pulled on his arm and had him up, straddling my lap in a flash. I pulled him to me as I mashed my mouth to his, slipping my hands in the back of his jeans. We kissed, ate, bit, and sucked every inch of each other's mouths before air became necessary.

"Don't ever apologize for staking your claim like that, baby." I panted against his lips. "For one, I am yours, and you have every right to get pissed when someone's that rude. Secondly, it was so fucking hot I want to fuck you on the bar right now."

"That's allowed if you wanted," a man sitting next to us purred as he eyed Josh over. "I know I'd enjoy the show."

"Maybe later, but we're talking right now." I growled at the guy. He held up his hands in surrender.

"Sorry, just know you're not a regular here, was only trying to help."

"Thanks," I said, rolling my eyes, knowing full well he was looking for any excuse to see my man naked. I turned back to Josh, who was still flushed, watching the conversation with the other guy while squirming on my lap. "I thought it was hot that you let that guy know exactly who I belonged to."

"Well I would have been nicer if he hadn't been so rude and nasty," Josh said as he stuck out his lip again. I chuckled and leaned in to lick along it, getting a moan from my man and more wiggling of his butt on my lap. "But really it was more his assumption that you'd ever stoop low enough to be with a skanky ho like him. If anyone's going to proposition my Greek god, it better be some grade A meat."

"I've got the highest grade in my arms and I want no one else."

"Really?" Josh gasped, his mouth hanging open as his chest started to heave with desire. I nodded and he leaned back and whipped off his shirt. "Is my man feeling feisty?"

"Oh yeah," I purred as I flicked his nipple rings. I took his tiny shirt and stuffed it in my pocket before reaching back for our drinks and handing his to Josh. "Drink up, I want to see my baby dance for me."

“You voyeur,” he giggled and then downed his martini. Josh handed me back the empty glass as he slipped off my lap, rubbing my cock through my jeans as he moved. Without a word, he walked several feet away to the edge of the dance floor, putting an extra sway in his hips as he moved.

The little imp bent over with his back to me, touching his toes as he stuck his ass in the air suggestively as he let me see his jeans slide down over the top of his ass. Then he spun around and ran his hands over his chest as he swayed to the music, his eyes never leaving mine. I sat there, dying to go to him as he put on a show for me. Taking slow sips of my drink as I watched him dance, my cock got so hard it almost hurt.

The next song came on and Josh changed his rhythm and someone joined him. A bigger guy, maybe only a few inches shorter than me dressed in nothing but leather chaps moved in behind my man. He grabbed Josh’s hips roughly and thrust against his ass as Josh’s eyes got wide and he froze. I was up and out of my seat before Josh could even react.

“Mine,” I growled to the man as I pulled Josh to me.

“Sorry, man, I didn’t know,” the guy said as he backed off and turned to go find someone else to dance with.

“Growl again for me, big boy,” Josh purred as he rubbed his cock against my thigh.

“I can do better than that,” I snarled as I lifted Josh up and threw him over my shoulder. I glanced around and saw an empty elevated stage with a play table. “You still want to play in public, baby?”

“Oh god yes, I’m primed and ready to shoot after all this teasing and displays of dominance.” That was all I needed to hear. I raced to the stage, hopped up on it, and laid Josh on the table. I undid his jeans and yanked them down his thighs. I thought it best not to just take off our clothes since we might not have any to put back on when we were done with this crowd. Reaching up, I fastened his wrists in the restraints that were built in the table.

“I know how much you liked to be tied down, sub,” I said with a wink, letting him know I was playing. I figured when in Rome... Then I grabbed his hard cock and started stoking him at a furious pace. “I want your cum, baby.”

“Fuck yeah,” Josh cried out and arched his back. “Anything my maven wants I shall give him.”

*Give me your heart*, I thought as I reached with my other hand and played with his plug. We’d drawn quite a crowd who were making catcalls and whistling at us. “Come for me now, my sub.”

His eyes went wide as his body listened to me. Josh instantly came for me, screaming out my name as he shot his load all over my hand. But I was far from done with my baby. As he was still experiencing his orgasm, I pulled out his plug and stuffed it in my other pocket.

“I’ve created a monster.” Josh gasped as he tried to come back down from his climax.

“I think you have, love.” I purred, and his eyes went wider at the term of endearment. Pushing his jeans-covered legs to his chest, I unzipped my fly and pulled out my dick. “Want more, baby?”

“Fuck me as hard as you can. I want that cock pounding into me so hard and fast we break that table.” Josh nodded frantically and I lined up with his prepared hole. I gave one very hard thrust and bottomed out inside of him.

“Yeah! Give him that big cock.” Someone screamed and let out an ear splitting whistle.

“Yeah, give me that cock,” Josh purred as he licked his lips. There was no real foreplay or preamble from me. I started fucking him so fast that the table did creak and groan under the pressure. “Yes, Mad. Harder, my maven, give me everything you have!”

“I-love-that-you-call-me-your-maven-when-we-fuck,” I grunted out in between thrusts. And I did. It was hot that he reminded me that I really was the boss of him in every way. The kicker was, Josh was just as much the boss of me. I fucked him like a caveman for several

minutes, moaning at the feeling of his tight hole greedily sucking back in every time. “Heaven. You feel like heaven, baby.”

“I was thinking the same thing.”

“Come for your maven again, Josh.” I demanded as I grabbed his cock and started stroking it in time with my thrusts. I changed the angle, hitting his sweet spot each time. “Now, sub!”

“Madden.” He screamed as he came again, arching his back as his eyelashes fluttered. Josh never looked more like an angel than when he came under me, from my attentions. I growled my approval as his ass clamped down on my cock. Howling out as I climaxed, I kept pumping every drop of my seed into Josh. It was as if I needed to mark him from the inside out.

“Everything you ever wanted?” I gasped a few minutes later, still trying to catch my breath.

“Better,” he panted, smiling up at me with his eyes sparkling. “I love you, Madden Forrest.”

“Me, too, baby,” I replied, knowing it was weak. It was how I felt, but I’d only said the words to one person before and I’d lost them. I wasn’t ready to really let go and be in love again. Josh’s face fell, but he gave me a weak smile to try and hide his hurt. I pulled out of him as I released his wrists. He lowered his legs and sat up, looking anywhere but at me.

“Is it too soon to say it?” He whispered, gazing somewhere over my shoulder.

“No, I’m just not ready, Josh,” I answered, cupping his cheek so he had to look at me. “Give me time, baby. It’s how I feel, I just can’t say the words yet, okay? I’ll explain when we get back to the room.”

“Am I going to be upset that you’re only telling me this now?” Josh asked with a raised eyebrow, throwing my earlier words in my face.

“I don’t know, but I hope not. We’ve moved really fast here, Josh. I’m not sure you can fault me for not having told you everything about me already.”

“Fair enough,” he said, turning his head and going to move off the table when I went to kiss him. “I’m gonna clean up in the bathroom and meet you at the bar.”

“Okay,” I whispered as I handed him his shirt. He gave me a nod and took it before pulling back up his pants. I stood there like an idiot, watching the man who had my heart walk away from me. Hell, my cock was still hanging out, spent from the amazing sex we’d just had.

How could I be stupid enough to hold back from him? I knew I loved him, so why was I so scared to say the words? But I knew why. I was scared shitless history would repeat itself and I would lose Josh. And I didn’t think I could survive that.

## Chapter 5

I ordered another drink at the bar a few minutes later after I'd put myself back to rights and sulked a bit. As I sucked my Manhattan down, I started to worry if maybe I should check on Josh. I knew he wasn't happy, but I also didn't like him being alone in a crowd like this. I mean, the bouncer had even warned me.

Decision made, I set my drink down and started towards the bathroom when a man came flying out the door. I watched in horror as the man landed with a thump, knocked out, and with blood on his face. Running faster than I ever thought possible, I met security at the bathroom door.

"Sir, you can't go in there," one guys said trying to keep me back as his friends went inside.

"Fuck that, my partner's in there," I growled and shoved the guy aside. I pushed through the door just in time to see Josh land a perfect roundhouse kick to some guy almost a foot taller than him. Then he returned to his fighting stance as he eyed the room looking for threats. But there were none. My five-five man had kicked four guy's asses and was still smiling. "Josh!"

"Hey." He said loudly and gave me a wave as he relaxed. I raced to him and pulled him into my arms, kissing him gently. "That was my first real fight. I did well, right? I mean I took on four guys and I'm fine."

"Are you hurt, baby?"

"Nope, just shaking with all the adrenaline. Fuck, it was a rush, Mad!"

“Okay, chill out, Van Damme.” I chuckled as I let him go and turned to take everything in. One of the security guys was restraining the man Josh had kicked with those ties the police used when they had more people to take in than handcuffs. “What kind of fucking place is this? Four guys just jump someone in the bathroom?”

“These aren’t our members,” the security guy answered shaking his head. “I’ve never seen any of them before in my life. I don’t know what the fuck is going on.”

“I do,” Josh whispered in my ear. “These guys wanted to take out the witness to a certain crime that gave a description to a sketch artist.”

“Shit,” I growled as I pulled out my phone and dialed Gabe’s number. As it was ringing I turned to the security guy, whose nameplate said Finn. “He’s a witness in a murder, they were sent to take him out.”

“Good thing you know how to handle yourself, man,” Finn said to Josh as they bumped fists. “Wicked moves that make me almost jealous.”

“Hey, small doesn’t mean helpless.” Josh giggled as he went to wash his hands.

“Don’t, your hands might be evidence,” I said to him as Gabe picked up. “Gabe, you are in so much fucking trouble with me.”

“What happened?” He asked, his voice laced with concern. “I was going to call you in the morning. The sketch artist told me that Josh couldn’t give him enough detail to put anything together.”

“Well I know who talked at least,” I grumbled, rolling my eyes. “The guy drew a perfect sketch, Josh gave him exact details, Gabe. Four guys just found us in a club and jumped Josh in the bathroom to take out the supposed witness.”

“Fuck, fuck, fuck!” Gabe shouted, getting louder each time. “I’ll send units to you that I trust and I’ll be there shortly. Have security lock down the bathroom with the guys and clear the club of everyone else. Where are you?”

I told him the club and he said to give the phone to whoever was in charge. After handing it over to Finn, I watched the man go still as he gave clipped answers. Then he handed me my cell back and started barking orders into his two-way radio. Finn knew what he was doing, that was for certain. Then he pulled out his phone and called whoever was the owner of the club I assumed.

“Military?” I asked when he got off the phone.

“Yeah, just got out of Special Forces with the Marines,” he answered with a smile. “I was thinking of taking the test to be a cop. But I got the job as head of security here while I felt out how the New Orleans police force felt about gay officers.”

“Want a safer job that pays better?” I asked, knowing the order was always needing security specialists for the compounds. We had some, but they always couldn’t handle what we did. “You’d have to be open to seeing things that you can’t always explain.”

“Please, my gram was a witch.” He laughed, waving off my concerns. I pulled out my card that had the main number to our branch of the order and gave it to him.

“Call that number tomorrow and ask for Raven.” I instructed Finn as his eyebrows shot up. “I’ll talk to him tonight and tell him to expect your call. We’re privately funded and we require discretion.”

“I won’t do anything illegal, I’m not a merc,” Finn replied, eyeing me over.

“I’m a Son of Thanatus; we are able to find the dead that haven’t been laid to rest.” I explained quietly so no one else could hear us. “Nothing illegal, I assure you. We were brought in by the mayor’s office to help with a serial killer. But you can see why we’re trained in hand-to-hand combat and have the need for security.”

“Yeah, I can understand that one,” he snickered as he looked us over again. “That’s a neat gift. I always thought I was a freak because I could see ghosts.”

Josh and I shared a look before Josh turned back to Finn. “Do they talk to you?”

“I’ve stumbled upon a few dead bodies myself in a warzone,” Finn nodded. Josh turned around, undid his jeans, and pulled them down enough so Finn could see his birthmark.

“Look familiar?” Josh asked gently.

“Y–Yeah, I–I have the same mark,” Finn whispered, his eyes darting between Josh’s mark and my eyes. “What are you saying?”

“That you’re not alone, brother,” I said as I reached out my hand to Finn. “We’ll talk, okay? Let’s just get through this with the police, and I’ll call Raven in to explain everything. He’s my boss at the order.”

“Okay.” Finn swallowed loudly as he stared at Josh’s ass. “This is way more than I thought would happen when I came into work tonight.”

“Baby, cover up your hot ass.” I growled playfully as I gave it a smack. He let out a yelp, but stared at me with lust in his eyes as he redid his pants. I turned back to Finn, who was blushing after he realized he’d been staring at my man. “Not what you were expecting, but isn’t it better you know now that you’re not alone?”

“Actually, I know of others,” Finn whispered as his eyes went wide and looked at me. “I found five other guys in the Marines who were like me. We kinda all stuck together after we saw each other’s birthmarks in the shower. Can you help them, too?”

“Oh yeah,” I answered with a wide smile. “I love my calling and what I can do, Finn. We help people be laid to rest and give their souls peace. The order is like a big family that treats us well, my friend.”

“Sounds nice. I’ve not had a family since my gram died when I was a kid.”

“Welcome to ours,” Josh said gently and went to give Finn a hug. The larger man hugged my baby gently as he smiled so widely I thought his lips might split. It seemed I was just going meet all kinds of new people on this trip. Meeting Finn was great, and I was glad he

would get some answers, but more importantly, I'd met the love of my life. Now if I didn't fuck it all up, that would be great.

\* \* \* \*

It took hours for us to deal with everything at the club. Gabe had shown up with the police to take the suspects into custody and apologize profusely for what happened. At least he handled all the questions from the police as to how things went down, but we still were needed to stick around for follow up questions.

Finn had done a great job facilitating everything. I made a few mental notes on what to tell Raven as I watched him at work. Then I called my boss and filled him in on about not only Finn, but his other five friends. Raven had been thrilled at the prospects of helping others find the order and was jumping on a plane to get to us by morning.

After centuries of being persecuted and lots of generations losing the way of our kind, there were many of us who were in the wind. It had to be hard on them, knowing they were different, but not the how or why. I know it had been for me.

Josh looked uncomfortable as we entered our hotel room, nervous almost. We'd not gotten a chance to say much to each other since the police showed up and were quiet on the cab ride home. But I'd made several decisions where my man was concerned over the course of the evening. Starting with telling him how I felt the instant I saw that guy fly out of the bathroom if I ever got the chance.

Without a word, I followed him into the bedroom and moved up behind him. Wrapping my arms around him, Josh sighed and leaned back against my chest. Slowly I started to undress my baby and he tilted his head up and stared at me with questions in his eyes.

After I got off his shirt, I turned him in my arms and went to work on his jeans. Josh opened his mouth to say something, but I gently covered it and shook my head. I needed to show him how much I loved and cared for him right then before I said the words. He gave

me a nod, but still looked confused and begging for answers. My eyes never left his as I leaned over and claimed his mouth.

It was a sweet kiss, very tender as I explored his mouth. I ran my fingers lightly down his naked back, slid them into the back of his jeans, and pushed them down his hips. Josh shivered in my embrace and nipped my lower lip. I kissed down his jaw, along his neck, and over his collar bone before moving to his perfect pink nipples. Latching onto one with my mouth, I flicked his ring with my tongue.

Josh panted as he ran his fingers through my shoulder length hair as he stared at me with so much love I thought I might burst from it. After playing with his other nipples, I kissed and licked every inch of his stomach, stopping to pay attention to his navel ring I loved. Then I licked and sucked marks on each of his hip bones as Josh started to shake with desire. Just to torture both of us, I skipped his groin and kissed my way down his legs as I removed his jeans and shoes.

Then I licked my way back up, spreading his legs before taking his sac in my mouth. I reached behind him and supported his weight, helping him stand, with my hands under his ass. When his balls drew up close to his body, I knew he was getting close. Done with my teasing, I moved to swallow his cock down. He gasped as his hold on my hair tightened.

I slid my hand around front and pushed two fingers into my mouth alongside his dick. Josh started gently thrusting into my mouth as I licked and sucked him faster. Then I moved my hand back to his ass and slowly pushed my fingers into his ass. That's all it took for him to come. Josh cried out, throwing back his head in ecstasy as he shot his seed down my throat.

When I milked him dry and licked him clean, I stood up and swept him up in my arms. He wrapped his arms around my neck as he panted with his mouth partially open, the most wonderful blush over his face. My baby looked completely debauched and captivating. I laid him gently on the bed as if he might break before undressing slowly for him to watch.

His eyes never left me as I grabbed the lube off the nightstand, squirted some on my hand, and slicked up my cock. I crawled on the bed, moving his legs to make room for my larger body. Then I slowly pushed them back to his chest and Josh held them there for me. I used the leftover lube on my hand to push three fingers into him to make sure he was adequately stretched.

When I was sure he was ready for me, I pulled them out, getting the sweetest whimper from the man I loved with all of my heart. Lining my cock up to his perfect hole, I gently pushed inside of him. I thrust in and out of him slowly, working more of my dick into him each time. As I bottomed out in him, my balls resting against his ass, I moved his legs around my hips. Leaning over him, I slid my forearms under his shoulders and claimed his mouth.

Josh threw his arms around my neck as he submitted to me in every way. His tongue ran over mine as we made love to each other with our mouths. Then I started gently thrusting into him, making just as slow love to his body as I was with my tongue. It felt like hours we laid there together, not as two men in bed, but connected as one soul. He lifted his hips to meet my every thrust, making the most beautiful noises that went straight to my heart.

Just as I was about to come, I leaned back so I could stare into those gorgeous green eyes that reflected everything I felt back at me. Moments later, we came together never looking away as his seed filled up the space between us as mine filled his body. When we were finally spent, panting as we were still wrapped around each other, I knew it was time.

“I love you with all my heart and soul, Josh McGregor. Everything I am, every part of me, belongs to you in a way that I never have before. You are my soul mate, and I pledge my love to you for as long as I live. There will never be another for me, Josh. You are my everything and I want you to be mine in every way forever.”

“I love you too, Madden,” he whispered as tears glistened in his eyes. “And I know you love me, you just showed me in a way I never thought possible. I’m yours as you are mine, my maven, my love, my partner, my everything.”

“Thank you, Josh,” I replied as I hugged him to me tightly. I wanted to scream out in joy, cry at the overwhelming relief that he loved me and accepted me even with my flaws. Thanking the heavens for the man in my arms I knew I would never let him go without a fight.

“What is this all about, Mad? I know something’s going on here, that you’ve had some major breakthrough, but I have no clue what that is.”

“I was married,” I said as I nuzzled my face in his neck. “I loved Meghan, I really did, but I’m not sure I was every *in* love with her. She was my best friend, but also my cover so I didn’t have to admit I was gay or disappoint my high and mighty family.”

“She was your brush with death, wasn’t she?” Josh asked as he ran his hands over my back in a show of support.

“Yeah, she was,” I sighed, rolling us over so I didn’t squish him. “I was adopted and I never knew it. I don’t know who my birth parents were and I had no idea what the birthmark meant. I was dating Meghan when I first realized I might be gay. I freaked out and proposed senior year of college. I think she always knew, but we fit together. My adopted family was a big to-do, political clout and everything.”

“So she ran in the same crowd you did,” Josh said, trying to urge me on.

“We grew up together. Her parents were friends with my parents and it was neat and clean in everyone’s eyes. We graduated, got jobs, got married, and everything was almost perfect.”

“Except you were gay.”

“Except I was gay.” I chuckled before getting very somber. “We were married for two years before she became pregnant and I was

thrilled. I thought having a baby was better than ever admitting who I really was. Two months into the pregnancy she was driving us to her parents, a deer ran across the road and she swerved to miss it, but it had been raining and everything was slick. We crashed.

“She was worse off than I was and I didn’t know then that I was immortal, though we can die too. She made me promise to be happy and to be who I really was in life before she died. Seconds later I blacked out and woke a week later in a hospital. A man in the emergency room had seen my birthmark and called the order. Raven was sitting by my hospital bed when I came around and told me she had died.”

“What did your parents say about him being there?”

“They were pissed that he told me I was adopted.” I chuckled remembering how my father had almost blown a gasket. “He explained things to me, about who I was, the birthmark, everything. When I asked my parents if they knew my birth parents, they refused to tell me. That was the last time I saw them. Meghan had already been buried since I’d been out for a week; her parents didn’t bother to see if I’d wake up.

“Raven went with me to the cemetery to say good-bye to her and after that, I left my old life. Packed up the stuff that was really important to me and moved to the Miami compound. The Patriarch thinks that I made it through my training and apprenticeship faster than normal because my brush with death wasn’t just my wife, but my child as well.”

“I’m so sorry, Mad,” Josh whispered and leaned over to kiss me. “And no, I’m not upset that you didn’t tell me sooner. I can see why what’s between us would scare you and would make you hesitant.”

“Thank you for understanding,” I said with a smile as I ran my fingers through his long blond hair that had fallen out of his braid. “I believe in the legends, Josh. I believe that every Son of Thanatus will find their true soul mate who will be a Son or Daughter of Thanatus. And I know you’re mine. I will always love Meghan— she was my

best friend and the mother of my unborn baby. I will always grieve their loss, but that won't ever take away how I feel about you."

"I love you so much," he replied and kissed me again. "I believe the legends too. That's why I thought that the maven who tricked me was it for me. But then when I met you and the first night we spent together, everything just clicked into place. I know that's why I wasn't more upset that you were not just a maven, but *my* maven. And now I understand what the Patriarch meant when he sent me here."

"Raven said that the Patriarch told him that he had a vision and knew we would be more than apprentice/maven, that we would heal each other."

"Yeah, he told me I was being given a maven who would understand my past pain and would know how to make me whole. I didn't get it and thought he was being all creepy and mystical like he can get, but I understand it now."

"I was so scared when I was running to the bathroom to get to you, baby." I admitted as he sat up on my hips. My cock was still inside of him, thought it had softened. Now it was taking renewed interest at his movements. "All I kept thinking was I could lose you and never have told you that I loved you."

"Not going to happen, Mad. You're stuck with me," Josh winked, moving his hips for emphasis. "Are we done with the serious for the night?"

"What did you have in mind, my dirty apprentice?" I asked with a chuckle, grateful he was trying to lighten the mood after everything that had happened tonight.

"Turning around and riding you while shoving a vibrator in your firm ass."

"Oh fuck yeah, I can totally be in the mood for that," I groaned, thrusting up so he bucked on my hips. We shared a look and burst out laughing. In two days Josh had become my entire world. Things like that just didn't happen in real life, or so I thought. And if I hadn't already believed in the legends of soul mates, meeting him would

have changed my mind. Otherwise I would have had to be a fucking moron to deny what was staring me in the face.

## Chapter 6

The next morning as we left our room and went downstairs to meet Raven, I couldn't help but notice Josh was walking a little funny. After we'd made love, we fucked like rabbits for hours. And then I used a few of the toys he'd chosen on him. I could only imagine how his ass was feeling after that kind of attention. But I still planned on doing it again tonight if he wasn't hurting. Otherwise I could just kiss it and make it better.

"Maybe we shouldn't have sex today, baby," I cooed as we got on the elevator. "You're walking kind of weird today. Is my cock too much for your tight ass?"

"Cut me off from sex and I'll just use the toys on myself and let you watch." He threatened as he raised an eyebrow at me as if to test him. "I love our sex life. It's nice to know there's someone who's just as horny as I am."

"In my defense, you normally start it." I snickered as the elevator opened. I reached out and touched his shoulder when we stepped off. "Seriously, though, I didn't hurt you. Did I, Josh?"

"No, my big Greek god," he purred and rubbed against me suggestively. "Just been a long time for me and never quite this much or so passionate. We might not want to play hard tonight, but we *will* be playing. I think some spanking and blow jobs are on the menu."

"I'll suck you off all night if that's what my baby wants." I gave him a quick kiss and slid my hand in his before leading him to the other restaurant the hotel had. Raven gave us a wave as we entered, looking like he'd been pulled out of bed and hopped on a plane. Which, of course, he had. We walked up to the booth and I pulled

Josh in front of me. “Raven Englewood, I’d like to you meet the love of my life and apprentice, Josh McGregor.”

“Nice to meet you, Josh,” Raven chuckled as he stood and shook Josh’s hand. He glanced at me as we sat back down. “Love of my life, huh? Guess you figured out the whole ‘I think I fucked my apprentice all last night’ thing.”

“Yes. And he did it again last night,” Josh said sweetly as he turned his coffee cup over to signal to the waitress he wanted some. “And I plan on getting spanked before sucking Mad’s cock all night and then letting him tie me down and fucking me with his massive cock some more.”

“Josh!” I exclaimed as Raven’s eyes went wide. “What the hell, baby?”

“Raven may be your boss, but I don’t think that we love each other is anything to laugh about,” Josh said firmly as he stared daggers at Raven. “It almost sounds like he’s jealous that he can’t have you. If I need to explicitly tell him exactly how I’m willing to please you and how often, I will. But he cannot have you.”

“I wasn’t laughing at the fact you love each other, Josh,” Raven replied quietly. “And it’s never been like that with me and Madden. The situation was somewhat comical on how you met and I’ve known Madden a long time, okay? He had a hard time dealing with the fact he was gay and used to think maybe it was a phase. But yes, I’m jealous. Not of either of you, but what you obviously have. I’d like to find my own soul-mate one day.”

“Well I’m going to shut up now and melt into the floor,” Josh said, pursing his lips while nodding his head. “Sorry for being a douche.”

“Not at all, nice to know that you’re so protective of Madden.” Raven waved off his concerns as I spotted Finn. I whistled, getting his attention, and he came over.

“I plan on spanking you extra hard tonight for that outburst,” I whispered in Josh’s ear.

“Promise?” The little imp smiled widely and wiggled his eyebrows at me. I chuckled as we all stood and made the introductions.

“I’m sorry, Finn, I never caught your last name.” I gestured that he should sit down next to Raven as we slid back in the booth.

“Finn Murphy,” he said as he looked at Raven in a side glance. Well wasn’t that interesting? I’d have to tease Raven on that later. Finn spread his hands out in front of him. “Okay, I’m here. So now what?”

“Now we explain what your birthmark means and who the Sons of Thanatus are,” Raven answered and gestured for the waitress. “But coffee first, since I didn’t sleep on the plane and haven’t really been to bed yet.”

Raven spent the next half an hour going over who we were and what being a part of the order meant. He took a break when we ordered food and it arrived. But we were just finishing up our food when he wrapped it. It was then I noticed Finn hadn’t eaten a thing.

“Alright, I’m in,” Finn said quietly after several minutes of silence. “I want to learn everything and know if this was why my family said they were witches. But I need to know about my friends.”

“I’ve already talked with the Patriarch,” Raven replied slowly, sharing a look of concern with me at Finn’s reaction. “We’re going to have a special, much shorter training program for all of you since your military training puts you leaps ahead of most of our students. But I need to know if you’re willing to help me find them.”

“Oh, that’s easy,” Finn snickered as he finally took a bite of his breakfast. “They’re all still in Iraq on active duty. They renewed their contracts, but I got out.”

“That’s easy enough to get them out of. Will you come with me to talk to them? I think a friendly face will make it less likely for me to end up shot.”

“You can get them out of military just like that?” Finn asked, his eyes wide as his fork stopped halfway to his mouth. “Who *are* you guys?”

“We’re very well connected.” Raven shrugged. “You wouldn’t believe the people we’ve been called in to help.” He focused on me then. “Which reminds me, you two are flying out tonight. I’ve got your next assignment. It’s very high profile and very hush-hush.”

“You e-mailed it to me?” I asked as I pushed my plate aside.

“Yeah, before the plane landed this morning.” Raven smirked and glanced at Josh before returning to me. “I guess you were busy tying down and fucking your apprentice when I sent it.”

“No, he was using toys on me probably,” Josh replied smoothly, batting his eyelashes at my boss. “Or he could have been slamming his ten inch—”

I slapped my hand over Josh’s mouth before he could finish that statement. “You guys are going to be the death of me. Play nice in front of the new kid, okay?”

“You remember where I met you guys, right?” Finn snickered in between bites. “Hell, I saw the show you put on last night at the club. I was hard as a fucking rock after watching you two together.”

“They put on a show, huh?” Raven blinked several times before bursting out laughing. “Oh, Madden, I can’t picture you at a Dom club dressed in leather and chains.”

“He wasn’t,” Josh said, winking at me before muttering his next words. “But you should have seen what I was wearing.”

“Yeah, made me wonder what else you had pierced,” Finn said, waggling his eyebrows.

“I’ve been thinking of getting a Prince Albert.” Josh shrugged. I choked at his response and spit coffee all over poor Raven and Finn. “Is that a no?”

“You’re just teasing me, aren’t you?” I gasped, trying to breathe normally again.

“Yeah, totally,” he giggled as he ran his hand over my thigh. “There are just some places piercings will never go on my body.”

“Hey, to each his own,” I shrugged, but secretly agreeing with him. “But you seem to like to shock me so I figured I’d check.”

“Yeah, next time shock him when he doesn’t have a mouthful of coffee,” Raven grumbled and we all laughed. After the check was paid, we all said our good-byes as Raven went with Finn to help him settle everything in his current life before starting his new one. That was Raven’s main role in the order. He traveled all over the world, like a few others in the order, and followed up leads when reports came in that someone had the birthmark.

Josh and I went back to our room and he started getting our things together while I booted up my laptop. I watched him hum as he moved around the room, swaying to some unknown tune that was playing in his head. Again I was dumbstruck by his beauty. And I didn’t just mean the physical. The inside, heart and spirit, of Josh was even more amazing than his hot outer package.

I opened Raven’s e-mail and scrolled through the file, getting the basics. One of the other great things about the order was we never had to do the legwork. I didn’t have to worry about booking flights, rental cars, hotel rooms, or anything that came with traveling. There was a main coordinator who handled all of that along with handing out assignments. Davin Rahu was a cute little guy, no more than mid-twenties and an off the chart genius.

“Hey, baby?” I called out to him, smiling widely when I saw where we were going. Josh turned and looked at me before walking towards me. “How do you feel about going to Argentina?”

“I feel we may need to do some shopping,” he snickered looking at the winter clothes he had in his hands. “How do we do this?”

“We pack up and ship back to Miami what we won’t be needed.” I explained as I sent the details of the flight to my iPhone. “Does us no good to drag all that along. But more often than not we normally get a chance to fly back home and rest a few days before the next

assignment. I have a feeling I'm being sent because I've dealt with the Ambassador of Argentina before with my maven."

"He a good guy?" Josh asked as I went and helped him start separating what we'd ship back to the order and what we'd take with us.

"Yeah, Jake's one of those guys with family connections but fought to make his own way in the world. I respect him."

"Do we have time for sex before our flight?" He smiled at me as he held up two different toys we'd played with last night. I groaned and yanked him to me. Josh came willingly, rubbing himself against me as I caressed his ass. My job had never been so much fun or exciting before Josh. And even after he became a maven of his own, I knew I'd never stop making sure he was with me. Can't be away from my soul mate, now could I?

\* \* \* \*

We landed in Buenos Aires at eight in the morning their time. It had been an easy flight, and we both slept the entire time holding hands as we sat in first class. Again, the order believed if we traveled constantly, they'd make it as easy as possible on us. I was shocked when Jake met us at the airport with his entourage.

"Ambassador Wilson, I'd like to introduce you to my apprentice, Josh McGregor," I said after shaking Jake's hand. "I apologize for our casual clothes, I wasn't expecting you to meet us at the airport."

"A pleasure," Jake said to Josh as they shook. Then he hurried us along to several SUV's. "We've had some threats recently against the consulate and I thought it best that I come because the best guards always come with me."

"Understood," I replied, exchanging a glance with Josh. What the fuck had we just walked into? "Is this something I need to apprise my superiors of?"

“I called them when the latest threat came in.” We jumped into the SUV with Jake after he assured us someone would be getting our bags. “Another Marine went missing.”

Marines were often stationed overseas at the varying consulates since it was technically American soil. They were specially trained as a type of secret service for our dignitaries. In other words, they shot first, asked questions later.

“This makes three in as many days?” I was shocked. The file had stated that a group of rebels against the Argentine government were trying to get the US out of their borders. The theory being that if we withdrew our support from the current administration, a coup was much more possible.

“Yes, and we have no idea how the rebels are getting in the compound, if it’s really them, much less how they’re getting our guys back out. The whole thing is quite disturbing. But the first thing I would like is for you to check the grounds. We might have missed something and they could possibly be there.”

“So we’re staying at the consulate?” I asked, glancing at Josh again at the change of plans. So much for our fun and checking out the sights.

“I talked to your superiors and they agreed with me that you staying there is for the best,” Jake said as we drove along. “The only people who know you’re here are myself, my wife, and my security detail. No one else, I swear it to you.”

“That’s fine; I’m just not sure how we can help you if we’re under such tight constraints. And are we even sure this isn’t a K&R?” I asked, knowing what the file said but wanting to hear it from the horse’s mouth. K&R was a term for kidnap and ransom, normally for out of country kidnaps where there the local government wasn’t motivated to help.

“No, we’re not sure,” Jake sighed as we pulled into the gates of the consulate. “But if it’s a K&R why keep taking more Marines? We’ve had no demands, proof of life, or even a peep about what’s

going on. The President of Argentina knows we have Marines missing and is using all resources to look into the matter. He's a good man who wants us gone even less than we're willing to leave."

"Go ahead and ask, Josh," I said when I saw his eyebrows drawn together in thought. I glanced over at Jake and explained. "In general we don't want our apprentices to ask questions in front of clients because it can seem as if we don't know what we're doing. But we've worked together before; I know you're a believer."

"If we can find the bodies of these Marines, then what?" Josh asked, giving me a quick glance. "I mean no disrespect, but finding them doesn't mean we can know who's behind this exactly. I know you want to find your men, but that doesn't stop number four from going missing tomorrow."

"No, it doesn't," Jake answered, shaking his head. "But it gives us a starting point at least. If these rebels were smart, they'd have found another way to try and get the US out, not resorting to acts of terrorism and killing Marines."

"Shit." I sighed and leaned back in my seat. It sunk in what Josh was inadvertently asking. Did we tell Jake what else Josh was capable and use that to help put a stop to all of this?

"Yeah, that's what I'm asking," Josh said quietly. Jake gave us a funny look, but we stopped in front of the consulate. We all got out and I leaned over to Josh.

"Say nothing yet," I hissed in his ear before we started walking the grounds. After a half an hour we covered everything within the walls and found nothing. We followed Jake inside the building and went to his private quarters for lunch with his wife. As soon as I introduced Josh to Helen and the food arrived, I turned to Jake. "Can we clear the room?"

Jake eyed me over for a minute before nodding and asking his guards to leave the room. When we were alone I explained to him exactly what Josh was capable of and how we might be able to help to putting a stop to the rebels. Next we pulled out a map and started

setting up a grid search pattern. It was decided that we begin with the grids closest to the consulate and work our way out.

After lunch was over we headed back downstairs where Jake bid us good luck. He wasn't coming with us this time, and we could move faster without his additional security. Josh had a longer range of ability to sense a body than I did, but I still kept the grids just on the edge of my limits since he was brand new in the field.

"Okay so we're setting up two teams to guard each of you—" Jake's head of security said, but I cut him off.

"No, my apprentice does not separate from me." Not only was it against the order's procedure of a new apprentice, but I loved Josh, and the shit we were in was *not* the time to take unnecessary risks. "He's not ready to be on solo field ops."

"We'd be with him though," the guy replied, and I just shook my head that it wasn't happening. Sighing, he turned to Josh. "Surely you can see how much more ground we could cover if we split you up."

"I'm not ready. This is only my—" Josh started to say but then caught himself in time. Mustn't tell the clients it's your second day as an apprentice because they'd probably freak. "My maven has made the call, and I do not doubt him. We go together or we don't go at all."

The guy looked annoyed but went over to talk with one of his men as we climbed into the Expedition. Minutes later we were on our way and driving out of the gates. Josh was looking out his window as I was trying to visualize where we were heading on the map I'd seen.

Suddenly a hand covered my mouth with something foul smelling. I elbowed the guy in the face and had enough time to see Josh was fighting as well before the edges of my vision went fuzzy. The last thought I had before everything went dark was, *I guess we know how the Marines are being taken.*

## Chapter 7

I woke up chained to a wall of what looked like a storage closet. Josh was on the floor next to me, still unconscious but not restrained. First I checked the chains, but they weren't getting pulled out of the concrete wall anytime soon. Or at least not by me. Then I felt in my pockets, but they'd emptied them out.

Next I thought maybe Josh had a bobby pin in his hair. I gently felt around in his hair, but no such luck. He'd worn it in a bun since we hadn't planned on seeing Jake as soon as we got off the plane. And then I was officially out of ideas for the moment.

"Hey, baby," I whispered as his eyes fluttered open, pulling him onto my lap. "Did they hurt you? You feeling any pain?"

"No, just a little woozy," he answered, rubbing his hands over his eyes. Josh sat up and took in our surroundings. "It's almost comical that you're tied up this time and I'm not, if this wasn't so serious that is."

"Yeah, not exactly how my fantasy of being handcuffed with you played out in my mind."

"We're in deep shit, aren't we, Mad?" He asked after a moment, turning in my lap so he was straddling me. "Ever been kidnapped before?"

"No, not ever had the pleasure," I sighed as I held him to me. "Jake will figure out we're gone and call in backup. If I know the Patriarch, he'll send an army to get us. And Raven will tear apart the entire country if he has to. That man doesn't know the word defeat or give two shits about stepping on toes when it comes to the people he cares about."

“Maybe we should talk to the Patriarch about putting trackers in us when we’re out on assignment,” Josh mumbled as he nuzzled my neck. “But the good thing is we’re wicked hard to kill, right? I mean we should be staying positive.”

“Right, my love,” I whispered and placed small kisses on his shoulder. That tracker idea wasn’t half bad, something I’d need to think about later. “And we’re still alive, which means they either want information or to ransom us.”

“Would the order pay ransom?”

“I’ve never heard of one of us being kidnapped,” I answered after a few moments of thought. “It would be more likely that they storm the place and rescue us. Don’t forget while we all have the same basic gift, some have additional ones. The Patriarch gets visions, and you’re a perfect example of how powerful we can be, baby.”

“Right, right, all good points,” he whispered and started to shake. I held him tightly, rubbing my hands over his back in comfort. “If we don’t make it out of this—”

“Don’t say that, Josh. This is *not* good-bye. We’re going to get out of here, okay?”

“Just let me finish,” Josh said as he sat up and took my face in his hands. He waited until I gave him a nod, staring him straight in the eyes. “If we don’t make it out of here, I want you to know it was worth it. I don’t want this to be the end. I was looking forward to centuries with you, Mad. But if this is our time, at least I found you first. And I won’t ever regret this being the outcome when I was able to love you and be loved by you.”

“I’m sorry I failed you,” I whispered against his lips as my eyes started to burn.

“You didn’t fail me, you loved me with all of you and I’m grateful to have felt that in my life.”

“I’m supposed to protect you, not only as my apprentice but as the man I love,” I replied but Josh shut me up with his lips on mine. He kissed me softly though passionately, putting all his feelings into that

one moment. God, I didn't want this to end. I wanted centuries with Josh, not a few days and for us to die like this. This wasn't going to be how it ended, I decided. At least not for Josh. I'd do whatever it took to keep him alive.

We sat there together for a while, wrapped around each other, and waited. That was maybe the worst part, the not knowing what was next or going on. Were they going to come in here and just shoot us? Were they going to torture us? I felt like I was losing my mind as the hours went by and we knew nothing more than when we'd first gotten there.

That's not true actually, we did learn a few things. Like we learned that the door was locked and made of steel. Josh figured out that there was nothing in the room to pick the lock to my chains or get us out of there. We had four walls of concrete and a steel door. We weren't going anywhere.

Several hours had passed since we'd woken and I had to guess it was the middle of the night before we heard anything. I moved Josh behind me as the door finally opened and we leapt to our feet. Three men entered, staring at us while one guy seemed to take the lead.

He started talking to me in Spanish, asking questions I was pretty sure. Another thing to add to the list, learn Spanish. The order didn't have a language program for the training on our continent. I don't think it had ever come up before that we needed to speak anything other than English. But then again, none of us had been kidnapped before.

"We don't speak Spanish," I said, interrupting him as his face started to turn red from our lack of response. "I don't understand a word you're saying or know what you want with us."

The man threw up his hands in the air and started a long-winded rant. He did not sound happy either. Josh peeked out from around me and squeezed my arm he was holding onto. I kind of took it as a "what the fuck" gesture and I felt the same.

I had heard enough Spanish or seen enough movies with some subtitles to pick out certain words. There was an interesting combination of something about my mother and an ugly donkey. But picking that up wasn't the same as being able to communicate enough to get us out of this mess.

"Only English?" the second, smaller guy asked.

"I know Latin," Josh answered. Part of me wanted to laugh. Yeah, I didn't think a basically dead verbal language would help with rebels in Argentina.

"Who are you?" Guy number two asked, his English was very broken and I doubted he would be much help.

"Professors." That was what the mavens in the field said as their cover stories for non-clients. It had a better response than explaining we found the dead. Plus it helped us blend in. People remembered someone who had an interesting, rare job. "We teach at the University of Miami."

"He's a teacher of University?" He pointed to Josh with a raised eyebrow and a look that said he wasn't buying.

"I'm a professor, he's my assistant. Assistant teacher," I said, pointing to me than Josh.

"Why you here?"

"Consulate requested us," I answered slowly trying to buy time as I raced through what to say next. Since it was an inside job, they had to know why we were sent here. So lying at this point would probably get us killed. "We were sent here to help find the missing Marines. I teach political criminology. Why crimes are committed for political purposes."

"Why University pick you to send?" The guy asked. There was always a pause in between questions and answers as he translated to the other man I assumed was in charge.

I shrugged. I figured that was the universal sign for I don't know. "They tell me to go help the Ambassador of Argentina, I go. I brought my assistant for a learning experience."

“We were told you were witches,” the guy said, looking us both over suspiciously like he didn’t believe that either. Now that might be able to help us. One of the other things we learned in our training was how to read people. It helped in the field to know who didn’t buy what we could do and who could be a possible threat. Seems it didn’t help with Jake’s guys though.

“We’re not witches,” I replied shaking my head. “I can hear the dead sometimes, but that’s more a family trait. And that’s all I can do. The University doesn’t send me out to help because I can do that though. I’m here as a consultant to the Ambassador on trying to figure out who’s killing the Marines.”

I figured it was better to keep their focus on me instead of Josh. Plus while I was lying that I worked for the University of Miami, if they pulled my background it would confirm it. But the rest was true and it worked.

“You know the Ambassador, he is friend?”

“We’ve met before, but I wouldn’t say we’re friends,” I answered. Again also true. This time they went back and forth several times before all three moved in on us.

“We take your boyfriend and see what he says alone.” The second guy said, gesturing to Josh who I had protectively behind me. And that wasn’t easy since I was chained to the wall.

“No! We’re telling the truth,” I growled, just about smashing Josh against the wall so they couldn’t grab him. “What do you want from us? Tell me what you want to know and I’ll tell you.”

But it seemed time for talking was over as two of them came at me swinging while the other went for Josh. I couldn’t raise my arms enough to hit them. I basically just defended myself from their blows as best as I could. Josh didn’t put up a fight when they yanked him out from behind me, playing up his size.

I did land a good shot with my elbow to one guy’s groin, which got me several kicks to the head and back. Falling to the floor in a heap, I had just enough time to see Josh mouth “I love you” before

they pulled him out of the room. And then they all left. I lay there in pain, bleeding, praying that they didn't kill the man I loved before help could get here.

I must have passed out from the pain for a while, because I came around when I heard the door open. One of the guys threw Josh into the room and I dove for him, but couldn't move fast enough to break his fall and the chains stopped me. I saw red with rage as I looked my baby over. They'd worked him over good.

"Josh," I shouted as I tried to get to him. The other guy left the room saying something in Spanish that didn't sound happy.

"I got a message to the order," he said as he rolled to his feet. I stared at him with wide eyes as he walked over to me and helped me sit back down. "I'm fine, Mad. I took a couple of punches, no big deal. I was faking how bad I was injured."

"Oh, thank god," I gasped as I tried to pull him into my lap. But that hurt way too much. Instead I ended up collapsing with my head in his lap. "What happened?"

"They left me in a room with one guy." Josh explained with an evil grin. "We fought and I let him get a few punches in before knocking him out. Then I grabbed his phone and called the main number. I talked to Davin and he traced the GPS signal of the phone. After that, I put the phone back in his pocket and pretended he'd worked me over just as bad as I did him. When he came to, he called for backup, and they threw me back in here."

"My baby's a genius," I said as I kissed his thigh. I wanted to cry with relief that not only was he okay, but help was coming.

"Raven and a bunch of guys from the order are already here. Davin said we just have to hang on for a bit while they get organized and come in hot." Josh ran his fingers through my hair gently before leaning over and kissing my temple. "Are you okay, Mad?"

"I am now," I whispered as I tried to ignore the pain. "I was so scared I'd never see you again."

“I told you that you’re stuck with me, my love,” he cooed and then picked up my shackled wrist. Moments later I heard a click as he sprang me loose. He did the same with the other wrist and kissed them where I was bleeding from fighting against the metal. “I’m going to take good care of you, Mad. It’s all going to be okay now.”

“I love you so much, Josh.” I sighed, snuggling my battered face into his lap. My baby had saved us. I was so glad but felt so guilty at the same time. It was my job to protect him and I failed miserably.

“I love you too,” he whispered as he held me. We lay like that for a long time until we heard an explosion. “Here comes our rescue.”

“Thank fuck,” I groaned as we got to our feet. I leaned some of my weight on him, careful not to crush him with my two-eighty frame. The sounds of gunfire were close, and I sent up a silent prayer that none of our guys got hurt trying to rescue us.

It went quiet for a minute before the door opened and the first guy who seemed in charge barreled through. I had just enough time to see the gun in his hand before he raised it. Pushing Josh to the ground, I went to dive onto him to cover him with my body. As I moved to protect the man I loved, I heard a loud noise and felt white hot pain in the right side of my chest.

The guy rattled something off in Spanish and then I heard another shot. Glancing up, I saw the guy clutch his chest, drop the gun, and then crumble to the floor. Right behind where he’d been standing was Finn, still aiming a gun at the guy.

“Medic!” Finn screamed as he kicked the guy’s gun away and raced to me. He rolled me onto my back and I started having trouble breathing.

“Josh. Help Josh,” I gasped as I tried to turn my head to see where he was, but my body wasn’t listening.

“I’m right here, Mad. I’m just fine,” Josh said as he came into view. He had tears in his eyes as he whipped off his shirt and pushed it onto my chest. Fuck, that hurt! “Don’t you dare die on me, Madden Forrest. I will be really pissed if you leave me now.”

“Not going anywhere, baby. I love you too much,” I whispered as the edges of my world started to go dark.

“The bullet was a through and through on the right side of your chest, Madden,” Finn said as others entered the room. “You’re gonna be just fine.”

“Does that mean I can pass out from the pain now?”

“Yeah, go right ahead. We’ll see you when you wake up and are all better.”

“Thank fuck,” I gasped and blacked out. It was almost like I could let go now that I knew Josh was going to be safe. Also people make getting shot look way too easy in the movies because the reality of it was it hurt like a motherfucker.

\* \* \* \*

“Wakie, wakie, sleepyhead,” Josh cooed in my ear. I let out a deep groan as I opened my eyes and looked around. My head hurt too much to turn, and my mouth felt like I had been eating sand for a few days. I recognized the familiar surroundings of the infirmary in the Miami compound where I lived.

“Water?” I croaked out as I raised a hand to rub my eyes. He smiled and held out a spoon to me that ended up having ice chips on them. I downed them greedily and opened my mouth for more.

“Not too much,” Josh gently chastised as he fed me more. After swallowing several mouthfuls I started to almost feel human again. And I was a feeling such pain that I couldn’t even explain it. Except it wasn’t physical pain from the bullet wound. It was overwhelming loss at what I knew would come next. “How are you feeling, Mad?”

“Fine, thanks,” I answered, pulling back from the hand he was running through my hair. “Can you get me Raven, please?”

“Oh... um, sure,” he whispered, turning his head as if I’d struck him. Josh walked out of the room looking so dejected it added to the

guilt eating away in my gut. But I knew in my heart he deserved someone better than me.

“If you’re awake, why does Josh look like someone ran over his puppy?” Raven asked with a raised eyebrow as he eyed me over after walking in the room.

“I need you to find him a new maven,” I answered instead, not turning my gaze away from his as my eyes burned. Raven’s jaw just about hit the floor as he seemed to try and find words. At first he opened and closed his mouth several times like a fish before he found his voice.

“No. That’s not how it’s done in the order and you damn well know it.” His eyes narrowed at me in suspicion as he closed the gap between us. “What’s going through that head of yours, Madden? You don’t want him because he saved you both?”

“That’s not it,” I said, begging him with my eyes to understand. “I can’t protect him. I’ve proven that, and my love for him clouded my judgment, Raven. I should have seen this coming, but I didn’t, and I almost got him killed. I’ll let him go before I lose him.”

“You son of a bitch,” Raven whispered as his hands turned into fists. “This is more than that, Mad, and you fucking know it. You’re being a chickenshit! You are pushing him away because you’re scared you’ll lose him like you did Meghan.”

I turned my head away because the verbal blow was just as painful as if it had been physical. Plus it was partially true. While it wasn’t the main reason, it was *a reason* I was doing this. “Please take care of him, Raven.”

“No, you take care of the man you love. You were lucky enough to find him, now man up and be what he needs.” Before I could even reply he stormed out of the room and slammed the door behind him. I couldn’t just lie there knowing Josh would be back soon to ask me questions I didn’t have the answers to.

Getting out of bed I spoke to the doc as he filled me in on my restrictions and what I needed to do before I left the infirmary. He’d

handed me a bunch of pills and said he's stop by my room later to check on me. As I made my way to my room in that stupid hospital gown my mind kept racing. I wanted desperately to have the blank spots filled in for me.

I remembered being shot and rescued, but how did we get back to Miami? Did the Marines end up being alive or were they in on it with the rebels? And how long had I even been out?

As soon as I was back in my room I climbed into bed with my laptop and pills. I reached over to get something to drink out of my mini-fridge and cried out in pain. The stitches were pulling so hard from that slight movement that I ended up having to slide out of bed and kneel on the floor to get a bottle of water.

Once back in bed and settled, I popped my pain pills first as I booted up the computer. As soon as I loaded I connected to the order's main frame and pulled up the debrief reports. It seemed the Marines had been found dead, unwilling to get involved with the plot. The only people involved were the team that had taken Josh and me out that day.

I also figured out I had been down for a week. The guilt in me brewed even stronger as I knew in my heart Josh had been at my side the whole time. And wasn't I just the biggest douche for sneaking back to my room when he was gone.

After I finished catching up on everything, I turned my laptop off and laid it on the nightstand. The pain pills were wicked strong and I felt myself already needing to sleep. Just as I got snuggled in and closed my eyes I heard a soft knock at the door.

"Mad?" Josh whispered as he opened it up and stuck his head in. I pulled another asshole move and pretended to sleep. He walked over to the bed and sat down next to me. "I wish you would just tell me what's going on, my love."

I didn't answer, knowing he thought he was talking to me while I was sleeping. Josh ran his hand gently over my hip before crawling into bed next to me. He spooned me from behind, and I wanted to cry

in anguish of the knowledge it would be the last time he lay with me like this. Instead I evened out my breathing and didn't move.

"I love you so much." He sniffled as he rubbed his face in my hair. "I won't ever let you go, Madden. I'm sorry for whatever I did to upset you, but you're stuck with me. I know you love me as much as I love you, and I won't walk away from that."

As I drifted off to sleep, his words hurt me worse than the bullet wound. Because it told me I'd have to be a dick to push him away and have him move on. And I didn't want to hurt him. Josh deserved better than me and all my crap. But even more than that, loving each other and working together would get him killed. I would do anything to keep that from happening even if it meant ripping apart our love in the process.

## Chapter 8

Over the weeks of my recovery I kept Josh at arm's length. He wouldn't listen to me when I told him to leave or move on. No matter what I said he wouldn't walk away so I finally just shut down and started ignoring him. It was childish and I hated doing it, but nothing else worked.

After about ten days he finally got the hint and left the room. He didn't come back. I cried for the first time since I'd lost my wife and child. And I kept crying for the rest of my recovery not getting out of bed or caring who came to check on me. I ignored all of them.

When I'd had my last check up the doc had said I was ready to start getting back into my routine slowly. Since I'd been out of the field for so long I knew they wouldn't give me any assignments until I was back in top physical condition. I headed straight to one of the training rooms that had an attached workout room.

Josh was sparring with Finn in the middle of the mats as I walked in. His gaze met mine and in that second's worth of distraction Finn kicked Josh's legs out from under him. The larger man followed Josh down to the mats and pinned him. While Finn had clearly won, he wasn't getting back up, which I found odd.

I felt all the blood leave my face as Finn moved his knee between Josh's legs and spread them so his body would fit. He wrapped Josh's legs around his hips as Finn mashed his mouth down to the man I loved. Josh gasped and went to move his arms, but I didn't wait to see what he did with them. I spun on my heel and left the room.

The tears that burned my eyes I felt in my soul. My chest hurt so bad that it made the gunshot wound seem like a scratch as I stumbled

back to my room. But this was what I wanted, right? I wanted Josh to find someone who could love and protect him the way I couldn't. I knew it was more complicated than that and the pain was from more than Josh moving on.

It was how soon he'd moved on. If Josh had really ever loved me, he wouldn't be making out with Finn on the mats in the training room for anyone to see. And here I'd been torn up inside from pushing Josh away. How fucking stupid was I?

"Madden, wait!" Josh called out just as I stuck the key in the lock to my door. I'd just gotten it open and hurried to get inside as he darted in with me.

"Please just go," I whispered as I stared at anywhere but him. I hadn't closed the door, still holding it open for him. "I'm happy for you and Finn, Josh. You deserve his love. He's a good man."

"There's no me and Finn, Mad," he said softly as he moved towards me. "Finn saw you in the mirrors and decided it was time to give you a taste of your own medicine."

"What?" I asked, my head swinging towards him as I stared at him in confusion.

"You hurt me and he thought it was your turn to hurt. I didn't know what he was doing and I punched him for it."

"I believe you," I said and I did. Josh wasn't a liar. "Finn obviously likes you though... you should go for it with him."

"On one condition," he whispered as he closed the door and invaded my personal space. Josh slid his hands up my chest and used them to hold my face so I had to look at him. "Tell me you don't love me. If you can honestly say that you don't love me anymore and never did, then I'll walk out that door and never bother you again."

I stood there in shock for a minute before I finally recovered. Opening my mouth to say what he needed to hear, I had no voice. I tried and tried, but I couldn't say it. I could not lie to him and tell him I didn't love him.

“That’s what I thought.” He stood on his toes and gently pressed his lips to mine. “I love you, too, Mad. Please stop this and talk to me. Don’t throw away what we have without even telling me the truth of why you’re pushing me away.”

“Because I love you more than anything,” I whispered against his lips before taking a step back. “Don’t you see that, Josh? This isn’t about my lack of love for you, it’s because of my love for you.”

“You’re leaving me because you love me?” He asked, raising an eyebrow and giving me a look as if I’d grown a second or third head. “How does that make sense?”

“I almost got you killed!” I shouted as I threw my hands in the air. “You could have died, and I was so busy burying my cock in your sweet ass I totally fucking missed the fact that the enemy was right in front of us. And then I couldn’t even figure out how to get us out of it! My apprentice of two fucking days saved us while my head was up my ass.”

“That’s not true,” he growled and stormed over to me. He moved faster than I could since I wasn’t anywhere near full strength. With a hard shove to my chest, I stumbled back a few feet and fell on the bed. Josh was on me before I could even recover. He pinned me down with one shoulder as he reached over to the nightstand.

I heard the click around my wrist before I saw the handcuffs. I scrambled to push him off of me, which ended up with me closer to the headboard. He dove on me and snapped the other end of the handcuffs to the headboard.

“Stop this, Josh,” I cried out as my eyes burned. This wouldn’t accomplish anything except dragging out our pain. “Just go and move on.”

“No! I won’t let you push me away.”

“I don’t want you,” I screamed and we both gasped. I didn’t know I had it in me to lie to him like that, but in that moment my panic overrode my feelings for him. Josh stared at me for a moment before slapping me hard across the face.

“Don’t you ever lie to me like that,” he whispered as tears streamed down his cheeks. I grabbed my face with my free hand as my heart broke. “You not only want me but you love me. You’re just scared, and I won’t abandon you when you need me most.”

“I’m sorry, baby,” I cried softly. He wasn’t listening to me. Instead he leaned over and tore my shirt off of me. Next he yanked off my pants before pulling off his own clothes. I gasped at the sight of his body. He was beautiful even when he was full of pain and rage at me. “Don’t do this, Josh.”

“You love me, Madden Forrest. Admit it!”

“No, it won’t help either of us move on.” He shook his head and reached back over to the nightstand and grabbed the lube. I watched in horror as he moved in between my legs and poured cool slick over my traitorous hard cock. Josh rubbed it in as he stared up at me.

“Tell me that you don’t want this or me and I’ll leave, Mad.” Again I couldn’t get my mouth to work. I did want him, more than I wanted anything in my life even if I knew I was wrong for him. “See? You can’t say it because you do.”

“It doesn’t matter, I can’t have you.” I gasped as he moved his hips over mine and lined up my cock with his hole.

“It *does* matter,” he yelled at me as he impaled himself on my cock in one thrust down. We cried out together at the sensations racing through our bodies. My eyes overflowed with tears at the feeling of being home inside of him again. In my heart I knew this is where we belonged, together. Josh leaned forward after a moment, placing his hands on my chest as he panted. “Say the words, my love, my maven.”

“You won’t leave me if I do, and you have to leave me,” I said softly as I reached out with my free hand and cupped his cheek. “You deserve a man that can love and protect you.”

“I deserve the man that does love me,” Josh gasped as he started to move his hips. “What happened was *not* your fault. The patriarch

even said so and you know this. Pushing me away didn't work, Madden. You're stuck with me so stop trying to get rid of me."

"You can't die, Josh. I'd die with you. If living my life without you saves you then so be it. I can't go through the grief of someone I love dying on me again."

"I'm not Meghan," he whispered as he leaned over and kissed me. "You know I'm immortal and can take a hell of a lot before it would ever kill me. But if you keep this up and force us to be over you'll kill us both."

"No. You can move on and find someone who's right for you," I whimpered as he rode my cock. It was hard to think logically when all the blood was in the south half of my body and I wanted everything Josh was giving me. "Someone who won't fail you."

"The only way you've failed me is by denying our love," Josh cried as he moved his hips faster. "You love me, admit it!"

"Yes! Yes I love you more than anything," I yelled, no longer able to deny it as I saw the open hurt and pain on his face. "How can you not hate me?"

"It wasn't your fault, Mad." He leaned over and kissed me as we made love, whispering over and over again that it wasn't my fault. Around the second dozen time he told me it finally started to sink in. No one blamed me but me for what had happened. And I'd been so wrapped up in that blame and guilt I'd almost destroyed everything.

As soon as that weight was lifted off my shoulders I grabbed Josh's cock with my free hand and started stroking him as I thrust up. His eyes went wide as he stared at me with recognition of what had just happened in my head. Seconds later Josh threw back and cried out my name as he came all over my hand and chest. I followed him right over, shouting my love for him to the heavens as I shot my seed inside of him.

"I believe you, and I'm sorry," I whispered minutes later as we were both recovering. Josh lay on my chest like a wet noodle, my cock still inside of him. "I'm so fucking sorry, baby."

“It’s okay, I forgave you as soon as I saw you still loved me in the training room. But we’re going to have some rules before I come back to you officially, my maven.”

“Anything. I’ll do anything, Josh,” I said adamantly as he raised up and braced his hands on my shoulders. We were almost nose to nose as he started laying down the law.

“No more running, Mad.” He informed me and punctuated it with a firm kiss.

“No, I swear it, baby.”

“You will talk to me from now on when something’s bothering you.” Each of his demands were followed with a kiss and he didn’t give the next one until I nodded or gave my agreement. “You will never lie to me ever again.”

“I promise.” That got me an additional kiss.

“You won’t ever try to get rid of me, no matter what happens.”

“Never, baby. You’re all mine.”

“You will ask me to marry you in a very loving and romantic setting.” He kissed my open mouth as I gasped in shock.

“You’d marry me after what I did?” I asked, completely shocked as my heart raced.

“I love you, Mad,” he answered gently as he trailed his fingers down my cheek. “I want you to be my husband, my maven, my everything.”

“Okay, I promise I’ll come up with something good,” I laughed as I hugged him fiercely. “But I have a condition of my own.”

“Sex four times a night even after we’ve been married a decade or so?” Josh giggled in my ear.

“Well, that too,” I drawled as I smacked his ass. “I want us to go through the binding ceremony.”

“Yes, gods, yes,” he whispered as he buried his face in my neck and shook.

“Hey, I didn’t mean to make you cry, baby,” I said gently as I ran my hands over his back in comfort. The binding ceremony was

something soul mates did in the order to not only bind their souls but their magic and gifts to each other. It was the ritual to intertwine our life lines that the Fates gave us together for eternity.

“I’m crying with relief,” Josh sniffled as he wrapped his arms and legs around me. “If you want to do the binding ceremony I know you won’t try to leave me again.”

“No, baby, I won’t ever leave you,” I nodded as I held him back. I started to get frustrated that I couldn’t use my other arm since I was still handcuffed to the bed. “Baby, where’s the key?”

“I’m not telling until I’m sure you won’t change your mind.” I started to laugh, but then I realized he was serious. Fuck! I’d done so much damage and hurt this wonderful man in my arms. I did the only thing I could think of to reassure him.

“I swear on my soul as a Son of Thanatus that if I ever even try to leave you again I will cut off my own dick and gift wrap it for you, Josh McGreggor. My solemn oath binds me to the gods and may they carry out my request if I do not.”

“You didn’t just say that,” Josh gasped as he leaned up and stared down at me. “You know exactly what that oath means, Mad.”

“I do,” I said with a wide smile. It meant if I broke it not only could the gods take away my immortality, but I’d be kicked out of the order. “I mean every word of it, Josh.”

“Fuck, I love you,” he replied with his own smile as he reached over to the nightstand and picked up the key. “It was right here. I just wanted you to realize I wasn’t messing around.”

“Neither was I.” He leaned up and unlocked my wrist. I immediately wrapped my arms around him and rolled us over. Burying my face in his neck we lay there together. “Thank you for not giving up on me, Josh.”

“You’re my soul mate, what else could I do?”

I knew I didn’t deserve Josh or his love, but fuck it. I wasn’t going to give him up or let him get away from me ever. I’d spend the rest of my life loving him and undoing the damage I’d done to our

relationship if that's what it took. But knowing Josh he'd already forgiven me. That's just who he was. He was loving and caring, and I was the luckiest son of a bitch in the world.

\* \* \* \*

Over the next week Josh helped me regain my strength and mobility. And I'm not just talking about the wicked hot sex we kept having. He helped me with weight training, sparring, stretches, and building up my cardio.

But he was holding himself back and I knew why. He was scared I was going to run again. I knew Josh well enough to know that he wouldn't believe that I was truly into this relationship until I took the next step and made the commitment. There were a few times I almost let my surprise slip when I saw that hesitant longing in his eyes.

Every second I wasn't with Josh that week I was off planning on how to not only propose, but our binding ceremony. Raven, Finn, Davin, and even the Patriarch were in on it and helped me to keep the secret. I dipped into my personal savings account to pay for everything to make it the most magical night of our lives.

At the beginning of the next week the Patriarch was finally able to fly into Miami and I knew it was time. Every member of our order at the Miami location was with me in the ballroom waiting for the man I loved.

Glancing around the room I started to worry I'd gone overboard. The entire room was filled with candles and purple/lilac thornless roses. Finn had found out for me that they were Josh's favorite flower. All the Sons of Thanatus were in their deep green ceremonial robes standing around the large ballroom as I stood alone in the center.

"I don't understand why Mad didn't just come get me himself," Josh said as he walked in with Raven. He gasped and froze as he glanced around the ballroom before his eyes landed on me.

“Because I wanted it to be a surprise, my love,” I replied, my voice and hands shaking in fear that he would reject me.

“What’s going on, Mad?” Josh took several hesitant steps toward me as his gaze traveled around the room. “You’re really going to do it, aren’t you?”

“Oh yeah,” I answered with a wide smile. Josh walked the rest of the way until he was standing right in front of me and I could see the tears in his eyes.

“You did all of this for me?” He swept his arms out to gesture to the romantic stage I’d set for tonight.

“I’d do anything for you, baby,” I whispered as I dropped down to one knee and took his hand in mine. “Josh McGregor, I love you more than anyone or anything in this world and the next. Would you do me the greatest honor of becoming my husband?”

“Yes, gods, yes,” he cried out as he tackled me to the floor. “I thought you didn’t want to marry me anymore and changed your mind.”

“No way.” I chuckled as we sat back up. “I was just planning the romantic setting you deserved in front of witnesses. Do you like?”

“It’s the most magical thing I’ve ever seen,” Josh said in between peppering my face with kisses. “And yes, yes, yes, yes, I’ll be your husband even if I’m really going to be the wife.”

“My man is all man,” I purred as I reached into my pocket and pulled out the small jewelry box with the rings I’d gotten. I heard Josh’s sharp intake of breath as I opened it for him to see. Inside there were matching wedding bands that had diamonds placed in the intertwined gold and platinum metals. “Be my everything, Josh.”

“As long as you’ll be mine,” he whispered as I slid the ring on his finger. I nodded like an idiot with a huge smile on my face as he slid the other ring on my finger. “What now? I mean do we have a ceremony? Or the binding ritual?”

“I figured this was as intimate as any wedding ceremony,” I chuckled as we glanced around the room.

“I like it better,” he purred and licked my lips.

“And I asked the Patriarch to be here so we can have the binding ritual if you’re ready?”

“Oh yeah,” Josh moaned quietly as he wiggled his ass against my groin. “We know how much sex in public does it for us.”

“Behave,” I snickered as I smacked his ass lightly. “This isn’t about sex, it’s about our love.”

“Every time I have sex with you it’s making love no matter how kinky it is,” he replied with tears in his eyes. I saw the burning truth as his words sunk in. “Now that we’re married, let’s get bound.”

“How can you make anything sound dirty if you want to?” I snorted as we got to our feet.

“It’s a gift.”

“You’re my gift, Josh,” I whispered as I nuzzled my face into his neck as I wrapped my arms around him from behind.

“Who knew I’d ever have such stylish ice on my finger,” he giggled as he stared at his ring. I also didn’t miss the way he kept pushing his ass back into my groin. “It’s perfect, Mad. Just like you.”

“I’m far from perfect,” I choked out, suddenly overwhelmed with emotion. “But I promise to do everything in my power to be perfect for you.”

“You are,” Josh replied staring up at me with complete love and trust in his eyes. “Let’s get naked and tied together.”

“I asked Davin to stand up for you if that’s okay?” Josh and Davin had become fast friends in his time at the Miami compound and the ceremony required each of us to name a second. In a way it was the same theory as in olden day duels. If something ever happened to me, Raven was promising to take care of Josh in my stead and vice versa with Davin.

“Yeah, I totally would have picked him,” Josh answered with a nod as he scanned the crowd. His gaze locked on his friend’s and he raised his voice. “You totally knew about this, didn’t you? Nice way to give a brother a heads up!”

“Oh please, you would have killed me for ruining the surprise,” Davin snickered. Everyone else started to file out of the ballroom and down to the ritual room under the basement of the house. Raven, the Patriarch, the Eldest, and Davin all stayed behind and walked over toward us. The Eldest was the title given to the head of each compound. Luckily for me it was also my maven, James Mahaffey.

“Glad you finally pulled your head out of your ass and married this fine man,” James said to me as he gave me a bear hug. “There were lots of us who would have willingly called him our own if you didn’t get your shit together.”

“You charmer,” Josh giggled as he went to hug my maven when we broke apart. They had already met several times and became fast friends as well. Then my man turned to the Patriarch. “Thank you for being here. Although I have to admit, you’re like a father to me and the idea of you seeing me have sex is a little weird.”

“You and me both.” Dante Hinder, our Patriarch chuckled as they hugged. “Believe me I’ll be looking at your faces the whole time.”

“You’re a lucky son of a bitch,” Raven whispered in my ear as he clapped me on the back. I smiled and nodded in agreement as we started to make our way to the ritual room.

The main ritual room was over half the size of the entire compound. It was built under the house in the way the catacombs of Rome were done. The symbolism was there to remind us of our ancestors who were persecuted over the centuries and had to keep our ways hidden. It was lit with candles and torches.

There was a large stone altar at the front of the room with a pentagram on the floor under it made out of gemstones. I swallowed loudly as I took Josh’s hand in mine. That did not look like a comfortable place for us to have sex on. Personally I’d only seen the ceremony once in my life, but we were trained as to how the ceremony worked and the words that would be spoken.

“Last chance to run,” Josh hissed in my ear as everyone parted for us as we walked the last ten feet to the altar. I could hear the fear in

his voice and I wasn't sure if it was because of what we were about to do or if he thought I might really run. But I wasn't going anywhere. I loved Josh with everything I had and I'd be damned if I threw away the second chance he gave me to prove it.

## Chapter 9

“I’m not going anywhere without you ever again, baby,” I said firmly as we reached the altar. I spun him in my arms and planted a classic movie style kiss on him. Complete with leaning him over as I molded his body to mine. When we broke apart we were both panting heavily and I could see the lust and love in his eyes.

“Then let’s get naked and bound to each other for eternity.” I nodded at him as he smiled. Pulling him back onto his feet, we stood in front of the altar with our hands interlocked. The Patriarch recited the blessing the Sons of Thanatus gave for our union, stating they recognized us as soul mates. He rubbed warm blessing oil on our foreheads and then we broke apart.

I watched as Raven undressed my man as Davin did me. It was still hard to keep my jealousy under control even though I knew the meaning behind the actions. Raven was showing he would pledge himself to tend to my mate if anything ever happened to me. Starting with preparing him for our union.

As I was ready to growl as my friend slicked up his hands with oil, Josh gave me a wink. And I melted. My hot little man was shaking with excitement as Raven knelt behind Josh and started stretching him for me. I glanced around and looked at my brothers in the order who were here to witness our union. But I couldn’t help but wonder how many of them were loving seeing Josh naked.

My gaze locked on Finn, who looked as if he was having his own issues. Though he wasn’t looking at Josh or me... He was staring at Raven. The desire and love in Finn’s eyes for my friend were so raw

and obvious, Raven would have to be a moron to not see them. But I knew they'd not gotten together, so what was up with that?

I couldn't think about that right now. Right now was about Josh and me. I gasped as I felt Davin reach around me and slick up my cock when I was naked. It wasn't lube like we normally used, it was blessing oil. Again it showed that the order was behind us and condoned our mating.

When we were both ready, I reached for my man and placed my hands on his waist. I gave him a quick kiss as I lifted him up onto the altar. Once he was spread out for me like a feast, I hopped up there myself and moved between his legs.

"I love you," Josh said softly as he spread himself wide for me as I lined up my cock to his hole.

"I love you, too, baby." I pushed into him just enough so that I would stay inside of him for the rest of the preparations. Josh groaned as I slid into his stretched hole. He wrapped his legs around me as we both reached over his head with our left hands.

"Are you both ready?" the Patriarch asked as everyone else moved into positions. He stood at the head of the altar, while Raven and Davin stood on either side of us. James was at the other end, showing that every major supporter of our bonding was there to experience it with us. While kind of creepy to make love to Josh while they were all right there, it proved the solidarity of our union.

The Patriarch bound our left wrists together as he blessed us and released our ingrained gifts to flow into each other. This wasn't just about binding our souls and life lines for eternity, but our magic, gifts, and very essences.

Once we were tied together, we had a slight balancing act as we reached up with our right hands. I glanced down at Josh who was bearing most of my weight to see any signs of discomfort, but all I saw was glee. The Patriarch cut a two inch gash in each of our palms. Then I placed my hand over Josh's heart as he did mine.

“It’s time to pledge yourselves to each other,” he said with a smile. I swallowed loudly as I stared into the eyes of the man I loved.

“I, Madden Forrest, pledge my heart, my soul, and my body to you, Josh McGreggor. I dedicate my entire person to your happiness and well-being. I swear by the gods and goddesses in the heavens above to put your needs, your wants, and your desires above my own for the rest of our days together. I pledge all that I am to you and am now yours for eternity. Your life, happiness, and safety will forever be placed above my own. From this day forward, may our life threads forever be intertwined. Accept my oath and all of me as we bind each other in the ways of our forefathers.”

“I do,” Josh replied with a smile. Then he recited the same words back to me.

“I do,” I sighed as I kissed him. We made love as we stared at each other, trading soft kisses as I felt his soul fill me. I cried out as Josh came and I followed him over. I heard his yell in the background as his magic slammed into me as mine did to him. My hand felt hot on his chest as my own heart started beating even faster.

Several minutes passed before my vision cleared and I was feeling bliss that I’d never lose Madden again. Wait a second? My eyes went wide when I realized I was feeling Josh’s emotions and thoughts.

“I’m not going anywhere, Josh,” I whispered as I leaned down to kiss him again. “You’re all mine now, baby.

“Thank the gods.” Josh groaned and we started to make out passionately, completely oblivious to the onlookers. Moments later I felt our wrists being released and I glanced up that the Patriarch.

“Your hands should be healed as well,” he said softly. “We’ll leave you to your lone coupling in front of the heavens alone.”

“Oh right, I forgot we get to go again,” Josh giggled. I had, too, actually. I gently moved off my man and sat back on my ass, pulling him onto my lap as everyone left us.

“We’ll see you upstairs at the party,” Raven chuckled as he and the other were the last to leave.

“Does it hurt?” I asked Josh when we were alone as I traced my handprint over his heart. It was elevated, almost like a burn that had been singed into his flesh when we mated. That was the reason for the cuts and blood as we made love while touching each other’s hearts.

“No, it actually feels fantastic when you touch it,” he moaned and squirmed on my lap. “Did they keep this part a secret? I didn’t know it would become a new erogenous zone for me.”

“Guess they wanted us to have some surprises,” I chuckled as he ran his hand over mine. I groaned and my cock filled right back up. He wasn’t kidding. Josh touching his handprint on my chest was almost as good as his lips wrapped around my dick.

“I’ve always had some kinky fantasies about doing it on one of the altars,” Josh hissed in my ear. I felt him get hard against my stomach and I wanted to give my baby his deepest desires.

“Oh? And what did those entail?”

“Riding you until you screamed out my name as you came in my ass so hard I couldn’t walk the next day.” He panted as he licked my neck. “Will you let me ride you, Mad?”

“Fuck yeah.” I groaned as I lay down on my back. Josh moved himself so that his hole was lined up on to my cock and impaled himself. I cried out at the sensations as he moved his hands to my chest, his hand matching up with his handprint. I did the same with my right hand as I placed my left one on his hip to help him move.

“I love you so fucking much, Madden.” He moaned as he rode me hard and fast. “Thrust up into your soul mate.”

“Whatever my man wants,” I replied with a wink as I moved my feet flat on the altar. I started thrusting up hard as he moved his hips to meet mine. Suddenly I felt a possessive thrill run through me as I felt Josh’s emotions that it had never been so good with any of his other partners. “No one else, Josh. Not ever! You’re mine forever and I will end anyone who touches you.”

“Fuck, it’s hot when you get all dominant.” He groaned and started moving his hips harder. “Yes, I’m all yours, Mad. Growl for me again, my Greek god.”

“Yes, my husband.” I growled and grabbed his cock with my left hand. I stroked him hard and fast, just the way he liked it. “After the party I’m handcuffing you to our bed and fucking you for the next week.”

“Oh goddess of love, yes.” Josh’s eyes went wide and I knew he was close.

“Come for me, my apprentice,” I panted, knowing he loved when I took charge and reminded him I was his boss. “I want your seed all over me right now!”

“Yes, my maven,” he screamed as he came. I was still milking his gorgeous cock when I fell over into my own climax. We were both still coming when I felt my seed running back out of his hole, still full of my cum from our earlier coupling. “I love it when you brand me from the inside.”

“Me too,” I gasped, needing more air than available from the intense orgasm. Josh slumped over my chest and started giggling. “What’s so funny, baby?”

“I’m married and bound,” he whispered and I was not getting the joke. “I’ve never been so fucking happy in all my life.”

“Me either.” And it was the truth. I was thrilled down to my toes, and I could feel Josh’s happiness as well. We shared a soft kiss before separating and hopping down off the altar.

Minutes later we were taking a quick shower back in our room. And just referring to it as *our* room made me smile. We’d both moved out of our assigned single rooms and into a double room meant for couples. When we were all cleaned up and dried off, we both got dressed in clubbing clothes, but not before the little imp made a show of putting in a large butt plug so he’d be ready for me later.

“I’m never going to worry about you ever having a headache when I want sex, am I?” I whispered in his ear as we walked back into the ballroom.

“Not unless I really do have one,” he laughed and gave me a quick kiss. “Nice party you threw for us.”

“Actually this was all the Patriarch’s doing. He insisted on throwing us a reception,” I replied as we headed over to our group. The candles and flowers were still all over the room, just pushed back off the dance floor.

One of the brothers was playing DJ for the night while several others were helping out behind makeshift bars around the room. Hell, someone even thought to bring out a light party ball for the ceiling that made it even more like a club atmosphere.

“We should have a party once every few months anyways,” Josh said to the group as we joined them. He gestured around the room to where so many of the order were laughing, drinking, dancing, and just plain having fun. “Everyone’s having a blast and blowing off steam. Plus if we invited the local branch of Daughters of Thanatus think of how many might be able to find their soul mates.”

“My man is wicked smart,” I purred as I wrapped my arms around him from behind. “You should tell them about the tracking chip idea too, baby.”

“Oh? You want us to track everyone?” The Patriarch asked, raising an eyebrow.

“Only if we get taken or fall off the grid,” Josh answered with a smile. And I could feel how excited he was that I liked his ideas. “Something that’s not always on, but can be flipped on and GPS located in case of an emergency.”

“That’s actually a good idea,” Finn nodded. “I’ve got some tech contacts that could hook us up for cheap.” He turned to look over at Raven. “They’re actually on the way to Iraq so if you wanted we can stop over by them on our way to talk to my friends next week.”

“I think the idea definitely has possibilities,” the Patriarch said as he looked at Josh like the proud father.

“Cool. Finn, dance with me, big guy,” Josh said as he took our friend’s hand. Finn looked at me with wide eyes and I laughed, giving him a nod that it was fine with me. I would have been more upset that Josh wanted to dance with Finn at our wedding reception if I hadn’t felt Josh’s sadness at his friend’s discomfort. It seemed Finn wasn’t the best at handling groups, and the Patriarch scared the shit out of him.

I watched my man’s moves as the Patriarch and the Eldest moved on to other conversations and groups. Davin went to the bar to get another drink, which left Raven and I.

“So are you getting hitched next?” I leaned in and casually said to my friend.

“What are you talking about? With whom?” Raven asked, his eyebrows shooting towards his hairline in shock.

“Good to know I’m not the only moron when it comes to relationships,” I snickered and shook my head. “Finn, you dipshit. He’s totally all about you, Raven.”

“Shut up,” he snorted and gave me a shove. “He’s confused and overwhelmed being new in the order. He’s not had a chance to make friends yet, that’s why he’s latched onto me. Just like you did when you were new here.”

“Maybe, but I didn’t look at you like I wanted to lick every inch of your naked body,” I chuckled as I watched Josh and Finn. The man in question looked at Raven right then with such heat that I almost felt as if I was burning just standing next to Raven. “Just look at the way he watches you.”

“You really think he wants me?” Raven asked, licking his lips as he returned Finn’s stare.

“Go get him, tiger,” I answered and smacked my friend’s back. Raven gave me a nod and went after his prey. I watched him ask to

cut in to Josh's dance. My man graciously stepped back and then headed towards me.

I watched my hottie husband saunter towards me. He was wearing another pair of low-cut, skintight jeans that showed off his hip bones and ass. God, was he gorgeous. Josh was wearing a light green button up shirt that he left the top and bottom buttons open so that his chest and navel ring were exposed. The shirt didn't even reach the top of his jeans so he was showing even more skin... Skin I planned on exploring with my hands while we danced.

Josh stopped at the edge of the dance floor and crooked a finger at me. I didn't need any more invitation than that. Racing over to him, I saw him run his hands over his body as he licked his lips, watching me intently.

"I'd accuse you of being a tease if I didn't know you'd make good on your taunting when we get back to our room," I said as I pulled him into my arms and made sure he felt my hard on in my jeans.

"Oh, yeah." He purred as he threw his arms around my neck. "We're going to be having lots of hot fun in between opening all of our presents later."

"We got presents?" I was shocked at the idea. I hadn't thought anyone would get us anything.

"According to Finn most of them are gag gifts after rumors of our vigorous and kinky sex life got around the compound. But fuck if I'm complaining at the idea of new toys to use on each other."

"I love our brothers." I groaned as I ran my hands over his firm ass as we danced. "Not as much as I love you."

"I love you just as much, my maven," he whispered as he stood on his toes and kissed me. Josh was the perfect man for me and knew always exactly what I needed even if I didn't know it myself. I was proud to be his husband and share our lives together. I could feel the same contentedness and happiness coming from Josh as we danced all night at our wedding reception. It was the perfect night, and I'd never been so elated someone had said yes to a question I asked them.

\* \* \* \*

A week later Josh had asked the Patriarch to use one of the order's private jets. I had no clue what was going on or where he was taking me until several hours later we pulled up to a familiar graveyard outside of Boston.

"Josh, no. I can't do this with you," I whispered in horror as I stared out the window of the town car he'd ordered for us. I'd wondered now why we'd not just gotten a rental car, but we weren't staying here tonight and Josh would have worried if either of us would have been able to drive after our visit.

"Yes you can, Mad. And I need it too," Josh said gently as he took my hand. He leaned over and gave me a quick kiss on the cheek before almost dragging me out of the car. "Where's Meghan's grave?"

"Over there," I answered so quietly I could barely hear my own voice. "Why are you doing this, Josh?"

"Because I would like her blessing on our marriage and she deserves to know you kept your promise to her to be happy and who you really are."

"You're amazing, Josh," I said in awe of my husband. He was completely right and I'd never thought of it. But not my Josh. Josh was always thinking of my needs and how to be there for me.

"I have my moments," he replied, giving me a quick kiss before letting me lead him over to Meghan's grave. While I hadn't picked out the headstone, it was a thing of beauty. It was black marble with Meghan's name and dates of birth and death etched into it. Under that was *a loving mother and wife who was taken from us too soon.*

"Hey, sweetheart," I said after clearing my throat a few times. Josh gave me a slight nod that it was okay as I swallowed around the lump in my throat. "I miss you so much, Meghan. Josh brought me

here today so I could tell you that I kept my promise to you. We were married last week. I hope that's okay with you."

There was a slight warm breeze which was odd for the cold March weather. Even more, I swear I could smell her perfume.

"She wore Chanel No. 5," Josh whispered and I nodded. I saw a few tears slide down Josh's cheek as he let go of my hand and knelt on her grave, reaching out to touch the headstone. "Hey, Meghan, I'm Josh McGregor. I wish we could have met, I think we would have been great friends. Mad speaks the world of you, and I know I can never replace you in his heart. And I'm cool with that, he's got a big enough heart to love us both.

"I promise you I love him with all of my heart and will take good care of him. I really hope you give your blessing on our marriage and understand why I wanted to come talk to you today."

"Holy shit," I gasped as I felt another breeze and watched it swirl around Josh, blowing his glorious hair all around him. He'd gotten accustomed to letting it hang loose when we were together because he knew I loved it so much. "Thank you, Meghan."

"I'm sorry you were taken from Mad earlier than your time, Meghan," Josh choked out and I knelt next to him and wrapped an arm around his shoulders. "But I know in my heart that you're up in heaven with my parents watching over us and happy that we found each other. We'll come visit again when we're out this way on assignments, but I knew this needed to be a special trip."

"Josh is my soul mate, Meghan," I whispered as I caressed her head stone. "I loved you so much, you were my best friend. But you knew before I did that I was gay and would never truly be myself until I fell in love with a man. Well, I've found that man. And he's wonderful, sweetheart. He even knows how to keep me in line and what's best for me. I hope you're happy for us and know that I'll never stop loving you and our baby."

"She knows, my love," Josh said as he helped us stand. Another breeze blew, stronger, warmer, and more fragrant than the others. And

I knew down to my soul that Josh was right. Meghan knew I loved her, but even more was happy for us. “Bye, Meghan. We’ll see you soon, we won’t forget you.” Then he turned to me with a soft smile. “I’ll wait for you by the car.”

“I love you, Josh,” I replied, giving him a light kiss before he walked off. When I was alone, I turned back to run my hand over the headstone again. “You really would have liked him, Meghan. He’s so amazing and full of life. I know you see everything from heaven, and you know he saved my life a few months ago. And I’m not just talking about our imprisonment in Argentina. Josh saved me from a life of loss and loneliness. He’s a good man. I miss you, Meghan.”

I kissed my fingers and ran it over the headstone before turning and walked towards Josh. He was leaning against the town car with a gentle smile on his face, the wind blowing his hair around him. But oddly, none blew in his face and I knew it was Meghan’s way of showing me that she saw the beauty in my man.

We climbed into the car without a word and headed back to the airport. Josh was right. I needed to visit Meghan with him like we did. It was as if a burden I hadn’t known was even there was lifted off my shoulders. I would always love Meghan, but she was my past and Josh was my future. And for the first time, I realized that was okay.

## **Epilogue**

A month later Josh and I were back in the field and finished a brutal case. We'd decided after our wedding and binding ceremony that we didn't want to open all of our gifts at once. Instead we'd bring one with us each time we were out on assignment. As we got back to our hotel room I knew it was time to bring out the present and have some fun. Josh looked drained and in desperate need of some distraction.

"Why don't I run you a nice hot bath, my apprentice," I whispered in his ear as I started taking off his suit.

"You don't mind?" He asked and I could feel some of the tension slip away from him. "That sounds great right now."

"I think you need to relax, baby." I moved him to sit on the bed while I went into the bathroom and drew him a hot bath with his favorite sea salts. When I was ready I went back to the bed and finished getting him undressed. "You have to remember you're still new to being in the field. It's draining and very stressful. When we finish a case we need to recharge and pamper ourselves."

"I won't fight you on that," Josh snickered as I lifted him up into my arms once he was naked. "Are you going to join me?"

"Not this time," I answered, kissing his sweet lips. "We both know we won't relax if we naked in water together and you need to unwind."

"I love you, Mad."

"I love you too, baby." I lowered him into the tub and dimmed the lights before leaving him to soak. When I was back in the bedroom, I made quick work of getting undressed and hanging up our suits. Then

I pulled back the covers and got into bed with the present and a bottle of lube. While Josh rested and took a hot soak, I got my ass stretched out for him.

I knew it was time for my husband to take my virgin ass. Sure we'd played with toys, but I'd never had Josh inside of me. I was just finishing up when my hot man walked into the bedroom with nothing but a towel around his waist and his long, wet hair swirling around him.

"Well hello there nakie man in my bed," Josh purred as he dropped the towel and sauntered over to the bed. "Is this my reward for being such a good apprentice?"

"That and loving me," I replied as I spread my legs wide for him, showing off my lubed up hole.

"Mad, are you sure?" He gasped as he stared up at me with wide eyes.

"I'm very sure, baby," I answered as I handed him our wedding present. Josh's whole face lit up with a smile as he tore of the wrapping paper. We laughed as he held up dual wrist restraints. I couldn't even count how many handcuffs and restraints we'd already received as presents. "Looks like you'll have to take me and tied us both down."

"With pleasure," Josh growled as he bound up my hands to the headboard. Then he lined up his hard cock to my hole and gently pushed inside of me. I gasped at the feeling. It was very different than the toys we'd used, but much better. "I love you, Mad."

"I love you too, baby," I groaned as he worked his big cock into me. "Jesus, I had no clue what I was missing out on!"

"Glad you like it because, now that I've had you, once won't be enough," he panted and gave one last thrust to bottom out in me. Josh raised his arms and bound himself to the headboard as well as I wrapped my legs around him. It put us almost face to face and all of his weight on me. I fucking loved it.

“Take your husband like no one else has,” I whispered against his lips before kissing him. Josh gently thrust in me, both of us moaning in between kisses. With our hands bound we had to rely solely on our bodies to do the work. It didn’t take long for both of us race to the edge of our climaxes.

“I love you!” Josh screamed as he came inside of me. I watched as his eyes fluttered and the tendons in his neck stretched as he pumped his seed into me. The sight was so erotic that I roared out as my orgasm swarmed me moments later. Just as my climax was ebbing, Josh collapsed on my chest and I felt a pure bliss I’d never experienced before. My husband had filled me with his essence and was still inside of me.

“I love you so much, baby,” I whispered as I undid our hands from the restraints and then hugged him to me. “That was amazing. Thank you for making my first time so beautiful.”

“You’re very, very welcome, my maven, my everything,” he said before kissing me again. I felt his happiness that I’d loved his taking me and that we were truly equals. Josh was my apprentice and my everything, and I loved him more than words could ever explain. We lay there for a long time, wrapped around each other just content to be. And it was exactly how I knew we’d spend the next several centuries, always together.

**THE END**

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joyee Flynn grew up in Chicago living in the same house all her life until she left for college. She loves to get lost in fantasy that only books could bring. She kept writing, short stories, romance, mystical, and of course adding in hot cowboys any chance she could. Her wide interest in reading was reflected in her writings. Currently Joyee lives with her dog, Marius, named after a vampire from Ann Rice's *Interview with the Vampire* series. She dreams of one day living out in Montana, enough land to have a few horses, and find a couple of cowboys of her own.

A lover of men, Joyee's all about them in any form in her books. Vampire, werewolf, military, doesn't matter at all as long as they are hot, hard, and sex fiends!

### ***Also by Joyee Flynn***

Ménage Amour: North American Dragon 1: *Dragon Mine*  
Ménage Amour: North American Dragon 2: *Dragon Ours*  
Siren Classic: Marius Brothers 1: *Micah*  
Siren Classic: Marius Brothers 2: *Remus*  
Siren Classic: Marius Brothers 3: *Stefan*  
Siren Classic: Marius Brothers 4: *Victor*  
Ménage Amour: The O'Hagan Way 1: *A Dillon Sandwich*  
Ménage Amour: The O'Hagan Way 2: *A Caleb Footlong*  
Ménage Amour: Purrfect Mates 1: *Here Kitty, Kitty*  
Ménage Amour: Purrfect Mates 2: *My Little Kitty*  
Ménage Amour: Purrfect Mates 3: *Our Sexy Tiger*  
Siren Classic: Hiding Hounds 1: *Sheriff Found*  
Ménage Amour: Resistant Omegas 1: *Tristan*

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