

MELLIE GEORGE

ROGUE

BAD BLOODED REBEL SERIES #2

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By Mellie George

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The Author acknowledges referencing the following people, places, music, bands, sports teams, movies, and all that noise: Oprah, Christina Perri, Twilight, Pizza King, Dr. Phil, and Call Of Duty.

This one is again dedicated to my loyal readers...thank you for embracing Ryder and Everleigh and loving the beginning of their story!

To Dawn, Sam, Leanne, Tiffanie, and Fiona...you sure know how to make a girl feel loved. Xoxo!

Table of Contents

[Chapter 1](#)

[Chapter 2](#)

[Chapter 3](#)

[Chapter 4](#)

[Chapter 5](#)

[Chapter 6](#)

[Chapter 7](#)

[Chapter 8](#)

[Scott](#)

[Acknowledgments](#)

[Soundtrack](#)

Chapter 1

Ryder

“What do you mean, they aren’t here?” I shouted furiously. “We literally sped all the way from Indiana to fucking get here on time, and those douche bags aren’t even here?” I walked across the recording studio and angrily kicked a chair. “This is bullshit!” Stanley and Rick Isaacs, two brothers that owed our label Bulldoze Records, had called our manager Steve Roberts and demanded

that me and my band mates Kris Engle, Beau Cavanaugh, and Jude Miller come back to our studio in Cincinnati. They were demanding we record the five remaining songs for our upcoming album. We still had a few months before the label actually needed the record to be finished but Stanley and Rick were just being dicks. This wasn't about the music...this was about Everleigh.

Two days ago, I had taken a chance and drove two hours from my hometown of Cincinnati, Ohio to find Everleigh Stone, a beautiful brown eyed bombshell I'd met backstage at the last stop on our tour. She had captivated me in a way no girl ever had and after three months of thinking of her day and night, I

drove two hours to Muncie, Indiana where she lived to find her. She was less than thrilled to see me at first but after hanging out in my hotel room for a few hours (which unfortunately was nothing more sexual than just kissing), I was finally able to break down some of the walls she'd put up and she'd thankfully given me a chance.

Of course, with fame comes paparazzi and cameras. Within a few hours of being in Muncie the press started to swoop in and suddenly my relationship with Everleigh had been a hot topic in the music industry. Because of this the band was now getting more attention than it had in the last three months since our tour ended, so Stanley

and Rick saw the publicity as an opportunity. They decided to bust our asses and make us put out the album earlier than we wanted to. It didn't matter if the record was complete shit. They wanted to "strike while the iron was hot" and pad their pockets in the process. Dicks.

After dragging us back here I was more than a little pissed that the fuckers weren't at the studio like they said they would be. This was bullshit. I shouldn't have left Everleigh...she needed me. Her father, Max, was dying of cancer and I felt like I had abandoned her when she needed me the most. My own father had succumbed to cancer when I was twenty years old and after seeing how

sick Max was I knew his time was short.

“Calm down, dude,” Jude said, placing a warm hand on my shoulder. “Even if they don’t get here we’ll get this hammered out in no time. We’ll get it done.”

“Listen, if need be, you can just record your vocals and we’ll do the rest,” Kris said sincerely. “If Everleigh calls you, you need to go.”

I ran my hands through my hair and pulled at it impatiently. I needed to be with her and not just because Max was dying. Everleigh had trusted me enough to let me get a little peek at her soft sexy body and now that I’d gotten a taste of everything she had to offer I was dying for more. I didn’t want to rush her but

my dick was getting hard just at the memory of feeling her slick folds around my fingers, her inner walls clenching as she came. Damn it...why the fuck did I come back here?

“Are you going to be able to make it through this, man?” Jude asked, sitting down on a stool and plucking a few strings on his bass guitar. “I mean, we were all there when Alan passed away and then again when Rose died. You were a wreck.”

“Well, of course I was. They were my parents, you dick,” I snapped. “Besides, this isn’t about me, Jude. It’s about Everleigh.”

“Sorry,” Jude said after Kris shot him a glare from behind his drum kit.

“We’re just worried about you, bro. We don’t want to see you fall off the deep end again by reliving their deaths when Everleigh’s old man passes away.”

I knew he was being sincere and that he cared about me like a brother but I had to admit his concern was irritating me at the moment. All I could think about was getting this recording finished and getting back to my girl. “I’ll be fine, okay? I just want to get this shit over with. Fuck Stanley and Rick. We’re doing this shit without them. Where the hell is Beau?” I asked.

“I think he stepped out to take a call,” Kris said. “He’ll be back in a second. Just chill, dude.”

At that moment, the door to the

recording booth opened and in walked Steve. “Hey boys,” he said. “Glad you all made it.” Steve Roberts was a slightly pudgy middle aged man that still tried to look younger than he was by wearing a leather jacket and spiking up his salt and pepper colored hair. He was a nice guy but had put up with a lot of shit from us over the years.

“Well, it’s about God damned time one of you assholes shows up!” I snapped at him. “Where the hell are Dumb and Dumber?”

“They just messaged me and said they had to fly to New York tonight,” Steve said, a worried expression on his face.

“What?” I screamed, kicking over

a stool. “You mean to tell me those cock suckers forced us to come back here and they didn’t even bother to fucking show up?”

Kris stood up from behind his drum kit and walked over to me, his hands raised. “Ryder, calm down man. It isn’t Steve’s fault. He’s under their thumb as much as we are.”

“I don’t give a fuck! This could have waited and you know it, Steve! Why can’t you for once stand up for us and get shit done?”

Steve looked hurt for a split second before he got angry. “Look here, you little punk, I have been standing up for you for more than ten years and trust me, it hasn’t been easy. I’ve put up with

your drinking, partying, and your endless string of whores night after night and I never complained once. I go without sleeping, eating, and seeing my family to help you all because it's my job and I love you boys. Don't you dare stand there and say I don't defend you to the death, Ryder, because believe me when I say, I do," he snapped.

I took ten deep breaths to try and calm myself down. I sighed. "Look, I'm sorry man, all right? I'm just anxious. We shouldn't have been dragged back here right now because of-"

"Because of Everleigh. I know," he said, the corner of his mouth lifting into a smile. "I've seen the pictures on TV. She's pretty cute."

“She’s fucking beautiful,” I corrected.

“Tell me about her. What’s so special about her that made the ultimate bachelor like you take a second look?” Steve asked.

I smiled my first genuine smile since leaving Indiana a few hours ago. “She’s just...I can’t describe it. She’s so beautiful it hurts to look at her and she doesn’t even know it. She’s honest, sincere, a hard worker, and she loves her Dad.”

“Have you met him yet?” Steve asked, grinning.

My smile quickly turned down into a frown. “Actually I have. Max is a really great guy.”

“Okay...then why do you look bummed out?” he asked.

“Her dad has cancer,” Kris said softly. “It’s not looking good.”

Steve’s eyes darted from Kris’s to mine in an instant. “Oh, Ryder, I’m sorry. How did you handle seeing him?”

I rolled my eyes. “Why does everyone think I can’t handle this? My dad’s gone and nothing is going to change that.”

“We know, but we also know how bad you slid off the rails when he died. You were even worse when your mom passed on too. You fucked anything that moved and nearly drank yourself to death. We are just worried that watching her dad die will send you into a tailspin

again,” Jude said, and for the first time in a while he looked genuinely worried about me.

“Are you really going to sit there and judge *me* for sleeping with too many women, Jude? Really?” I growled, and he huffed. “Look, you guys, I’m fine. I’m not some punk ass kid anymore, so don’t think I will break down when Max passes away. I’ve been through this and I know what to expect. However, Everleigh hasn’t and she’s going to need someone there who lo...uh, cares about her,” I said, catching myself before I said I loved her. I know that Kris, Steve, and Jude all picked up on my slip by the way they looked at each other but thankfully they had enough sense to keep

it to themselves.

Before anyone else could say anything, Beau came walking into the recording booth, his face full of concern. My heart jumped. “Beau? What’s up man?” Kris asked.

“I just got off the phone with Danni,” he said, looking straight at me.

“Just spit it out, man,” I said and my palms were starting to sweat.

He blew out a breath and said, “It’s Everleigh’s dad. I guess the nurse found him bleeding from his mouth and nose and they don’t think he’s gonna hang on much longer.”

Panic shot through me. “Fuck! I’m leaving. Now,” I said, looking around for my jacket and the keys to my

Escalade.

“Ryder, you can’t drive back to Indiana alone like this. I’ll go with you,” Beau said.

“We’ll all go. Fuck those two shitheads,” Jude chimed in. “We can have a couple of guys load our shit up and bring it to Indiana and we can record there.”

“That sounds like a plan. I’ll take care of everything guys. You all go,” Steve said, clapping me hard on the back.

“Why didn’t Everleigh call me?” I asked Beau, my head snapping back and forth in search of my jacket.

“Well, she’s a little preoccupied right now, Ryder,” he said.

“I understand that but Danni could have at least called my phone and let me know what was going on.” He looked like there was something he didn’t want to tell me and I was starting to panic. “Beau, what is it? Did he already die?” I asked, a lump forming in my throat.

He shook his head. “No not yet. It’s just...aw, fuck. Everleigh told her not to tell you.”

“She did what?” I asked, feeling as if I’d punched in the gut. “How could she not want me there?”

“I don’t know man. She’s a pretty selfless girl, Ryder. Maybe she just wanted to grieve alone, or maybe she didn’t want to burden you with her problems when you have problems of

your own.”

“Well, my problems don’t mean shit right now. Putting out a rushed album to please a couple of rich pricks doesn’t concern me at all when Everleigh is going through something like this. Where the fuck are my keys?” I shouted, looking around the room frantically.

“Calm down, man. Here,” Jude said, tossing me my jacket. “Keys are in your pocket.”

“All right, I’m leaving,” I said, sliding into my jacket and heading for the door.

“Wait, Ryder. Let one of us ride with you,” Beau said. “You shouldn’t drive alone on an icy highway when

you're panicked like this."

"I'll go," Kris offered. "The rest of you guys can go in the SUV with John."

Everyone nodded. "Whatever. Let's go," I yelled, and Kris followed behind me as I opened the door and heard Steve call out a goodbye.

Two long hours later, we had just reached the outskirts of Muncie and I was trying not to get pulled over as I sped to Everleigh's house. She lived on the east side of town and we were only about five minutes from her home. "Hey man, you all right?" Kris asked.

"I'm fine," I lied, as my stomach

twisted in knots. I knew what was coming and I would have given everything I had to keep Everleigh from feeling what I knew she was about to feel.

“Ryder, it’s going to be okay. Just help her get through this. She’s going to need you. She’s probably at one point going to try to push you away but you just have to be there for her any way she needs you to be,” he said.

I snorted out a laugh. “Thanks, Oprah,” I said.

“I’m serious. Just think about what I said, okay?” he asked as I turned down the road to her house.

“Yeah, all right. Hey listen, in case I don’t say it later, thanks for

coming with me. It means a lot that you guys are behind me in this and not telling me I'm crazy for following this girl here," I said.

"Hey, I've followed you into worse shit than this. We're brothers, and we'll always have your back," he said, and we bumped fists.

"Thanks, man." A few minutes later, we were at Everleigh's house and I pulled in the driveway. Someone must have tipped the press that we'd gone back to Cincinnati today and it looked like the reporters had followed. I knew that they would find out we came back eventually, but thankfully we'd gotten a head start on them and had some time alone to deal with this.

Kris and I got out of the Escalade and quickly jogged up to the front door. I knocked several times and after waiting for a few moments in the frigid

December air the front door opened.

“Ryder?” said Trish, Max’s live in nurse. “What are you doing back already? I thought you went home.”

“Where is she?” I asked.

Trish nodded sadly. “In his room,” she said, and stepped aside to let me and Kris inside. I immediately went down the hall past a puffy-eyed Danni to the room I had carried Max into last night and knocked gently on the door.

“Come in,” a tiny voice squeaked out. My heart tightened in my chest as I opened the door. It was dark inside

except for a tiny lamp that was on at Max's bedside. I took in the sight of Max lying on his bed, near death, and Everleigh's head down over his hand, sobbing softly. I tried to ignore the burn in my eyes and the tightness in my chest.

"Everleigh?" I asked quietly.

Her head snapped up and when she saw me, her eyes widened. "R-Ryder? What are you doing here?" she asked with surprise.

"Where else would I be?" I said, taking a step closer to her.

"How did you know?" she sniffed, her eyes swollen from crying.

"Danni called Beau," I admitted. "Is it okay that I'm here?"

"You didn't need to come, Ryder.

I'm fine," she lied, turning her head back toward Max.

"Everleigh..."

"I don't want you to see this. I care about you and I don't want you to go through this again," she said.

I took a few steps until I was beside the bed. I knelt down next to her and swept her long dark hair away from her tear stained face. "Everleigh, I'm glad Danni called. I care about you too and I refuse to let you go through this alone."

"I'm not alone. I have Danni and Trish."

"You have me too, Everleigh. You also have Jude, Kris, and Beau. They came up too because they already care

about you as much as I do.”

She let out a small sob. “You all didn’t have to come. You’re going to be in trouble with your record label now because of me.”

“I don’t care. Those assholes weren’t even there when we got back to Cincinnati. Our manager Steve is loading up our studio as we speak and he’s shipping our things here so we can record our album in Indiana. Those douche bags will get their record and I will be right where I need to be. Here with you,” I said.

“Ryder...”

“Don’t try to get rid of me because I’m not leaving your side in this gorgeous,” I said, wrapping my arm

around her shoulders and pulling her to me.

She grew quiet as tears steadily fell down her cheeks. I just sat there and held her while she cried. I still hadn't looked directly at Max...as much as I hated to admit it to myself I was scared to see him. I just needed a few moments to collect myself before I looked. I didn't have much time however because I suddenly felt a cold, clammy hand brush mine. "Well, hey there, son," Max croaked.

I took a deep shaky breath and looked up at him. When I met his eyes, the lump in my throat started to choke me. "Hey Max. How are you doing?" I whispered, trying to clear my throat.

“Glad to see you with my Evie girl. She’s going to need you,” he said, straining to speak above a whisper.

Everleigh openly sobbed as I squeezed his frail hand. “There’s nowhere in the world I’d rather be,” I said.

“That’s good,” he said. “Promise me something?”

“Anything,” I answered.

“Take care of her, son,” he whispered. At that moment, I couldn’t stop the emotions anymore and I felt two fat tears fall down my cheeks. They were the first tears I’d cried in the five years since I lost my mom.

“I will. I promise,” I said, my voice cracking.

“Thank you,” he said, and closed his eyes. I started to think the worst but I saw that he was still breathing and relief washed through me for one small moment.

I gripped Everleigh tighter in my arms and kissed her hair. She still smelled like warm vanilla...the smell was soothing to me. She looked up at me and wiped the tears from my eyes with her free hand. I kissed her fingertips and tasted my tears on them. I had barely blinked when I felt her lips on my cheek. She darted her tongue across my stubble and I asked, “What are you doing?”

“Now I’m kissing your tears away,” she whispered. I gritted my jaw tight and pressed my forehead to hers.

I felt Max squeeze my hand and my head shot up. He weakly nudged my hand over to Everleigh's and urged me to take her hand. Once I did, I felt his cold hand cover ours and he whispered through ragged breaths, "Take care of each other. At the end of it all, love is the most important thing. I love you, Evie girl, and I'm so proud of you."

She started to shake and I held on as hard as I could. "I love you too, Daddy. So much," she cried.

His eyes flicked to mine and he barely said, "Take care of my girl, son. Don't let me down." He took a few more ragged breaths, and then suddenly, he was still. Max was gone.

I blinked back more tears and

quickly tore my eyes away from him and over to Everleigh, who was sobbing hysterically and shaking his hand as if to wake him. “Daddy? Daddy, wake up! Please, don’t go, I’m not ready to say goodbye! Daddy, please come back!” she cried, shaking violently. I slid my hand out from under his cold one and wrapped both my arms around her to try and calm her. I ran my hands along her hair as she cried and cried, begging him not to go. It took all the strength in me not to break down right along with her. I wish I had better prepared myself for this because in that moment I felt like that scared twenty year old kid that lost his dad all over again.

I held Everleigh in my arms for

what felt like an eternity as she grieved over the loss of the first man she ever loved. I knew there were no words I could say to comfort her so I just held her and let her cry. I don't know how long we stayed like that because before I knew it, Max's bedroom door opened and Trish came in, her eyes bloodshot and red. She gave me a pleading look and I nodded. I needed to get Everleigh out of here so they could get him ready to move to the funeral home. I leaned in and whispered in her ear, "Everleigh, we need to step out so Trish can take care of him."

She shook her head. "No, I'm not leaving him!"

"They're just going to get him

ready, sweetie,” I said, rubbing her back.

She looked up at me with sad eyes and I nearly broke down looking into them. “I can’t let go yet.”

I wiped a tear from her cheek just as a fresh one fell. “He already has, Everleigh. Now you need to,” I said, trying to soothe her as much as possible.

I looked into her brown eyes, pleading with her silently. She looked from me to Max and started crying hard again. Suddenly, she stood up and leaned over his still body. Bending down to his face, she kissed his cheek one last time and said, “I’ll love you forever, Daddy,” and she stood up and stepped away from his bed.

She began to reluctantly move to the door and as I followed her out, I looked back at him one last time and said, “I won’t let you down, Max.”

Chapter 2

Everleigh

The next four days went by in a blur. The day after Daddy passed away, we were at the funeral home and I did the best I could to make his funeral arrangements. Ryder had been at my side the entire time, involving himself in every last detail of the service. I should have been offended that a virtual stranger had shown up and taken over my dad's funeral, but I wasn't. Planning

a funeral is a hard thing to do, but to try and do it all alone was unbearable. When he saw how overwhelmed I was, Ryder stepped in and helped with every single detail, right down to the music and what Daddy would be buried in.

He'd pretty much moved in temporarily at home too, keeping a constant eye on me and attending to my every need. He made sure I ate and showered (he jokingly offered to give me one himself to try and make me smile). He also slept in my bed, holding me close, which was actually very comforting. He tried to sleep on the couch the night that Daddy died, but I felt scared and alone so when I begged him to come in and sleep in my room, he

didn't hesitate.

It was now Thursday...the day of the funeral. Sadly enough, it was also New Year's Eve. Everyone should have been getting ready to celebrate and countdown to the New Year but instead we were all gathering to say goodbye to my father. After I had dressed in my best black dress and pinned my hair up, Ryder had made me choke down a small amount of breakfast before taking me to the funeral home. As we left my house, just as expected, there were cameras everywhere again. Even though they were annoying and I really wish they would go away, they surprisingly kept their distance and took long range shots of us so they weren't too close. I guess

sometimes the press can have respect for the dead.

We made it to the funeral home and Ryder and I were quickly ushered inside a back entrance by John. Once we were inside, he took my coat and hung it on a hanger. As he shrugged out of his jacket, I noticed for the first time that he was wearing a suit. It was a sharp black Armani suit and looked like it had been tailored to mold perfectly to his tall muscular frame. He looked absolutely gorgeous. I looked at him and for the first time in four days, I smiled. His eyes caught mine. “What is it?”

“You look good in a suit, rock star,” I said, and he grinned at me.

“You don’t look so bad yourself,

gorgeous.”

I smiled again. “Listen, before we go in there I just want to say thank you.”

“For what?” he asked.

“For everything. For helping arrange Daddy’s funeral when I was incoherent, for taking care of me, for staying with me every night so I could sleep...just everything. I’m very grateful for you, Ryder Matthews.”

He smiled a sad smile at me.

“Thank you for letting me do all of those things. I am glad you let me help out.”

I moved in close and hugged him tightly around his torso. “I’m glad you wanted to.” We stayed like that for a few moments before the back door opened again and Beau and Danni rushed inside

out of the cold air. “Hey Danni,” I said, stepping away from Ryder and hugging her.

“Hey Ev, how are you holding up?” she asked.

I shrugged. “As well as can be expected, I guess.” As she took off her coat, I stepped over to Beau. “Thank you for coming, Beau. I know you didn’t know my dad, but-”

“No, I didn’t unfortunately. However, I do know you and I am so sorry to see you go through this. I know how much this hurts you...we’ve all been through it before. If there is anything you need, anything at all, you can ask us, okay?” he said.

Tears pricked at my eyes. What

did I do to deserve such a wonderful group of friends as these guys? I leaned in and gave him a hug. “Thank you Beau. So much,” I said, sniffing. I pulled away and wiped his suit where my makeup had left a stain. “Oh, I’m sorry.”

He smiled and waved his hand.

“Don’t worry about it.”

Ryder took my hand and squeezed.

“Are you ready to see him one last time?”

I took a deep breath and nodded.

“I’m ready,” I lied. I wasn’t ready to say goodbye to my dad at all, but I really didn’t have a choice. He was already gone. Ryder’s hand never left mine as we walked down the hall toward the main room.

When we reached the doors, a man I think I remembered from planning the service gave his condolences and handed me a program before we walked into the chapel. When we did, I gasped in shock.

The chapel was filled to the nines with flowers...there had to be over a thousand flowers here of every variety. There were beautiful framed pictures of Daddy in different stages of his life set up on portrait stands all over the room. I looked to the right and I saw Daddy's old Army uniform hanging on a bust next to his casket and it looked like it had been cleaned and pressed with the utmost care. When my eyes settled on his casket, I began to cry hard.

I wasn't only crying tears over seeing my wonderful, loving father lying there, but over the casket itself. It was breathtaking. It was a lush mahogany casket that was trimmed in what looked like solid gold, and it had a soft satin ivory colored interior. One thing I did know for sure through all of this was that Daddy's life insurance didn't cover any of what I was looking at. I couldn't stop the tears from falling as I looked up at Ryder. "Did...did you do all of this?"

Ryder shrugged his shoulders. "It's no big deal."

"It's a *v-v-very* big deal," I choked out, barely able to speak.

He looked at me sheepishly. "I hope you aren't upset but I just wanted

the man you loved and worshipped growing up to have a proper send off. Are you mad?”

I shook my head and fell into his chest. “No, I’m not mad. This is so beautiful, Ryder. I can’t believe you did all of this for him. You are amazing,” I cried, and he wrapped his arms around me tightly.

We took our seats up front as more and more people started to file into the chapel. The service was beautiful and everything was perfect down to the last detail. Ryder even got the music right, choosing my dad’s all time favorite song, “Fire and Rain” by James Taylor, to be played as we left the chapel and headed to the gravesite. Ryder held onto

me tightly as my dad was lowered into the ground, rubbing my arms quickly to not only keep me warm but to keep me from losing it as I watched my dad slip away from me.

An hour later, we were back at my house and it was quickly packed so tight with people wanting to pay their respects that it was hard to move. I had ducked into the living room and had taken a seat on the couch closest to the window and just watched the snow falling outside in beautiful fluffy flakes. I hadn't really spoken to many people and it was nice to just have a quiet minute to

myself. I didn't realize anyone had sat down until I felt the couch dip down beside me. "Hey gorgeous, I made you some tea," Ryder said, placing a hot glass of tea on a dish on the coffee table.

I turned to him and smiled. "Thank you," I said.

"What are you doing all alone over here?" he asked me, wrapping his arm around me and pulling me into his chest.

"I'm just sitting here watching the snow fall. It's beautiful, isn't it?" I asked, my eyes misting.

"It's very beautiful," he said, kissing my forehead. "Can I make you something to eat?"

I shook my head. "No, I'm not

really hungry just yet. Thank you though.”

“Let me know,” he said, and I nodded. At that moment, I looked up and saw Kris walking through the living room holding hands with a very beautiful brunette. “Hi Kris,” I said, standing up and giving him a hug.

“Hey Everleigh. How are you doing, sweetheart?”

“I’m doing okay, I guess. Thank you for being here.”

“I wouldn’t have missed it,” he said. “Everleigh, I’d like to introduce you to my fiancée, Jessica Monroe. Jessie, this Everleigh Stone.”

I shook hands with Jessie and was stunned when she leaned in and kissed

my cheek. "It's so nice to finally meet you, Everleigh. I just wish it could have been under better circumstances."

I nodded. "Thank you, Jessie. I appreciate you being here."

"Oh, it's no trouble. Any friend of Ryder's is a friend of mine, especially one as sweet as you. I've been hoping he'd find someone to make him happy for a while," she said, winking at him.

"Have you all known each other long?" I asked her.

She nodded. "We all grew up together in Cincinnati. I've known these chuckleheads since I was in kindergarten."

I smiled at her. "That's nice that you all stayed friends for so long. It's

been that way for Danni and me too. She's been my best friend since preschool."

"Beau's new girl...yes I met her too and she's a doll. Looks like my guys got lucky meeting the two of you," she said, smiling an almost motherly smile. I could tell that she loved these guys with her whole heart and if she approved of me and Danni that already meant the world to me. "Now we just need to get Jude to settle down."

We all looked at each other for the briefest of moments and she snorted out a laugh. "Good luck with that, Jessie," Ryder said, and he leaned in and kissed her cheek. "Seriously, thanks for coming."

“No problem,” she said, smiling at him.

“Listen, we are going head back to the hotel, but we just wanted to pay our respects and say goodbye before we left,” Kris said to me.

I wrapped my arms around him and gave him a hug. “Thank you again for coming, Kris. You too Jessie,” I said, moving from Kris to hug her as well.

“You’re welcome, Everleigh. Listen, once you’re feeling up to it, can we have lunch sometime? You, me, and Danni?”

“Really?” I asked, smiling slightly.

“Of course. It will be so nice to

have some girl talk after being around all these guys for years,” she said, smiling.

“That sounds really nice, actually.”

“Great! Get my number from Ryder and just text me when you feel better, okay?” she asked, giving me one last hug.

“I will, I promise,” I replied.
“Take care, you two.”

Ryder gave my shoulders a quick shake. “I’m going to walk them out. Will you be okay until I get back?” he asked me.

I smiled softly at him. “I will be fine. Go with your friends,” I said.

He put his hands on my face and

kissed the tip of my nose softly. "I'll be right back, gorgeous," he said.

"No rush, rock star," I said, and I watched him follow Kris and Jessie out of the living room through the crowd of people.

I was just about to sit back down on the couch and take a drink of my tea when I felt a hand graze my neck and twirl a piece of my hair that had fallen down. "Hey baby girl," said a voice that sent chills down my spine.

I flinched away and turned to face the man that had destroyed my confidence. "What the hell are you doing here, Scott?"

"Just paying my respects," he said, a wicked grin on his face. I felt sick to

my stomach by the sight of him. He was dressed in a black suit and had his dirty blonde hair slicked back. I guess he was cute in the traditional sense but now that I knew what a bastard he actually was it made my skin crawl to look at him.

“My dad hated you and he’d have a fucking fit if he knew you were here. Get out,” I said.

“Well, Daddy’s dead now so what he doesn’t know won’t hurt him, now will it?”

I gasped sharply and slapped him across the face. “Get out of my house *now*, Scott!” I screamed, hot angry tears pouring from my eyes.

“Temper, temper, Everleigh. I see that piece of scum rock singer is rubbing

off on you in a bad way. Tell me, how's he been enjoying my sloppy seconds?" he sneered.

Before I could say anything else, Scott was jerked away from me with full force. "What the hell did you just say to her?" Jude growled. Beau was standing behind him and John was on the right.

Scott smiled at him. "Ah, the famous bass player. Your boy must be slumming it to fuck a girl like that one. Trust me, she's not that great. Strung my ass along for months before she gave it up and even then it was fucking terrible. She must be a little better at it now since she's with a sex fiend like Ryder Matthews. Maybe I overlooked something the first time," he said,

flashing a cocky smile. “You want to go find a closet and let me see if I was wrong?”

Jude’s eyes flared with rage and he charged at Scott, pressing him against the wall with his muscular forearm at Scott’s throat. “Get the fuck out of this house now before you leave here in a body bag, you got it dick?”

Beau pulled at Jude’s arm and he reluctantly let Scott go. He still had a smug look on his face and was trying to take a step toward me when Beau blocked his path. “Walk away, asshole. This time it’s just a shove against the wall. Next time things are going to get bloody,” Beau said, giving him a hard shove.

Jude narrowed his eyes at Scott.

“If you so much as talk to my little sister again, I can assure you no one will ever find your body. Get the fuck out now,” he said. Even though the situation was tense and I wanted nothing more than for Scott to leave, my heart warmed a little to hear Jude call me his ‘little sister’.

John grabbed Scott’s shirt tightly and said, “Outside, now.”

“I’m going to make sure this asshole leaves,” Beau said, giving me a slight nod. As they led Scott out the living room, he turned his face to me one last time and smiled an arrogant smile and flicked his tongue at me. I felt my skin start to crawl and bile start to rise in my throat.

As soon as Scott was gone, Jude came to me and wrapped his arm protectively around my shoulders. “You okay, Everleigh?” he asked.

I felt tears stinging at my eyes again and I shrugged my shoulders. “Thanks for that Jude. I can’t believe he had the nerve to show his face here.”

“So, I take it that was an ex boyfriend of yours?” he asked, a playful smile on his face. “No offense, kid, but that guy is a total douche.”

I scoffed. “I know. I don’t know what I ever saw in him. I am just glad that Ryder wasn’t here for that. That’s the last thing he needs.”

Jude chuckled and raised his eyebrows. “The last thing *he* needs?”

Everleigh, you are the one that just lost your dad. You shouldn't have had to deal with that prick. I promise we'll make sure he stays away from you from now on, okay?"

I nodded and wrapped my arms around Jude's stocky form. "Thank you so much," I said, and he hugged me back. "So, did you really just call me your little sister?"

"Of course I did."

"Why?" I asked him.

He smiled and kissed the top of my head. "Because you're family now," he said, matter-of-factly. More tears fall down my cheeks as I hugged onto my protector for a few moments.

Ryder came back into the living

room, wiping fluffy white snowflakes out of his hair. “Hey, who was that guy that John was dragging out of here just now?” he asked. As soon as his face landed on me and Jude, his eyes widened slightly. “What the hell’s going on?”

I pulled away from Jude and walked to him. “Nothing.”

“This doesn’t look like nothing. What the hell did I miss?” he asked.

“It was nothing, Ryder. Just forget it.”

“I leave for five minutes and I see John dragging someone out of the house into the snow and when I come back inside Jude has you in his arms rubbing your back,” he said, staring at Jude.

“Ryder, it’s nothing, I swear,” I said.

Jude shook his head and sighed. “It was her ex boyfriend. Some dude named Scott.”

I turned to him and nudged his shoulder. “Jude!”

“Hey, sorry, but Ryder needed to know. I came in the living room and heard him saying some shit to Everleigh, so I roughed him up a little bit and John made him leave,” Jude said.

I groaned and flopped down on the couch. “What the hell did he say?” Ryder asked Jude, but he was looking at me.

“Look, it’s not important. The point is that I threatened to kick his ass

and he's been told to stay the fuck away from her. Just let it go for now, man, and be here for your girl," Jude said, clapping him on the shoulder and giving him a shake. "I'm going to head out too. We're here for you, Everleigh, okay?" he said, looking at me. My heart swelled with love for Jude in that moment...I had always secretly wished for a big brother and now I had three. Even though I didn't feel like it then, I was really a lucky girl to have these guys.

I nodded and sniffed. "Thanks, Jude." He nodded at me and Ryder, and then walked away.

Ryder came over to me and sat down by my side. "Everleigh, are you all right?" he asked me, placing his hand

on my lower back and massaging it.

I shook my head. “No, I’m not. This has been *the* worst day of my life. I just buried my dad, there are about a zillion people packed into my house right now, most of who I have never seen before today, I’m on the verge of a migraine, and my ex shows up here and says the most horrible things to me. What did I do to deserve this?” I asked, and I started sobbing.

“You didn’t do anything, gorgeous,” he said, pulling me into his arms. “None of this is your fault.”

“I just want to sleep and forget about everything,” I cried.

“Do you want me to have everyone leave?” he asked softly.

I shrugged. "I can't ask that.

People came here to pay their respects and I would feel like a bitch for making them all leave."

"Well, why don't you go and get some rest? You are exhausted, Everleigh. Just get into some comfortable clothes and take a nap and everyone will be gone by the time you wake up, okay?"

"Are you sure? This isn't your job, you know," I said.

"No, it's my job to take care of *you* and right now you need to rest. I'll deal with all of it."

I felt a mixture of guilt and fear. No matter what he said this *wasn't* his job. I was terrified that he was just

fulfilling a promise he made to a dying man. I hoped I was wrong, but I couldn't think about that now...I just wanted to shut the world out for a while. I turned and hugged him tightly. "Thank you, Ryder. I won't lie down long, I promise."

He shook his head and traced his fingers along my neck. "You take all the time you need, okay? I'll check in on you and let you know when everyone is gone."

I nodded. "Okay. Please give everyone my apologies," I said, standing.

He stood to meet me and kissed my forehead. "I will. Get some rest," he said, and I drudged off toward my

bedroom. I nodded at several people as they gave their condolences to me, and as soon as I reached my bedroom, I closed the door behind me. I didn't even change out of my dress before I collapsed on my bed and fell into a restless sleep.

Chapter 3

Ryder

“Thanks again for everything, man,” I said to Beau. “Are you heading back to your hotel room?”

Putting on his coat, he said, “No. I was going to take Danni out for New Years tonight and then we’re going back to the hotel,” he said, slightly smiling. “You know, ring in the New Year right.”

I shook my head and looked pointedly at him. “Don’t fuck with her,

man. Danni's a good girl."

Beau opened his mouth and was about to reply but Danni came up to us at that moment and hugged me. "That was an amazing service, Ryder. Thanks for doing this for her. I don't know how she could have gotten through this week without you," she said.

"I just did what anyone else would have done for someone they lo-, um, care about," I said, catching myself for the second time in a week almost about to drop the L word.

She smiled at me. "I know you did. Give her a hug for me and tell her to call me tomorrow, okay?"

"I will. Good night you two," I said, and I watched them walk out into

the snow. I heard footsteps behind me and I turned to see Trish reaching for her coat. “Hey Trish, are you heading out too? I thought you lived here.”

“I do for now but I am going to stay with my sister for a week while Everleigh figures things out. I’ll move on to another patient soon but for now I want to give her some space to deal with everything.”

“Okay, well, that makes sense I guess.”

“Listen,” she said, “I am so glad Everleigh found you when she did, Ryder. She’s such a sweet girl and after the way Scott treated her, her confidence was totally destroyed. She has no idea just how beautiful she really is and the

worst part of it all is she believes she doesn't deserve to be loved. In the short time I have known you, I have seen some wonderful changes in her and I hope I continue to see that.”

“So, is this your motherly way of saying that she is into me and you want me to stick around?” I asked, smiling at her.

“I absolutely hope you stick around, Ryder. She may not admit it but she needs you and you are good for her.” She leaned in and hugged me. “I’ll be in touch. Give her my love and tell her I said Happy New Year,” she said.

“I will. Good night. Drive safe,” I said, and as soon as she walked out and was in her car, I closed the door. I blew

out a breath and turned and looked around Everleigh's house. It was a mess from all the food that everyone brought. I didn't want her to have to clean it up later so I got to work putting food away, throwing out trash, and cleaning dishes.

After about an hour of speed cleaning, I had just washed my last dish when I felt someone behind me. "Hey," I heard Everleigh say.

"Hey, gorgeous. How was your nap? Are you feeling any better?" I asked, placing a dish towel on the sink.

"I'm feeling a little better," she said. She looked around the kitchen and her mouth fell open. "Did you...clean my house?"

I grinned. "Well, it was a small

disaster. I wasn't going to leave it all night," I said. "Sorry, I'm a bit of a clean freak."

"It's okay. I appreciate it but you didn't have to. This isn't what you signed up for, I'm sure."

"What do you mean?" I asked, my brows furrowed.

"You've only been in town for one week and you've already watched someone die, planned a funeral, hosted a wake, and cleaned an entire house. All for a girl that isn't technically your girlfriend," she said, shaking her head.

"I made a promise to your dad that I'd take care of you, Everleigh, and that's what I intend to do. I'm not taking that shit lightly. Besides, why do you

think you don't deserve a break? I know this is a lot for a first week in any kind of relationship but for the first time in a long time I feel like I am in the right place at the right time.

“I was a mess when my dad died and I still wasn't over it when my mom passed away, so when she was gone I completely checked out. Sure, the guys were there for me, but I wouldn't let them help like they wanted to and I just fell into endless bottles of booze and fucked a lot of women. I know this is going to sound corny or unbelievable, but I really feel like I was meant to find you, Evie, and that I am supposed to be here to help you through this,” I said.

Suddenly, she gasped. “W-what

did you call me?"

"What?" I asked, confused.

"You...you just called me Evie. My dad was the only one that called me that," she said, tears clouding her eyes.

"Oh shit, I'm sorry. I didn't realize I did," I said, feeling like an asshole.

She shook her head. "No, it's... okay. That actually made me feel a little bit better. I can't explain it," she said, taking a step toward me.

I immediately pulled her into my arms. "I'll do whatever you need me to do to make you feel better," I said, lowering my lips to her forehead. I kissed her softly a few times before moving to brush soft kisses across her eyelids, her cheek, the tip of the her

nose, and then finally her lips.

I had backed off, letting her have some space and even though I still had every intention of doing that I missed kissing her lips. I just had to do it once, even if she pushed me away.

She started to kiss me back but just as suddenly as she'd opened her mouth to me, she froze and pulled away.

"Ryder, I'm sorry. I can't do this."

"I know. I'm sorry. It's too soon," I said, pulling back.

"It's not that," she said quietly, looking down at the floor.

I knew what this was about. That Scott asshole had gotten to her again. "Everleigh, what did he say to you?" I asked, my jaw tightening.

“Nothing, Ryder. He was just a jerk, like always. Let it go,” she said, her face flushed.

“Everleigh, I am not trying to push you, but you need to tell me what he said to you.”

“Why?” she snapped. “What difference does it make? He’s already ruined this whole fucking day. God, is it too much to ask for me to grieve in peace without everyone bothering me? Strangers packed in the house all day, everyone asking me every two seconds if I’m fine like I’m going to collapse, and then Scott showing his face here just to plunge the knife deeper!” she shouted. “Why can’t the world give me a break?”

I tried to wrap my arms around

her, but she started to shove me away. “I’m trying to give you a break so that’s why you need to tell me what that fuckwad said so I can convince you how wrong he is!” After a few moments, she stopped fighting and collapsed into my arms, sobbing. Stroking my fingers through her hair, I asked her softly, “What did he say?”

“He...he insulted you...he called you scum. He called me his sloppy seconds and then lied to Jude and Beau. He said that I strung him along for a long time before we had sex and that I was terrible in bed. He’s told me all those things before but today of all days I didn’t need him to remind me of it,” she said, speaking barely above a whisper.

Rage like I had never felt before shot through me and my blood was boiling. If I wasn't holding onto Everleigh I was certain I would have gotten into my car and drove around until I found his house and I would have killed him. "Are you fucking kidding me?" I growled. "Please don't tell me you believe that cock sucker, Everleigh."

"How could I not? I was a virgin when I slept with him and even then I didn't feel ready. Of course I'm going to be terrible at sex the first time."

"I don't think that it's possible for you to be bad at it, gorgeous. When you touched me last week...God, I've never came so hard in my entire life and that's

the truth.”

She shook her head. “I just wish he’d leave me alone, Ryder. He’s not around a lot but when he is it’s awful. It’s like when someone shows me the slightest bit of attention he flips out and starts insulting me.”

“He’s probably doing it because he still wants in your panties, Everleigh, and he doesn’t want anyone else to have what he felt like he was denied. I’m a guy so if I had to guess I’d say he thinks you cockblocked him and he got pissed,” I said.

“Well, I don’t want him. I didn’t really want him then but I felt like I was getting too old to still be a virgin so I did it and completely ignored that little

voice that tried to warn me that I wasn't ready. He took something from me I'll never get back," she cried.

"Well, you have something he will never get," I said, taking her face into my hands and staring into her whiskey colored eyes.

"What's that?" she asked nervously.

"A man that sees what a breathtaking woman you are who is *not* about to let you go," I said, and I leaned in and kissed her lips lightly. Everleigh moaned and surprised me by wrapping her arms around my neck, trying to glide her tongue into my mouth. As badly as I wanted to taste her, I was the one backed away this time.

Everleigh swayed slightly against me and when she steadied herself, her brows furrowed. “Why did you pull away from me, Ryder?”

I raised both eyebrows at her. “Everleigh, I am backing off because you just lost your dad. If I am being honest, I want you so fucking bad right now but I am trying to be the kind of guy you need. I’m not Scott, sweetheart. I’m not going to push you for sex, especially at a time like this.” She opened her mouth to speak but before she could, I stopped her by placing a fingertip on her plush lips. “It’s not happening tonight, gorgeous.”

She looked down at the floor for a moment and then looked up at me with

those damned eyes. Fuck, she was beautiful. “Okay, I understand. You’re probably right. It’s a bad time,” she said softly. “I just can’t help how I feel right now. This has been the hardest week of my life and you were there for me like no one ever has been. Every time you kiss me my body just responds to you. I’m sorry.”

I smiled at her and pulled her into my arms. “You don’t need to be sorry for feeling that way, gorgeous. Believe me...it’s going to happen. I just don’t want to look back on it and remember that our first time together was because you were looking for some comfort sex,” I said, grinning and trying to lighten the mood.

Luckily, she smiled at me.

“Thanks, Ryder,” she said, snuggling into my arms. She took a deep breath and sighed. “So, what do we do now?”

I kissed the top of her head and smiled. “What do you want to do? We can do whatever you want.”

“I kind of liked the idea of watching the countdown with you,” she said, looking up at me.

“Then that’s what we’ll do. We have a ton of leftovers in the refrigerator, or we could order something. Do you think that pizza place we had last week will be busy tonight?” I asked. That pizza was un-fucking-believable and I’d been craving it since that first night I was in Muncie.

“Pizza King? Um, they might be busy since it’s a holiday but I can call them.”

“No, I can call, it’s okay. You go get in your pajamas and get comfortable while I order us some food,” I said.

“Are you sure?”

“Of course I am,” I said, giving her a playful nudge. I already had my phone out and was Google searching for Pizza King’s phone number. “What toppings do you want?”

“I’m not picky. Whatever you want is just fine by me,” she said. “I’m going to take a quick shower, I’ll be right back.”

“Take your time,” I said, and I dialed the number. I watched her walk

away down the hall to her room, my dick getting harder at the sight of her hips swaying as she walked. I shifted in my pants and tried to think of anything I could to make my growing erection go away. I wanted to end this day with a happy memory for her and I was determined to make that happen. I was just going to have to keep my wits about me and try my hardest to behave.

Two hours later I had changed into a tee shirt and pajama bottoms, I had a belly full of the most amazing pizza known to mankind, I had a bowl of popcorn in my lap, and I had the most

beautiful girl in the world snuggled in my arms on her couch. Everleigh and I were lying together under a fleece blanket as we watched the pre-countdown festivities on television.

All the guys had called at one point or another to wish us a happy new year. Jude tried to convince me to bring Everleigh to the party everyone was attending at some bar on the local college campus but I turned him down. The last thing Everleigh needed was to be at a rowdy New Year's Eve party with a bunch of drunken coeds that would love nothing more than to pull me into a bathroom and beg me to fuck them. At one point I would have been up for that (and had done it before several

times) but since I'd met Everleigh, no one interested me in the slightest.

This was the longest I had ever gone without sex ever since I started having it when I was fourteen. I was sporting a serious case of blue balls but I'd suffer for as long as I had to for this girl.

I felt her fingers tracing the designs of the tattoos on my arms and she let out a little sigh. "Thank you for doing this for me tonight. This is nice, just sitting here with you," she said. "For a moment I forgot about everything."

"I'm glad I could take your mind off things, Evie," I said, and then I cursed. "Shit, sorry. I did it again."

"It's okay if you call me that,

Ryder. Dad really liked you a lot in the short time he knew you and when you call me that it really does make me feel better.”

“I’m glad. I don’t know why I keep slipping. That’s something between you and your dad and I don’t want to intrude or taint those memories.”

She shook her head. “You won’t. If anything you’ve made them better. You are keeping him alive in a sense so if you want to call me Evie it’s fine by me.”

I smiled and kissed her forehead. “Okay, I’ll remember that.” She continued to trace my tattoos with her fingers and I couldn’t hide it when the hair on my arms stood straight up under

her touch.

She turned her face toward mine and looked up into my eyes for a split second before her gaze landed on my mouth. Her tongue darted across her bottom lip and I felt myself start to get hard again. I reached my hand up and caressed her cheek and traced my thumb across her lips.

“Ryder,” she breathed, and I was about to lose control and pull her lips to mine when I heard the television announcer say, *“Okay everyone, it’s almost time for the ball to drop and ring in the new year! Thirty seconds to go!”*

Everleigh jumped at the sound of the TV but our eyes never left each

others. The whole world was on hold and we were the only two people in that moment that mattered. The seconds ticked by until I heard the announcer say, *“Okay everyone, here we go! Get ready to kiss the one you love as the seconds tick away! Ten, nine, eight...”*

“Ryder,” Everleigh repeated, desire in her voice, “I...”

“Seven, six five...”

“Everleigh...” I trailed off. I needed to back away before I let things get too far. But the way she was looking at me right now...

“Four...”

She wasn't afraid. She wasn't unsure. “Please,” she whispered.

“Three...”

“Are you sure?” I asked.

“*Two...*”

She nodded. “I’m ready.”

“*One...Happy New Year!*”

At the moment the clock struck midnight, Everleigh and I fell into each other and our lips instantly met. I wasted no time sliding my tongue into her mouth and she whimpered at the taste of me. Her kiss was like a drug to me...she was the best kind of high.

The arm I had wrapped around her shoulders moved down to the small of her back and she turned her body into me. Everleigh wrapped her arms around my neck and pulled my body into hers. She quickly wrapped her legs around my waist and straddled me on the couch and

I groaned at the feel of her heat pressing against my growing erection. The only thing between us was two thin pieces of clothing from my pants and her tiny shorts.

I didn't know how far she wanted to take this, but however this went down I knew I didn't want it to happen while we were on her couch. I wrapped my arms around her waist and quickly stood up, taking her with me. She tightened her grip on my waist with her legs and she gasped. "Are you really sure you are ready for this, Everleigh?"

I looked into her eyes, searching for anything I could find that would leave any doubt that this was what she wanted, but I found nothing. All I saw

was pure desire and something else... was it love? Before I could dwell on it, I heard her say, “I am more than sure, Ryder.”

“I just don’t want us to do this and you wake up and regret it in the morning,” I said. I was falling so hard and fast for this girl that if she woke up tomorrow and decided that sleeping with me was the biggest mistake of her life, I knew I’d be devastated. Call me a big ass pussy but that’s how I felt.

She shook her head, which made her body wiggle right into my dick. I gripped her hips with my fingers to steady her. “Ryder, I have never been more sure of anything in my life. I want you so much and I’m not afraid anymore.

This feels so right,” she said.

“It does,” I said, and she moved her mouth down along my jaw line and began to kiss and lick my neck. I gritted my teeth together and fought back a moan. “Evie, I’m scared,” I admitted.

She snapped her head up and her eyes widened. “Scared? Of what?” I shook my head. “Ryder, you can tell me. Maybe I can help,” she said.

I took a deep breath. “I’ve never made love to a girl before,” I admitted. I looked at her shocked expression and fought back a laugh. “Not in the way you think. I’ve had sex, Everleigh. A *lot* of it...” I said, and she looked away for a moment before looking back at me, “but I have never made love. I am scared that

I will fuck this up if I go with my instincts. All I know is hard, fast, and dirty.”

She played with the hair at the nape of my neck. “You won’t. The way you have been with me since we met... you’ve been amazing, Ryder. When I wanted to slow things down you didn’t hesitate to respect me. When I fell apart, you picked up the pieces and are helping me put them back together. I know you won’t be too rough with me. I trust you,” she said.

Even though I was still cautious, that was what I needed to hear. Our lips met again and this time, our kisses were desperate and full of need. I carried her to her bedroom and opened the door. I

shut it with my foot and Everleigh stifled a laugh. “What’s so funny, gorgeous?” I asked.

“You shut the door. It’s not like we have to be quiet now,” she said, and her eyes glassed over for a moment.

“Oh, Everleigh,” I started, but she shook her head.

“It’s okay. I just didn’t think before I spoke. I’m all right,” she said, and leaned in to kiss me again. I was trying not to read into what she’d said and when I felt her tongue glide into my mouth again, I was a goner. I walked her over to her bed and gently set her down. She started to reach for the bottom of my shirt, but I stopped her.

“Evie, listen to me. I’m going to

be really honest here. It's taking everything in me not to literally tear your clothes off and fuck you as hard as I can right here and now," I admitted, and she swallowed hard. "All I am asking from this is that you let me take my time with you. I think that will help me to keep in control. I need to know that I can slow it down and be calm and the only way to do that is for you to give yourself over to me. Can you do that and really trust me?"

Wide eyed, she nodded. "I already told you I trusted you, Ryder."

"I know but I guess I just needed to hear it again. I want to make love to you, Evie, and this is a new thing for me. I have to know I can be the right kind of

lover you need. I guess I am asking for a chance to prove to both of us that I am the only man you will ever want,” I said.

“So, let me get this right. You are asking me to completely let go of every idea of sex I’ve ever had and let you do what you want to me?” she asked nervously.

“Yes, in a matter of speaking. Don’t worry, I’m not going to pull any freaky shit on you,” I said, smiling, and she lightly giggled. “I just basically want you to lay back and enjoy. Give yourself to me tonight,” I said, staring into her hypnotic eyes.

She bit her bottom lip and blinked a few times. “I’m yours, Ryder. I trust you,” she repeated, and I took her hand

and pulled her to her feet.

“Put your arms up,” I commanded, and she did. I placed my hands on her waist and slowly started to pull up her camisole, trailing my fingers along her sides as I went. I pulled her top up and over her head with ease, and I gasped when her hair came cascading down in a waterfall of dark waves.

She wasn't wearing a bra under her top and my semi hard dick went completely rock solid when my eyes landed on her absolutely perfect breasts. They were full, firm, and beautiful. I wouldn't wait to taste them. “God you're beautiful,” I said, and I quickly pulled my shirt over my head and tossed it to the floor.

She lowered her hands and touched my chest with shaking fingers. Her delicate hands roamed down my chest and felt my defined abs, which contracted at her touch. “So are you,” she whispered. I pulled her close to me and we both gasped at the feel of our skin touching. I swept her hair back off of her shoulders and began to kiss my way from her neck down to her collarbone before my mouth was on top of her breast. My hand covered one breast while my lips moved down and I got my first taste of one of her perfect pink nipples. She tasted so sweet, and I planned on tasting every inch of her body all night long.

Chapter 4

Everleigh

My eyes closed...it was hard to focus on anything other than Ryder's deliciously sinful mouth on my nipple while his skillful calloused hands rolled and teased my other breast. I threw my head back and moaned loudly. I had never felt pleasure like this before... damn it, this man was talented. I could feel heat burning through me and my panties were dampening by the second.

“You taste so sweet,” he said, and the feel of his warm breath on my nipples made them harden painfully. For a man that’s never really made love before, he was off to a damn good start.

He moved us to the bed again and he gently guided me back and I laid my head on my pillow. In an instant he was on his knees at the foot of the bed and he hovered over me for a moment before his mouth was back on my chest, licking and tasting each breast. He didn’t spend too much time on them and I felt tingles shooting through me as he began to kiss his way down my stomach.

His tongue dipped into my belly button for a quick moment before his hands found the waistband of my shorts

and he began to slowly pull them down. I lifted my hips slightly so he could pull them off with ease and soon they joined the growing pile of clothes on the floor.

Ryder's eyes roamed hungrily up and down my body and I shifted around to try and ease some of the pain I was feeling from how turned on I was. "Fuck, you're so sexy," he said as I lay on the bed in nothing but a tiny red pair of panties. His fingers found the waist band of them and he slid them under the seam at my hips. "These panties are hot, Evie," he said, licking his lips. "Are you particularly fond of them?"

"N-not really. I've had them forev-" I gasped loudly as I heard a loud *riiip*. I looked down and saw Ryder tear

my panties clean off of me and toss them to the side.

He smiled sexily at me and cocked his head to the side. "Sorry, they were in my way," he said, winking.

I smiled back. "Couldn't you just as easily have taken them off?"

"Where's the fun in that? Don't worry, I'll buy you a new pair," he said, and his hands massaged my thighs as he stared down at my naked body. "God, Evie..." he said, almost like a prayer.

"What is it, Ryder?" I asked, still feeling a bit insecure.

"You are *so* damn beautiful. Everything about you is beautiful. Your lips, your long neck, your breasts, your stomach, your soft skin, and especially

this,” he said, running his fingers along the outside of my entrance, “this is fucking gorgeous.”

“Oh my *God*,” I moaned, writhing around.

“Damn, you’re drenched,” he said, teasing around my folds. “So wet for me, aren’t you?”

I nodded and bit my lip. “That feels *so* good,” I moaned.

He leaned in and kissed my stomach again for just a moment before he said, “I have to taste you,” and before I could think his mouth was on my heat. I screamed out in ecstasy as his tongue rolled around my clit and up and down my entrance. He moaned loudly as he licked and tasted me. “Tastes...

so....*good*,” he growled out between licks.

“Ryder! Oh my God!” I yelled, my hands finding his hair and grabbing onto it. He continued his torturous rhythm as my body was building and building toward what I was sure was going to be an extremely intense orgasm.

“Feel good?” he murmured.

I nodded. “Yes, oh *God* yes,” I moaned.

“Mmm, I could taste you all night,” he said, and I screamed out again when he slid two fingers in me. He groaned. “So fucking tight,” he said, and his mouth was on me again. I whimpered and moaned as he moved his fingers around inside me, his mouth never

leaving me. I started to arch my back...I was so close. He knew, and he paused long enough to say, “That’s right, gorgeous, come for me.” At that moment, I was completely gone as a hard, strong orgasm rocked my body. My hands gripped the sheets as his mouth and fingers never left my body, prolonging my release. I was falling, falling, falling...I didn’t know when it would stop.

Once my body finally stopped shaking and my orgasm started to taper off, I felt Ryder kissing my stomach right above my pelvic bone. “Oh...wow...” I mumbled, barely able to form any words.

He softly chuckled and his breath

caused goose bumps on my skin. “So, I take it that was good for you?”

I rapidly nodded my head. “Y-yes. Oh shit, Ryder, that was...” I said, and I felt a tear escape my eye.

He looked up at me and when he saw the tear rolling down my cheek, he looked panicked. “Evie, what’s wrong?”

I shook my head. “Don’t worry, I’m not crying. That was just so intense...that felt amazing,” I said, and he relaxed.

Ryder slowly made his way up my body with kisses, finally stopping at my lips. He hesitated before he kissed me, my arousal still glistening on his lips. I leaned up and pressed my lips to his and he groaned. It was strange to taste myself

on his tongue...strange and sexy. It turned me on knowing that he loved the taste of me so the flavor didn't bother me. It was really sexy.

"If you think that felt amazing just wait until I'm inside you," he said, and he suddenly climbed off of me and stood next to the bed. I sat up on my elbows as he started to pull his pajama pants down. I wanted to be the one to take them off, but he also said he was afraid if I touched him or tried to be sexy with him he might lose control and be too rough with me.

My mouth went dry as I watched him slowly push his pajama bottoms down and they fell to the floor. He wasn't wearing any underwear so as

soon as his pants were down and he was stepping out of them, my eyes landed right on his large erection, or “gun” as he liked to call it. I started to shake with anticipation...I already knew that he would have to go slow with me but I knew also that just from the look of his thick, strong length that this was about to be the some of the best sex I would ever have.

I was already feeling incredibly aroused from the sight of him alone but when his hand reached down and he started stroking himself, I almost had another orgasm. “I can’t wait to feel you around my cock, Everleigh,” he said, and my heart started beating faster. “Do you want me to wear a condom?”

I bit my bottom lip. “I don’t know...do you feel like you need to? Am I safe with you?”

He nodded. “Yes, you’re safe with me. I don’t have anything, I get tested regularly. Besides, it’s been three months since I’ve been with anyone. I just worried about you being at risk of getting pregnant.”

I shook my head. “I want children one day but not right now. I am on the pill so we should be safe. Using a condom is really your call, Ryder.” I’d been on the pill since I was sixteen because my periods were all over the place so I stayed on them to stay regular.

He smiled at me. “I’ve never gone bare before,” he said. “Looks like this

will be a night of firsts for me,” he said, and he stepped to me and climbed back on the bed. His hot, hard, toned body covered mine as I parted my legs for him. He fit so perfectly nestled between my thighs. It was like he was made to fit there and that no one would ever take his place.

I felt the head of his cock teasing at my entrance, a bead of moisture at the tip showing me he was ready for me. I grinded my hips impatiently and I looked into his eyes. “Ryder...” I whispered, silently begging him to take me.

He leaned in and rubbed his nose to mine. “You know if we make love there is no going back. I’m pretty sure that I’m never going to want to let you go

after this. Last chance to back out, Evie.”

I shook my head and pressed my fingertips into his strong, broad shoulders. “I don’t want to back out. I want you as much as you want me and I don’t want you to let me go. Make love to me, Ryder,” I said, and I leaned up and kissed him.

He kissed me hard for a moment before pulling away and placing his hands on either side of my head. “Look at me, Evie,” he said, and my eyes flickered up to his. “Keep your eyes on mine. I want to look into them when I push inside you,” he said. I nodded and one hand left the side of my face and moved down to his erection. He positioned himself at the entrance of my

heat, which was slick with my desire, and after rubbing himself on my clit a few times (which nearly cause me to come right then), he started to slowly enter me. I grasped onto his shoulders for support as he slowly took me inch by inch. “Oh fuck,” he said through gritted teeth, “you are so damn tight.”

“Oh Ryder,” I whimpered, my fingertips still digging into his skin. Hopefully I didn’t hurt him because holding onto him like that was the only thing keeping me from losing all control.

I felt my eyes start to roll back into my head as he kept inching his way in, but he said, “No, Evie, don’t look away. Keep your eyes on me, gorgeous,” and I did what he commanded. “God you are

so beautiful,” he said, and then with one last quick thrust, he was all the way in. We both gasped loudly as he filled me completely and he stopped for a second before moving. “Hold on, don’t move. You feel so god damned good that if I move right now I’m going to come,” he groaned through gritted teeth.

I was panting and craving some kind of relief so he put his thumb into his mouth for a moment before putting his hand in between us and rubbing my clit. After the first mind-numbing orgasm he’d already given me, my body was already a live wire of senses so it didn’t take but a moment for me to shatter around him in another orgasm. I wrapped my legs around his waist and

held on tight as I came hard against his dick, which still hadn't moved inside me. He groaned at the feel of my wetness against his cock and without another word he finally started to move.

His movements were slow and deliberate, like he was trying not to break me. My toes curled and my hands moved from his shoulders to his hair and I gently ran my fingers through it as he slowly made love to me.

He moaned and panted like it was his first time all over again, which in a way it was. This was a first for both of us. Neither Ryder nor I had ever made love to someone that we really had deep feelings for, and it made all the difference in the world.

With each slow thrust my body became more and more accustomed to him. It was like we were destined to make love only to each other for the rest of our lives. I didn't know how he felt but in that moment with him deep inside me, making love to me so sweetly and gently, I fell completely in love with him.

He was moaning and breathing into my ear and said, "I don't know if I can hold out much longer, Evie. You feel so fucking amazing...I just...can't...hold...on..." he said, his jaw locked tight. Seeing Ryder barely hanging on, feeling his hard toned body rubbing against mine, feeling his thick, hard dick deep inside me had me on the edge of

another orgasm.

He thrust hard one more time, hitting a spot deep within me I didn't know existed and at that moment I was gone. I was completely lost in a bone melting orgasm and I felt Ryder start to shake and his dick start to thicken inside me. "God, Evie, I'm going to come," he moaned.

"Come inside me, Ryder, please. Let go," I cried out, and with one final thrust, his body stilled and he emptied himself inside me. We both moaned loudly as we found our release together...it was so beautiful.

After a few moments in sated bliss, he pulled out of me and he raised his head, kissing my lips gently.

“Everleigh, that was...”

“Perfect,” I said, smiling at him.

“That was absolutely perfect.”

He grinned sexily at me. “It was, gorgeous. Evie, I lo-” he said, suddenly stopping.

“What?” I asked.

He shook his head and smiled.

“It’s nothing sweetheart,” he said, leaning in and kissing me, his tongue darting across my lips.

“Ryder,” I started, “look at me.” His cerulean eyes met mine and I was lost in them. “Were you about to say you...loved me?” I asked. I already knew I was in love with him, but I was terrified that he almost said it because he felt sorry for me after I lost my father.

He shook his head, but it wasn't in denial. It was in fear. "No, that would be crazy. I've only been here for a week, Everleigh."

"Well, technically you've been here since last year," I said, cracking one of my Dad's terrible New Year's Eve jokes from years past.

"Ha ha," he said, kissing my lips again quickly. "You know what I mean, gorgeous."

"Are you sure? I know it's only been a short time but I already know for certain what I feel for you, rock star," I said, trying to release some of the tension.

He cocked an eyebrow. "Yeah? And what do you feel for me, may I

ask?”

“I’ll tell if you tell,” I said, and he laughed.

“So you like playing games?” he joked.

Suddenly my face was serious. “Not when it comes to you, Ryder. No fear, no regrets. Let’s be honest with each other here and now. I will tell you exactly how I feel about you if you do the same. Deal?” I asked.

He suddenly looked vulnerable and scared. He swallowed hard and nodded his head. “Okay, deal.”

“On the count of three we confess everything,” I said. “You ready?”

He nodded again. “Ready, Evie.”

I cleared my throat. “One, two,

three..." I counted off and at the same time we both said, "I love you," in unison.

My heart leapt in that moment and I smiled so brightly. He loved me too. He had a smile on his face that could brighten the darkest night. "You love me?"

I blinked back tears and for the first time in a long time, they were happy ones. "I do. I love you, Ryder Matthews," I said.

"I love you too, Everleigh Stone," he said. He leaned in and kissed me, his tongue quickly forcing past my lips. I could feel his semi hard dick start to become engorged again and I grinded my hips into him, already ready for another

go. I started to feel my way down his hard body in search of his cock, but he stopped me.

“Ryder, what’s wrong? We’ve already made love and I want to touch you,” I said.

He shook his head and smiled.

“Just because we already did doesn’t mean I don’t want to again. This night is all about you, Evie. I plan on spending the whole night worshipping your beautiful body,” he said, and I shivered. “I’ve never been in love before and I want to show you exactly how I feel for you. Just give me tonight.”

Why was I complaining that he wouldn’t let me touch him? I had a gorgeous rock star with a body like

granite, a face that would make the Gods weep, and a dick that would make any woman faint from desire, and he wanted to spend the whole night taking his time and making passionate love to me. What the hell was wrong with me? I bit my lip and nodded at him. “Okay, Ryder. You get tonight. But I get tomorrow,” I said, smiling.

He grinned and leaned in to kiss me again as his hands made his way down my body. I completely gave myself over to him and we spent the rest of the night with Ryder taking me to new levels of pleasure I never thought I’d ever feel. God, I loved him.

I woke up with the bright January sun shining on my face. I didn't know if it was morning or afternoon because after Ryder and I had made love all night long I wasn't sure what time we actually fell asleep. I expected to feel warm, strong arms around me when I opened my eyes, but I didn't. I sat up quickly, my eyes scanning the room for him and hoping last night hadn't been just a dream. I turned my head toward the chair in the right corner of the room and Ryder was sitting in it, wearing nothing at all and he had his guitar setting in his lap, blocking the view. I smiled and sat up. "Good morning, rock star," I said, and I stretched my stiff arms. My body was

sore, but it was the good kind of sore.

“Good morning, gorgeous,” he said, mindlessly plucking the strings on his guitar. “I didn’t mean to wake you up.”

“You didn’t, I didn’t hear any music. Why are you sitting in the chair naked with a guitar on your lap?” I asked. That had to be the strangest question I had ever asked anyone.

Ryder grinned at me and strummed the chords with a guitar pick. “Well, you looked so beautiful lying there with your hair all around your face that I just felt inspired, so I got my guitar from the other room and I’ve been messing around for about an hour or so. You really didn’t hear me playing?”

“Nope,” I said, stifling a yawn.

“Wow, I’m just that damn good, I guess,” he said, smiling brightly.

Smiling, I said, “Well, I would disagree with you, but I can’t. Last night was amazing,” I said, and he smiled back at me, still mindlessly plucking the strings. “So, what song were you playing?”

“Oh, nothing. I was messing around.”

“Well, you said you were inspired so it must have been something,” I said.

“Tell me.”

He shook his head and laughed.

“You’re going to think I’m a total tool.”

“I’d never think that. Come on, rock star, what were you playing?”

He sighed. “A Christina Perri song.”

I had to be smiling so widely because my cheeks felt tight. “Really? I didn’t take you for a Christina Perri fan.”

He shrugged. “She’s got some good stuff. I’ve met her a few times. She’s actually really cool.”

“You have? Oh gosh, I love her!” I exclaimed.

Ryder smiled at me. “Really? I will have to introduce you to her some time.”

“Are...are you serious? That would be amazing! ‘A Thousand Years’ is my favorite song from her so far,” I said.

He huffed out a laugh. “Funny you should say that...”

“Why?”

“That’s the song I was playing.”

“Really?” I asked, grinning.

He nodded his head and strummed the first few chords of the song. “Yeah, well after you fell asleep and I watched you dream for a while, the house got really quiet so I turned on your TV and was flicking through the channels. One of those awful ‘Twilight’ movies was on so I thought I’d just sit through a few minutes of it and get bored with it and doze off. Of course, that didn’t happen,” he joked, and I giggled, “so I freaking watched it through to the end, and that song was playing when the credits

rolled. I actually loved the lyrics and when I woke up I remembered the words and music and was just messing around on the guitar. I can't get the damn song out of my head now."

"Hadn't you ever heard it before?"

"Nope. I am not a 'Twilight' fan and I don't listen to the radio anymore."

"So, you just heard the song one time and just memorized it?" I asked in amazement.

He shrugged his bare shoulders.

"It's no big deal."

"It's a very big deal. Ryder, that's impressive," I said sincerely. "I'm lucky if I even remember my own name anymore. Will you play it for me?"

He grinned. "Only if you sing with

me.”

My cheeks flushed red. “Oh no, I can’t sing.”

“I doubt that there is much you can’t do, gorgeous,” Ryder said. “Come on, it’s just us in here. I know you know the words. Sing with me,” he said, playing the beginning of the song again.

“I don’t know, Ryder,” I whined.

Still smiling, he stood up and walked over to me, his guitar in hand. My mouth went dry at the sight of his hard naked body in the morning light. Ryder walked across my bedroom in a few long steps and sat at the edge of the bed next to my knees, which were crossed under the blankets. “I’ll start, just join in when you’re ready,” he said,

and began to play the song one more time. I watched his fingers play the different chords as he strummed the strings with the other hand. “Don’t be afraid,” he said, and after I took a deep breath, closed my eyes, and right on cue, I began to sing.

Chapter 5

Ryder

As I played the first the bars of the song, I wondered if Everleigh was really going to sing for me. Even though she told me she trusted me last night, I knew the relationship was still so new and we had to learn more about each other. She closed her eyes and I didn't think she was going to do it, so I opened my mouth to start singing myself when I heard an angelic voice start to sing the first few

words.

I played the notes from memory and my eyes never left her face. Just when I thought this girl couldn't be any more beautiful, she opens her mouth and begins to sing like she was born to do it. She was obviously nervous, which is why she kept her eyes closed, but she shouldn't have been. Everleigh had the voice of an angel.

We sang the song together and I harmonized with her when I needed to. When it was my turn to sing alone, I was surprised when she harmonized with me with no problem at all. We sounded amazing...one more thing that we could do well together. I'd already lost my heart to this girl but now, sitting here on

her bed making music together, I fell even harder for her.

When the song was over, I slid my pick into the strings at the neck of the guitar and looked at her. “Evie, open your eyes,” I said.

She shook her head for a second, and then slowly lifted her gaze to mine. She looked so vulnerable, so innocent... and so delectable. “Well, I can definitely say that was a first for me.”

“Yeah?”

“Yeah. I’ve never sang in front of anyone before.”

“Well, you could have fooled me. Everleigh, that was beautiful. You have an amazing voice.”

Everleigh laughed. “Yeah okay

Ryder, sure I do. You are just saying that because you want to get lucky again,” she joked.

“Well, while I can’t deny that,” I said, winking at her, “I’m actually telling you the truth. You are really talented.” I raised my hand up and tucked a strand of hair behind her ear. “Have you ever thought about singing before?”

“What, like actually try to be a singer? Are you serious?”

“Yeah, why not? I’m a bit of a music snob so trust me when I say that you might have one of the best voices I’ve ever heard. Honestly,” I said, putting my hand over my heart.

“Thanks,” she said, her cheeks flushing a bright pink. She looked so

beautiful in all her vulnerability and I reached my hand to touch her face. Her breathing increased as I grazed my knuckles down her soft cheek. My eyes roamed down to her heaving breasts that were barely covered by the blankets and my dick twitched against my guitar. My hand roamed down her long neck and my fingers traced the curve of her breast. Her breath caught as her nipples hardened and I hadn't even touched them yet.

I gently put my guitar down on the floor next to Everleigh's bed and when her eyes roamed down to my already hard dick she gasped. I smiled sexily at her. "Like what you see?" I asked.

She nodded, her mouth falling

farther open. "I..."

"What is it?" I asked, pulling myself to my knees and taking my cock into my hand.

"It's just...I've seen it, I've felt it, but in this light..." she trailed off.

"What?"

"You're perfect, Ryder Matthews," she said, and licked her lips. "I want to touch you."

My grin widened and I inched closer, still on my knees in front of her. I took her hand and guided it down to my cock and she gently wrapped her slender fingers around it. She very shakily started to stroke the length up and down and I tossed my head back...it felt amazing. "God Evie," I moaned.

She looked up at me with those big brown eyes. “Does that feel good?” she whispered. She was still so insecure and it was obvious that she was asking if she was doing it right. She’d already done this to me before but I found it both charming and a little sad that she had to ask. This girl could do just about anything to me and it would feel fucking amazing.

“Hell yes it does. I love watching you stroke my cock up and down baby,” I said, and she shivered and blushed even harder. Clearly this girl was new to a lot of things, including dirty talk. It was going to be fun to teach her to come out of her shell and enjoy sex. “Why do you look so shy, gorgeous?”

She shrugged. “I just have never had anyone talk to me like that before.”

“I kind of figured that,” I said, and I moaned as she slowly stroked my length.

“I’m sorry,” she apologized.

Even though it felt so good, I stopped her hand. “Evie, are you apologizing for being inexperienced?”

“I’m just afraid that I am so behind as far as sex goes that you will eventually get bored with me and want someone a little wilder.”

I lifted her chin with my fingers. “I am never going to want anyone in my bed unless it’s you, gorgeous. I love the fact that I get to teach you things and change your mind about how amazing

sex can be,” I said.

“You’ve already done that, rock star,” she said, smiling at me.

“Good,” I said, placing her hand on my dick again. “You just do what feels right to you, okay? If you don’t want to talk dirty to me, you don’t have to, but I can’t make the same promise. I’m going to love seeing you blush when I tell you what I want to do to you.”

Everleigh swallowed hard. “So, tell me then,” she said, trying her best to be confident. “Tell me what you want to do to me.”

I covered her hand with mine and helped her increase her speed as she stroked me. “Oh, this is going to be fun,” I said. “First, I want you to stroke me

harder. I love feeling your hands on my dick.” Just like I wanted her to do, Everleigh started to stroke me harder and I groaned. “Yeah, just like that. Oh fuck!”

“What else?” she asked, her voice still timid. I looked into her innocent face and I saw a challenge. She was letting go...she wanted to play.

I grinned wickedly at her. “I want to feel my cock in your mouth, Evie. I want to see how far you can take me until I hit the back of your throat. When I feel your tongue running up and down my dick and feel you sucking me until I am about to come, I want to push you back into the bed, spread those killer legs wide and run my tongue all over your hot

little pussy,” I said, and I heard her gasp.

“Oh God, Ryder,” she said, shifting around on the bed.

“That makes you hot, doesn’t it?” I said. She nodded and her eyes wide and locked with mine. “After I lick and suck your tight little pussy until you scream, I want to ram my cock into you and fuck you hard until you can’t walk. When you come hard on my dick, I want to pull it out and shoot my come all over your perfect tits so you can see how fucking hot you make me,” I said, my dick now painfully hard seeing her expression. She was so turned on that she was panting.

“S-so, what are you waiting for?” she asked, her voice clouded with lust.

“Do it.”

“Yeah? Are you sure you’re ready for this, Evie?”

She bit her lip and nodded. “I gave you last night. Today is mine, remember? I want you to be yourself with me, Ryder, and this is part of it. I want to be everything you’ll ever need,” she said, and before I could speak she leaned forward, letting the sheet fall off of her gorgeous breasts, and grabbed my cock with both hands. She licked her lips and I looked down and watched as she slowly took me into her mouth. I growled and put my hands in her hair, guiding her. Everleigh was clearly inexperienced at this part of sex but nothing in the world had ever felt better

than feeling her lips around my cock.

“Oh *fuck*, Evie,” I groaned as she increased her speed. I thrust myself in and out of her hot little mouth, being careful not to hurt her or be too rough. When I thrust deep enough to hit the back of her throat, she made a little gagging sound and I almost came in her mouth. “*Fuck!*” I howled, and I gently pushed her back and she let go of me with a soft pop.

“What’s the matter? Was it not good?” she asked, a worried expression on her beautiful face.

I placed my hand reassuringly on her cheek. “Evie, that felt fucking incredible but I was afraid I was going to come in your mouth and I wasn’t

ready for that yet. Lay back, baby,” I said, and she immediately fell back onto her pillows, her hair falling around her face. I pulled the blankets off her body so she was lying completely naked under me...she took my breath away. I put my hand on my dick and started to stroke myself again as her legs fell gently open, ready for me to take her.

I reached down to her heat, which was completely soaking wet, and touched around her folds until I slid a finger into her. She was warm, wet, and so damn sexy. She bucked into my hands and arched her back. She moaned and panted as I moved my finger in and around her. When I added a second finger, she screamed out in ecstasy.

“You like when I fuck you this way, don’t you?” I asked.

“Yes, fuck yes,” she moaned, and my dick was throbbing at her words.

“Oh, Ryder, oh my *god!*”

I grinned as I watched her grinding into my hand. I moved my thumb to her clit and rolled it around the sensitive ball of nerves and she threw her head back into the pillows. “I want you to come on my hand, baby,” I said, increasing my speed. “Let go for me, Evie.”

Right then, I felt her walls clench hard and she exploded against my fingers. I moaned as her release flooded her entrance and I quickly pulled my fingers out of her and sucked on them

while watching her eyes go wide. I then moved my face down to her drenched folds. “You’re so fucking wet for me and you feel so good but baby you taste even better. I have to taste you again,” I said, and I leaned my mouth down to her clit and took a long hard lick.

I licked her perfect mound up and down, feasting on her juices like a starving man. It was fucking incredible. Everleigh was still shaking from her first orgasm that it didn’t take long to make her come again when I landed back on her clit and sucked gently.

“Ryder, oh my God!” she screamed out, her fists tangling in the sheets. “Oh fuck, that feels so good!”

I held on to her hips with both

hands and sucked until she was completely sated and then I raised my head to look at her. She was droopy eyed and satisfied and we'd barely even started. I looked into her eyes and licked my lips before I started to trail kisses up her soft skin. "Did you like me sucking you, baby?" I asked, rolling my tongue across one of her perfect pink nipples.

"Yes," she said, her voice barely a whisper. "Ryder, please," she begged.

"What do you want me to do, gorgeous?" I asked, moving my mouth to her other nipple and gently sucking.

"Ryder," she pleaded.

"Tell me, Everleigh. I need to hear it," I said, moving my mouth up to her neck and gently biting.

Panting rapidly, she ran her fingers through my hair and said, “I want you inside me, Ryder. Now, please, I need to feel you.”

I grinned at her and lifted myself slightly. “Why don’t you guide me home, baby?” I said, taking her hand from my hair and bringing it to my mouth. I sucked one of her fingers into my mouth for just a moment and she moaned. I moved her hand down to my hard cock and she wrapped her hand around it and gave it a few strokes. I moaned and looked into her eyes, saying, “Put my dick inside you, Evie.”

She guided me to her entrance and after stroking me a few more times she gently urged my cock inside her. I

groaned out loud as I started to inch myself inside her perfect tight heat.

“Ryder, oh...yes,” Everleigh whimpered. She was barely holding on as I slowly slid all the way into her. She felt like home.

“Evie! Holy shit, you feel fucking amazing,” I cried out as I started to move in and out.

Everleigh surprised me by clawing at my back, saying, “Please go faster, Ryder. I need you, please,” she begged.

“You sure?” I asked.

“Go harder, please!” she shouted, grabbing and pulling me into her more.

I leaned in and kissed her lips, my tongue thrusting inside her mouth. Just as

she asked me to, I started to move faster and harder and she started to move with me. She kept her arms tightly wrapped around my biceps as I pounded into her, making her melt around me.

I don't know how long we moved in unison together because time stopped for me in the moment we connected. Sex with this beautiful girl was unlike anything I'd ever felt before. It wasn't all about just enjoying the moment and getting lost in a nameless face. Whether it was slow and tender or hard and fast, making love with Everleigh was fucking earth shattering. Being inside her was quickly becoming my favorite place to be.

God this girl was like a drug to

me. I didn't think I'd ever get enough of her. We moved in perfect unison and hadn't slowed down at all when I felt her body start to shake. Her delicate fingers were still digging into my arms as I felt her release nearing. "R-Ryder, I'm close," she whimpered, "please don't stop."

"Come for me, Evie, I want to feel you come on my dick," I growled. I pounded into her a few more times before I felt her start to clench around me and I was rewarded with wide, bright brown eyes as she rode out her powerful orgasm. Her entrance flooded with her release and I nearly came inside her. As soon as she was coming down from her explosion, I kept my

thrusts up and I groaned, “Fuck, I’m going to come!”

“Let go, Ryder, please,” she whispered, still clawing at my back. *Fuck* that felt good.

“I want to come on your beautiful tits, Evie,” I said.

She nodded and licked her lips. “It’s okay, come for me, Ryder.”

I leaned up onto my thighs and pulled out of her, grabbing my wet cock in my hand. Just as I pulled all the way out, I felt the first hot spurt erupt from my dick and it shot out right onto her perfect breasts. She tossed her head back into the pillows as another spurt of my come landed on her and she cried out in pleasure.

“Oh fuck!” I yelled, my release shooting from me on Everleigh’s perfect skin. When I was completely drained, I couldn’t keep myself up anymore and I collapsed on top of her, my release rubbing between us.

“God, that was amazing,” Everleigh said. I was almost expecting her to be disgusted by what I did given that she was pretty inexperienced but she wasn’t. She was still slightly moaning and panting heavily. “That was really hot seeing you let go like that.”

I cocked an eyebrow. “Yeah? Well, feel free to let me do that any time,” I said, breathing heavily. She smiled up at me and I pressed my lips to hers. “Are you sure that was okay?”

Everleigh nodded. “If I wasn’t sure, you wouldn’t have done it. It really was a total turn on.”

“Well, that was just a taste of what I want to show you,” I said. “But first, how about we both get a shower?”

She giggled as our sweat covered bodies rubbed together. “That sounds like a good idea.”

Reluctantly I moved off of her and collapsed onto the other side of the bed. She sat up and slowly got out of the bed and my breath caught at the sight of her. She was breathtaking in the light of the morning as the bright January sunlight shone on her naked body. “How about we go out for breakfast after you take a shower?”

She opened her dresser drawers and started pulling out random pieces of clothes. “Are you sure? What if there are cameras everywhere? I don’t know if I’m ready to face that yet,” she said.

“Evie, we are going to have to face them eventually,” I said, sitting up and scooting to the edge of the bed. “I’m a famous musician and everyone wants the story on us, especially now.”

Her eyebrows furrowed. “I know, but can’t we just have one day? That’s all I ask. My dad hasn’t even been gone for a week and last night was the first time I have felt somewhat happy in a long time. This morning so far has been amazing too...can you please just give me today?”

I stood up and walked to her.

Wrapping her in my arms, I kissed her hair and said, “Of course I can. Today is just for us. We can deal with the world tomorrow,” I said. “How about I make us some breakfast after we get a shower and we can decide what to do for the day after that?”

“Actually, would it be okay if I made breakfast?”

“Really?” I asked, smiling. She wanted to do normal things again...this was good.

“Really. You have been taking such good care of me this week so I want to take some of the burden off of you for a change.”

“Everleigh, caring for you isn’t a

burden,” I said, frowning. “I meant what I said last night. I love you, gorgeous.”

Her eyes darted down for a moment before they caught mine again. “I love you too, Ryder, but I can’t help but feel like you are only being so attentive because of what my dad asked of you before he died.”

I flinched back like I’d been slapped and narrowed my eyes at her. “Evie, are you kidding me? What part of saying I love you isn’t registering in your mind? I have never ever said that to anyone in my life and I never thought I would care enough about any girl to even entertain the thought of love until I met you. Yes, I realize that this is moving crazy fast and yes, I also realize

that all of this is happening at a really bad time in your life. I guess I just hope that one day you will see how incredible you are and how easy it was for someone like me to fall for a goddess like you.” I know I sounded kind of harsh but after everything we’d been through in just one week I can’t believe she still seemed to have little to no faith in me or herself.

Everleigh looked at me with wide doe eyes. “I-I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to offend you by saying that. This just all seems too good to be true...you and me. You came into my life when I didn’t realize how badly I needed someone there. After what Scott did to me I never thought I’d love anyone again but you

came along and totally knocked down every single wall I'd built. Please try and understand that it's thrown me for a loop. I do trust you, Ryder, I really do, and I promise to try and not question you or second guess your feelings anymore," she said, seemingly blinking back tears. "Can you ever forgive me?"

I sighed and smiled at her.

"Forgive what, Evie?" She smiled shyly at me and I leaned down to kiss her perfect full lips. My dick twitched against her bare stomach and I leaned back. "Okay, we both need to stop this now before I say fuck breakfast and drag your sexy ass back to that bed."

She smiled wider and kissed my lips quickly. "I won't be long and I'll

start on breakfast once I get out. I'm not sure what kind of groceries are in there because I haven't been to the grocery store since before..." she said, her voice trailing off to nothing more than a whisper.

I rubbed her arms comfortingly. "Don't worry, Evie, the kitchen is stocked. I had Kip and Nathan shop for some things."

She nodded and swallowed hard. "Okay, great, thanks. Well, I'm going to go do this. I'll be five minutes I promise," she said, quickly turning on her heels and walking into her bathroom.

I ran a hand through my messy bed head and sighed. I realized it had only been a day since Max had been buried

and Everleigh hadn't really dealt with anything yet. That worried me... eventually she would have to really face this head on, but I promised her one last worry free day before she had to face the world again.

Chapter 6

Everleigh

The hot water of the shower felt good. My muscles were sore and it wasn't just because of the incredible night of I spent making love with Ryder (although that was a big part of my stiffness). I had been so tensed up from crying and barely functioning that I felt like I had aged ten years in the five days since Dad passed away. I thought I'd prepared myself for this but I clearly

wasn't able to handle losing my dad so I had sort of just zoned out and cried when I needed to. The full weight of his death hadn't hit me yet and I was terrified for the moment when it would.

Ryder had told me that he completely fell apart when his father passed away and that he had Beau, Kris, and Jude to help him through it. I hoped like hell that I still had people here to get me all the way through this. I know I had Danni, but Trish would soon be moving on to take care of someone else and I wouldn't have her here to talk to anymore. Deuce was my dad's friend and I knew he loved me too but he had his own family and the diner to worry about.

I also knew that Ryder was here for now but he and the guys would need to leave eventually. Even though their manager had set them up with a place to record while they were here, it was only for a little while and they would be moving on. The thought of my newfound family leaving me alone with nothing but an empty house and a broken heart terrified me. It rocked me to my soul at how much I had come to love and depend on Ryder and the guys in the short time I'd known them. What did that say about me?

Once I was clean and the water was starting to get cold, I shut off the shower and stepped out onto my rug. I quickly towel dried my hair and got

dressed in a matching purple bra and panty set (hopefully Ryder wouldn't destroy these panties...they were my favorite), a pair of black leggings, and a turquoise blue sweater dress. I twisted my damp hair into a messy bun on top of my head and clipped a turquoise flower in it, tossed on some mascara and lip gloss, and left my room to start breakfast.

Once I was in the kitchen I immediately roamed the cabinets to see what kind of food I had. I found the ingredients for French toast so I decided to make that. Once I mixed the eggs and started to dip the bread into the egg wash, I started to feel a little bit better. This was one of my dad's favorite

breakfast foods and instead of feeling sad, I was happy to be sharing this with Ryder. It had been too long since I had made this.

I kept myself busy frying the French toast and some sausage that I didn't even notice Ryder stroll into the kitchen until I took a breath and caught a whiff of his cologne. "What smells fucking amazing in here?" he asked, coming behind me and kissing my neck.

"I-I'm making F-French toast," I stammered as his tongue lightly grazed the vein on my neck.

"I'd rather taste you instead," he said, licking and lightly sucking the spot under my ear.

"C-come on, Ryder, the food is

going to burn,” I said. “Behave yourself.”

He laughed against my hypersensitive skin causing me goose bumps. With a quick nip at my ear lobe he backed away from me. “I’ll be a good boy for now. I can’t promise I will be after we eat though. I might misbehave so bad that you will have to spank me,” he said, and I nudged him in the stomach.

I giggled and said, “Keep it up and I might, rock star.”

He chuckled and playfully tugged at my ear. “Is there anything I can help you with?” Ryder asked, placing his hand on the small of my back.

“No, I have it all under control. This is my way of thanking you for

everything you've done so you just sit down at the table and don't do anything but eat what I put in front of you," I said.

Ryder placed his hand under my chin and turned my face to his. "Okay then, I want you naked on my plate covered in whipped cream," he said, smiling a wicked smile. "I'll eat that up all day long."

"Ryder!" I exclaimed, redness flushing my cheeks. "You are so bad. Go sit down."

He laughed at my expression and said, "Whatever you say," before kissing my lips quickly and walking over to the kitchen table. "So, what else did you want to do today after we have breakfast?"

I took the sausage out of the skillet and placed it onto a waiting plate. “I don’t know. I just thought I’d get through this first and then decide. Why? Did you have something in mind?” I asked, and then I laughed. I knew what Ryder would have in mind and it would involve us being naked and sweaty all day.

“Well, I’m pretty sure you can guess how I would want to spend the day but I was actually asking for the guys.”

I took off the last two pieces of French toast out of the frying pan and added them to the stack. “The guys? Why?” I asked, bringing the food over to the kitchen table and setting it down. “Did they call you or something?”

“Uh, yeah, right after I got out of

the shower. It's getting harder to go around town without a hundred people bothering all of us and they are going stir crazy being cooped up in the hotel. Last night was the first time they all had been able to get out of the hotel other than going to the funeral the whole time they've been here. They were wondering if they could come over here and hang. John and the guys have a pretty tight perimeter set up around your house so no one should be bothering anyone here."

At that moment it registered in my mind that I hadn't really been bothered by cameras since Ryder got back...at least not up close anyway. I smiled at the thought that John was busy taking care of me just as much as Ryder was. "Um,

yeah, I guess that would be okay. I haven't really had time to get to know them like I want to. This is good," I said, picking up a bowl of fresh strawberry sauce I made and a bowl of whipped cream and setting them on the table. "Do you drink coffee?"

He nodded. "Of course," he said, and I grabbed two mugs from the cabinet above the sink. "Are you sure you don't need help?"

I shook my head. "Nope. I've got this, rock star," I said. "This is what I do for a living." I placed the mugs on the table and quickly got the cream and sugar for the coffee, the powdered sugar and syrup for the French toast, and the pot of fresh coffee. Once everything was

at the table, I took my seat across from Ryder and nodded at him. “Start eating,” I said, taking a piece of French toast and putting it on my plate.

Ryder smiled at me, his blue eyes sparkling. “You don’t have to tell me twice, baby,” he said, winking at me. He helped himself to a little bit of everything I made and when he took his first bite of toast, his eyes rolled back and he moaned loudly. “Shit, Evie, is there anything you can’t do? This is fucking incredible,” he said before shoving another big bite into his mouth and moaning again.

I blushed and smiled. “You are just saying that. It can’t be that good, rock star,” I said and then instantly

regretted it. I promised I wouldn't second guess his compliments. I met his eyes which had narrowed playfully.

“Sorry, force of habit.”

“We need to break that habit, gorgeous,” he said, pointing his fork at me before he took another big bite of French toast covered in powdered sugar and strawberries. “Oh my God, Evie. This is seriously the best French toast I have ever had. If you cook like this all the time I might have to marry you before you can escape,” he blurted out and my eyes went wide. Noticing the panicked expression on my face, he barked out a laugh and said, “I’m kidding. Relax. Eat.”

I breathed a sigh of relief and took

a bite of my food. I had made huge strides in my relationship with Ryder so far but I knew for sure that marriage was the furthest thing from my mind.

We ate breakfast together and chatted about everything that wouldn't remind me of Dad or bring him up in any way. I was thankful that he wasn't treating me like a breakable doll anymore and that he talked to me like I was just a normal person without a care in the world. After we ate he insisted on helping me clean everything up which I had to admit I appreciated. I loved to cook but cleaning? No thank you.

After everything was all clean and put away, Ryder got his cell phone out of his pocket and he said, "I'm going to call

Kris and let him know the guys can chill here. Jessie will probably be with them...is that cool?"

I nodded and smiled. "Of course it is. She seems really nice."

Ryder smiled. "Yeah, Jessie's great. She's been like a sister to all of us for a long time and I know she's got to be stoked that she has you and Danni to have 'girl talk' with now."

"Well, I can't wait to get to know her. I assume Danni is coming too if Beau is. They are about as attached at the hip as we seem to be these days," I said.

"Yeah," he said, his brows furrowed.

"What is it?" I asked him, a

sudden wave of nervousness taking over me.

He shrugged his shoulders. "I just hope that Beau doesn't do his usual shit and run away once he's gotten his fill," Ryder said. "I like Danni."

My brows furrowed. "Do you really think he will do that to her? I don't want to hate him, Ryder. He's like your brother."

Ryder shook his head. "Beau isn't really known to be a one woman man but it should say something that he's been with Danni for over a week in person and they have been flirting and chatting for over three months and he's still interested. The longest relationship he's ever had has been long enough for him to

put his dick back in his pants and zip up. Don't hate on him yet, gorgeous."

I nodded my head, still uncertain. "I won't...I just worry about her. She says she's fine with them just having fun together, but I have known Danni since I was four years old. She's going to want more down the road whether she wants to admit it or not."

"They all usually do when it comes to Beau. Why I don't know because I am way hotter than he is," he joked, trying to lighten the mood.

I walked to him and wrapped my arms around his waist. "I guess that makes me lucky then, doesn't it?" I asked, looking up into his blue eyes.

Smiling down at me, he said,

“Lucky, huh? How so?”

“I didn’t get the womanizing asshole for once. I got the inked up prince.”

He laughed and hugged me tight. “I wasn’t always a prince, Evie. Trust me, I was more a ‘love them and leave them’ kind of a guy than anyone in the band. Meeting you changed that.”

In spite of the sadness I felt at the loss of my dad, my heart swelled in that moment. “I really hope so, rock star.”

He gave me a quick kiss. “Trust me, Evie, you’re it for me. I love you,” he said, seeming completely sincere. I really hoped he was...I knew my heart couldn’t take another crack before it completely shattered.

“I love you too,” I replied and he smiled at me. He kissed my lips and wasted no time in slipping his tongue into my mouth. I felt electricity down to my fingertips and I moved my arms from around his waist to his neck.

Just as the kiss was getting good Ryder’s phone rang. He groaned and quickly looked at the caller ID. “That’s Kris,” he said, playfully pouting.

I smiled and said, “It’s okay, take your time. I’m going to call Danni and then maybe we can make out until they get here.”

Ryder groaned and shifted his growing erection in his free hand. He placed the phone up to his ear and said, “Hey man, it’s cool if you all come over.

Got to go,” and he quickly hung up the phone and lunged at me, making me squeal. “You can talk to Danni when she gets here. I have to get you naked. Now.”

“Do we have enough time?” I said, breathless.

He picked me up and I wrapped my legs around his waist. “Trust me, gorgeous, there will always be enough time for me to bury myself in you,” he said, and his mouth captured mine as he carried me down the hall to my bedroom.

“Shit, where the hell is my shirt?”
Ryder asked, his head moving back and

forth. He was true to his word...we really did have time to sneak in some totally hot sex. My head was spinning from how fast he was able to get me off...damn it he was talented.

Pulling my leggings back up, I spotted his tee shirt lying on top of my dresser and I tossed it to him. "Hurry up. They should be here any minute."

With a sexy smile, he quickly slid into his shirt and crossed my room in two long steps. "You're fidgeting, gorgeous. What's wrong? Are you nervous?" he said, wrapping me into his arms and kissing my hair (that was now messed up so I had given up and taken it down) as I smoothed my sweater dress down.

“Well, I don’t want your friends to know we just totally had sex right before they came over to my house,” I said, feeling myself start to blush.

Ryder laughed. “Evie, what do you think Beau and Danni are doing right now?” I smiled a knowing smile at him and he winked at me. “Exactly. Knowing Beau as well as I do he’s probably finger fucking her in the back of the SUV right now,” he said, and I suppressed a smile.

I was about to say something else but before I could I heard someone knocking on the front door. “Okay, it’s show time,” I said and I kissed Ryder’s lips quickly and stepping into a pair of flats before walking out of my room and

down the hall. Once I reached the front door I smoothed my sweater dress one more time and opened it.

I smiled as I saw Kris, Jessie, and Jude all standing on my front porch. “Hey everyone,” I said, and motioned for them to come inside. “Come in, it’s cold out there.”

Kris and Jessie both gave me quick kisses on the cheek as they stepped inside. “It’s nice to see you again, Everleigh. Thanks for having us,” Jessie said to me, smiling sympathetically, and I nodded at her.

“Yeah, thanks for letting us chill today. I couldn’t stand another day in that hotel playing ‘Call of Duty’ with this shit head,” Kris said, nodding at

Jude.

Jude scoffed. “Whatever dude, you’re just pissed off that we couldn’t play ‘strip Call of Duty’ because Jess showed up. All of this,” he said, sliding his hand playfully down his abs, “is off limits to you now, Big Daddy. Hey Everleigh,” he said, wrapping his big, muscular arm around my shoulders as Kris shook his head and Jessie laughed. “How are you doing today?”

I wound my arm around his waist and gave him a hug. “I’m doing okay, I guess. It’s only been a day.”

“We’ll get you through it, sis,” he said, dropping a kiss to my forehead and giving me a squeeze around the shoulders before releasing me. “It’s too

bad you two didn't come out to the bar last night. That party was fucking killer, dude," Jude said, bumping fists with Ryder.

"Yeah?" Ryder asked, pulling me close to him. I placed my hand on his abs and lightly gripped his shirt with my fingers. He was so damn sexy. "So how many poor unsuspecting college girls did you nail this time? Did you at least beat your record?" he asked, smirking at him.

"No, the record is still intact but I did have a fucking good time," he said, wearing a satisfied grin on his face. "It wasn't the same without my wingman there but I know you've got a good girl now so it was just more for me." Jude smiled at me and ruffled my hair with his

hand.

“Record?” I asked, looking at Jude. “Do I even want to know?”

Jude winked at me. “Probably not, but nailing six chicks in the span of four hours isn’t something I can keep to myself.”

My eyes went wide. “*Six?* Are you joking?”

“I never joke about pussy, baby,” he said, smiling, and Jessie smacked the back of his head.

“Jude! I swear to God I’d die of shock if you ever learn to shut that mouth of yours,” she said, glaring at him like an annoyed sister. “Sorry, Everleigh.”

“It’s okay, Jessie,” I said, smiling at her but still a bit in shock. I knew that

Jude was a bit of a slut but that number *really* surprised me. Including Ryder my list of sexual partners in my life was now at two. Jude probably had two last night alone...maybe more. "At least he had a good time, right?"

Kris interrupted my thoughts.

"Well, speaking of a good time, where are the other two lovers? Aren't they here yet?"

I shook my head. "No, you three are the first ones to get here."

Jessie grinned. "They should have been here first since they left the hotel before we did," she said, smiling at Kris.

Ryder looked at me and smiled.

"See? I told you," he said, and I grinned.

Despite everyone's light mood, I was still worried about Danni. I don't care what she or anyone else said it was obvious that she was already falling hard for Beau and I prayed he wasn't going to break her heart.

After everyone took their coats off and I hung them in the closet by the door we went into the living room and sat down. Jude was in the middle of telling a story about taking shots off a girl's stomach when I heard the front door open.

"Hey, we're here!" I heard Danni shout.

I scooted away from my spot next to Ryder on the couch and tried to stand. He grabbed my arm and tried to pull me

back next to him. “Hey, where are you going?” he asked.

“I was just going to greet Danni and Beau. I’ll be right back,” I said, attempting to stand again but he tugged harder and I fell into his chest.

Smiling that damn sexy smile at me, he called out, “We’re in here!” and I giggled. “I’m sure they can find us,” he said, and kissed my nose and making me giggle. “I love when you do that.”

“Do what?” I asked, looking into his blue eyes and feeling like I was getting lost.

“Giggle,” he said, running his fingers up and down my spine. “It’s nice to see you smile, gorgeous.”

I sighed. “It feels good to smile,” I

said, and then I leaned in and kissed his perfect lips. We spend the rest of the afternoon hanging out together in my living room and I had a blast getting to know all the guys and Jessie, who was already becoming a girl I knew I would love forever. Kris was obviously the moral compass of the group and seemed to have his shit together despite being raised by his abusive alcoholic father. Jessie had her own demons from growing up in different foster homes but she'd seemed to rise above it and now was happily engaged to the man she'd loved since childhood. They made a perfect couple.

Despite my worries, Beau was actually a very sweet and charming guy.

If women didn't fall for him on looks alone his personality had them eating out of his hands. What I think I loved about him most was the way he looked when he talked about his younger sister, Sadie. She was only fourteen when the band hit it big and she'd stayed behind in Cincinnati with their mother. Beau's father was a drug addict that was never around so it had always been up to him to care for Sadie when their mom was out at a bar or wrapped around some man.

Beau was so proud of her...Sadie was already in her senior year of college and was majoring in music production. She'd hoped to eventually be a record producer and maybe produce one of Bad

Blooded Rebels albums but I was pretty sure she would have been able to do that without a degree. Beau, however, wasn't about to let her miss out on getting an education so he told her to apply to her first choice college. When she was accepted (I had a suspicion that he made sure she got in no matter what), he paid for all four years up front and even her living expenses so she wouldn't need to worry about anything. He may be a total player, but as a brother, Beau Cavanaugh was amazing.

Jude was obviously the clown/party animal of the group and any town they ended up in he found the nearest bar or club looking for a good time. Being a famous bass player in one

of the biggest bands in the world made finding a good time an easy thing for him. He wouldn't have needed his fame to get girls because he was actually a very gorgeous guy.

He had that total bad boy look down with his mohawk, multiple tattoos, and big muscles but what I think got to me was his eyes. His eyes were a light hazel and would change depending on his mood or even what he was wearing. They were very intoxicating and it was easy to see how a girl could be hypnotized by them. Despite his wild personality and addiction to women and partying, deep down he was a very sweet guy and a fierce protector of those he loved. This really was a family and I

was honored to have been taken in by these guys with no question.

Chapter 7

Ryder

It was amazing to see how Everleigh had fit so seamlessly into my life...especially after only one week. The guys in the band loved her like a sister and Jessie already had taken a liking to her and Danni as well. If there was any girl in the world someone needed to impress in order to get an in with one of us it was her.

Before we'd all realized it the sun

was setting and it was getting dark out. I know I had lost track of time just getting to hang out in a regular house with my friends like a normal person. Ever since I'd met her, Everleigh had given me a sense of normalcy that I was desperately craving. She was so humble and grounded and I loved her so much for that. I hope that being in such a public relationship with me would never change that.

“Dude, we should go out tonight,” Jude said, patting his full stomach. We'd all just finished a big dinner that Everleigh insisted on cooking for us with Danni and Jessie. She'd made meatloaf, homemade mashed potatoes, sweet corn, and buttered rolls. The girl I

was going to end up needing to hit the gym hard if she kept cooking like this.

I shook my head at him and he groaned. “No fucking way, man. Everleigh wanted the day to be quiet and the last thing she needs is to be at some sweaty club.”

Everleigh walked across the kitchen toward me and slid a hand around my shoulder. “Hold on, Ryder. That might not be a bad idea,” she said, and I whipped my head around.

“Yes! Awesome! Let’s do this shit!” Jude said loudly, slapping the table with both hands.

“Jude, shut up,” I said to him. I tugged on Everleigh’s arm until she was sitting on my lap. “Evie, I thought you

wanted to stay in and hide away from the world for the day,” I said, rubbing her back.

She shrugged. “I know that, but I guess I am starting to get a case of cabin fever myself. Yesterday was one of the few times I left my house all week and I suddenly feel the need to let off some steam.”

I furrowed my brows. “I don’t know,” I said. “It’s only been one day since-”

Everleigh placed a finger to my lips. “Ryder, I promise I’m fine. I want to get out of the house with everyone... maybe not at a busy club but somewhere.”

“We could go to the Red Dog,”

Danni suggested.

“Red Dog?” Jude asked.

“It’s a bar that serves food and stuff,” she answered.

Everleigh shook her head. “No, I don’t want to go there.”

“Well, then, what about 7-6-5?”

Danni asked. “It’s a fairly new club that opened up on the north end of town and I’ve been dying to go.”

“That place is always busy,” she said, biting her lip, “but I’d actually love to check it out too. Do you think John and his guys can protect us from anyone that wants to mess with you?” Everleigh asked me.

“I’m sure he could, but-”

“Ryder, it’s okay. Really. I

haven't been able to go out in such a long time. Please?" she asked, slightly pouting.

Despite my reservations, I looked into those breathtaking brown eyes and relented. "Okay. Anything you want, gorgeous," I said, and she wrapped her arms around my neck.

Pulling me into a hug, she whispered into my ear, "Thank you rock star."

When she pulled back and lightly kissed her lips. "You're welcome. Love you, gorgeous."

"Love you too," she whispered to me and out of the corner of my eye I could see Beau and Jude exchanging amused looks.

“Okay, let’s get ready,” Danni said, smiling and taking Everleigh by the hand. “Since it’s the first time we’ve been out together in forever we need to look hot.”

“Not too hot, baby. Remember, you’re taken,” Beau said, walking to Danni and giving her a light tap on her ass.

She giggled and kissed him on the cheek. “I am, am I? What, are you jealous?”

He cocked an eyebrow at her and pulled her into a full hard tongue swapping kiss. When he pulled away, he said, “I don’t need to be jealous baby.” He swatted her ass one more time before she fell away from him, lips swollen and

a love drunk look on her face.

“Come on, ladies, let’s get sexified,” Jessie said, and the three of them walked out of the kitchen toward Everleigh’s bedroom.

I stood up from my chair and got a beer out of the refrigerator. I could feel the guy’s eyes on me as I took a long drink. “What?” I asked, turning to face them.

“So, you dropped the L-word already, huh?” Beau asked. “Was the sex *that* good?”

“Knock it off, shit head. I know it seems fast but it’s true. I love her, man,” I said, taking another sip of my beer.

“Believe me, Ryder, it’s not been fast. You have *literally* mentioned her

every single fucking day since the show in Cincy,” Jude said, smiling. “I’m just surprised because that’s something I never thought I’d hear coming from you.”

I shrugged my shoulders. “What can I say? She’s just incredible. She’s not only beautiful on the outside-”

“Oh yeah,” Beau said.

“So hot, dude,” Jude followed.

I rolled my eyes and continued.

“She’s amazing inside too. I haven’t known any woman that didn’t want something from me in my life. Even in high school girls were trying to get into my pants.”

“And you totally let them,” Kris said, smiling.

“Well of course I did. What horny

teenage boy wouldn't fuck a girl that begged for it?" I said, shaking my head. "I can't help how I feel for her. I just hope I don't fuck this up because I don't know how I'd get past it if I did. She's it for me."

"You won't. We've all seen the change in you since you met her so I think it's pretty clear that you're in this for the long haul," Kris said.

"She's pretty awesome, man. I'm happy for you," Jude said, standing up and slapping me on the arm. "Now that you are off the market that means there's just more pussy for me to plow through."

I shook my head. "Jesus, was I ever this bad?"

All the guys nodded and Kris said,

“Oh yeah, you were way worse.”

I cringed and laughed. “Damn, you could have told me.”

“At the time you probably wouldn’t have listened. Whatever, it doesn’t matter anymore. You’ve got a really sweet and totally fucking hot girl now so that’s what important,” Beau said.

“Yeah, and so do you. Remember that, man, because I don’t want to have to break your legs. Not only do I like Danni but she’s Everleigh’s best friend so if you hurt her I will have to hate you by association. That’s how this girl code shit works,” I said with a laugh.

Beau shook his head and smiled. “I’m not stupid, man. Danni and I are

just having a good time right now...no strings sex. If it goes somewhere then that's great but I'm not going to go out and buy a fucking diamond ring yet."

"Well it doesn't seem like 'no strings sex' to me man. You two are together as much as Ryder and Everleigh are and judging by the noises coming from your hotel room every night I'm surprised that girl can fucking walk the next day," Jude said and Kris snorted.

"Look, we all know you Beau. This is the longest you have ever been with anyone ever but eventually the newness is going to wear off. Danni's a good girl and doesn't deserve it so if you aren't really thinking of giving this some kind of a chance you need to break

it off now,” I said.

He rolled his eyes. “You guys are making a big deal out of nothing. Believe me Danni feels the same way I do. We are both having a good time and just seeing where it goes. Let it go, okay? I don’t need this shit on my mind especially if I plan on getting laid tonight.”

“Me too. All this Dr. Phil talk is bringing me down. I want to get tore the fuck *up* tonight,” Jude said. “I’m the only single guy in this bunch now so I plan on hitting that club hard.”

“Well for once can you remember that we are in the girls’ hometown and that there are people with camera phones ready and waiting to take pictures of us?

You know that The Twin Dickheads are still pissed off that we came back here to record so we are under a microscope big time right now. They could be pricks if they wanted to and force us back there to record if there are any unflattering pictures of us out there,” I told Jude. “I don’t want to be pulled away from Everleigh right now when she needs me.”

He twirled his finger around his head in the shape of a halo and said, “Don’t worry, Dad, I’ll behave.”

I narrowed my eyes at him. “Jude, I’m serious.”

He nudged me with his arm. “I am too. I just want to get drunk and get my dick wet. I won’t cause any trouble,

okay?”

“Okay,” I said, and I downed the last of my beer.

The guys and I went and got ourselves ready to go out and then sat around shooting the shit at Everleigh’s kitchen table while we waited for the girls. Just as I was checking the time on my phone they came walking back down the hall and I got the fastest boner *ever* when I saw Everleigh.

Her hair was falling around her shoulders and down her back in soft curls. She was wearing a tight red top that accentuated her gorgeous breasts and clung to her tight stomach and curvy hips. What surprised me most was the fact that she was wearing a tight black

mini skirt, fish net stockings, and knee high black high heeled boots. She looked so fucking hot that I nearly came in my pants.

She stopped just in front of me and did a little curtsy. “You like?”

I nodded my head and thought I would start drooling. “Uh huh. I like a *lot*,” I said and placed my hands on her hips, pulling her into me.

She smiled at me and pressed herself against me. She wiggled her hips against my painful erection and said, “I think your ‘gun’ likes it too.”

“Jesus Christ, Evie,” I said, and I pulled her into a deep steamy kiss. I didn’t care if everyone was staring and that I heard Jude cat calling. I didn’t

know how I was going to make it through this night without pulling her aside somewhere and sinking my dick into her.

“Uh, hey, guys? We should probably go,” Jessie said, tapping me on the shoulder.

Everleigh pulled away from me and licked her lips. “Sorry,” she said, blushing. “She’s right, we should go.”

I followed her to the coat closet and helped her into her coat. “I can’t wait to get you back home tonight and show you how fucking hard you just made me,” I whispered into her ear.

I felt her shiver and she whispered back, “I can’t wait either, rock star,” as we walked out the front door.

An hour later, we were all chilling at 7-6-5 and getting buzzed. The music was pretty good and when the DJ recognized us he threw on a few of our chart toppers and did this sick mash-up of them with a hip hop beat. It was weird but it worked.

I was kicked back at a table in the back watching Everleigh dancing with Danni and Jessie on the dance floor. She was a totally different person tonight than she'd been in the short amount of time I knew her. For the first time she seemed carefree and energetic.

I was happy for her but at the same time I was worried. Max had barely

been in the ground for a day and she had done a one-eighty. I was just going to have to keep her close and just wait for the emotional breakdown which I was sure would come.

I sat there for a while and just watched her moving her sexy body around on the dance floor. She looked like a fucking vixen the way she was dancing with Jessie and Danni up against her and it made me rock hard in an instant. I wasn't going to be able to wait to get her back to her house to ravage her.

After I finished my shot of whiskey I stood up and made my way toward Everleigh. I felt hands start to grab at me and I brushed them off. I was

used to having girls trying to grope me when we would go out like this and I usually gave Jude a run for his money when it came to plowing through girls. Tonight was the first night that it actually bothered me that women would readily throw themselves at me just to get a few minutes of bathroom sex. In that moment I was thankful I'd found Everleigh because I knew then that I didn't want that life anymore. All I wanted was her.

I had almost made it to where the girls were dancing when I suddenly felt an unfamiliar hand on my dick. "Hey Ryder," said a woman's voice said into my ear. "Take me to the bathroom and fuck me!"

I looked at her and narrowed my

eyes. She had bleach blonde hair with about two inches of dark roots, a dress that was about a size too small, and she reeked of stale cigarettes and cheap beer. I scoffed at her and shoved her hand away. “Not likely, sweetheart. I’ve got my dick pointed at someone a little hotter,” I said, and side stepped her, leaving her standing open mouthed. I thought I heard her yell out “fuck you” as I walked away.

As soon as I made it through the crowd to her, she turned to me and threw her arms around my neck. “You going to dance with me, rock star?” she asked me, smiling.

“No. Come with me,” I said, taking her hand and leading her off the

floor.

“Where are we going?” she asked, looking confused.

I said nothing until we made it to the bathrooms. I opened the door to the women’s bathroom and planned on leading Everleigh into it but when I opened the door, Jude had already beaten me to it. His pants were around his ankles and he had a bleach blonde girl pressed up against the wall and was fucking her hard.

I rolled my eyes and said, “You need to lock the door, dude,” I said and he flipped me off as we left.

I led her to the men’s room and pulled her inside. After I checked all the stalls to make sure we were alone, I

locked the door and pulled her to me.
“Ryder, what are you doing?” she asked.

“I wanted to wait until we got home but I can’t. You looked so fucking hot out there dancing with Jessie and Danni and I have to have you now, gorgeous,” I said, and I picked her up and she wrapped her legs around my waist. I carried her over to the sink and set her down. Her skirt had hiked up her thighs making it easy for my hand to find its way to her panties.

“Ryder, don’t rip these panties. They are my favorite,” she said, grinning.

“Okay, deal. But these fish nets are getting torn, baby,” I answered and she giggled.

“Deal,” she said, and leaned up to kiss me.

“You sure this is okay?” I asked.

She nodded. “I want you, Ryder. Now,” she said and her hands found my belt and she started to tug. Soon my cock was free and she took it in her hands and began to stroke me.

“Oh, fuck,” I moaned and I tore my way through her fishnet tights and moved her panties to the side. She was already soaking wet and I slid two fingers into her. She gasped and her eyes rolled back.

“God, Ryder, I need you,” she whimpered and she slid closer to me. She pulled me closer and positioned me right at her entrance. “Please,” she

begged.

“Anything you want, sexy,” I said, and I slid into her slowly, groaning at the contact.

She screamed out in pleasure and it thankfully went unheard because the music of the club was up so loud. “Oh God!”

We moved in perfect rhythm for several minutes before I felt her starting to clench. “Fuck, I can’t hold out much longer,” I said.

“I’m so close, keep going!” she yelled. After a few more hard thrusts I felt Everleigh’s release flooding around me and that set me off. I emptied myself inside her with a growl.

“God damn, Evie. That was so

hot,” I said, and she smiled at me as we both found our breath.

“You are so amazing,” she said, a satisfied look on her face. “Thanks.”

I chuckled. “You are thanking me for fucking you in a men’s bathroom at a club?”

She bit her lip and smiled. “No, I am thanking you for another new experience I have had now since I met you.”

I smiled. “Just the first of many, gorgeous,” and I leaned in and kissed her. As I put my dick back in my pants I said, “Are you ready to go back out there?”

She jumped down off the sink and pulled her skirt back down and adjusted

it. “Yes. Thank God the lights are low out there. I don’t want anyone to see me blushing.”

I laughed. “I’m pretty sure everyone will know what we were doing in here, Evie. I just don’t think anyone will care since I’m sure Jude is on his second girl of the night in the bathroom right next to us.”

She huffed out a laugh but her face was serious as she fixed her makeup. “I know I haven’t known Jude long but I worry about him Ryder,” she said. “I know that having women thrown at you and partying hard is part of this lifestyle but this just seems a bit excessive to me.”

I shook my head. “Jude has always

been this way. He had a shitty childhood just like the rest of the guys and women are his escape.”

“Well he obviously hasn’t met the right girl. Hopefully she will come along before he catches something from one of the skanks he seems to gravitate towards,” Everleigh said, putting one last finishing touch on her lip gloss. She turned to me and smiled. “Are you ready to go back out there?”

I nodded and winked at her.

“Absolutely.” Just then there was a loud bang at the door.

“Dude, I’ve got to piss! Open the fucking door!” someone barked.

Everleigh blushed and I rolled my eyes. “Let’s go, gorgeous,” I said, taking

her hand and unlocking the bathroom door. We walked out past the line of angry guys waiting to take a piss and I flipped them all off as we walked back out into the club.

Chapter 8

Everleigh

I don't know what possessed me to want to come out to a busy night club tonight but I was actually glad I did. I was trying to do anything to distract myself from facing the fact that my dad was gone and even though it probably wasn't the best or healthiest idea partying with Danni, Jessie, Ryder and the boys was just what I needed. I hadn't been to a club in over a year and it had

ended with Scott beating someone up and harassing me until I left. Tonight was the first night in a long time I'd actually had fun.

Ryder and I had just come back to our table from our romp in the bathroom to find Jude already sitting there downing a shot of Patron. "Hey you two," he said, winking at me.

"Hey yourself," I said, blushing hard. "Where's your girl?"

He shrugged. "Somewhere around here, who knows?" he said. "You two have fun in there?" He wiggled his eyebrows up and down and I blushed even harder.

"Dude, shut up. At least we locked the door so no one would walk in on us.

We are supposed to be laying low tonight, remember?" Ryder said.

"I know, sorry. From this point on the halo is back on," he said, smiling at me.

"Thank you Jude," I said, taking a sip of a Jack and Coke that I'd ordered earlier.

Danni and Jessie came over to the table with Beau and Kris at that moment. "Hey, Everleigh, there you are," Danni said, her speech a little slurred. "I have to pee. Come with me."

I looked over at Ryder and he smiled at me. "It's okay, gorgeous. I'll be here when you get back," he said.

I leaned in and kissed him. "I won't be long." Sighing, I stood up and

smoothed my skirt.

Jessie smiled at me. "I'd better help you in case she falls in the toilet or something," and she leaned in and kissed Kris before turning back to me. I laughed as we followed Danni to the bathroom. We were about halfway there when Jessie said, "Shit, I forgot my purse. I'll be right back." She turned and quickly walked to the table.

As soon as we made it to the ladies room Danni went in and I started to follow inside. Before I could enter I felt someone roughly grab my arm and drag me back out. I tried to scream but a strong hand covered my mouth and pulled me toward the men's room and dragged me inside.

I was thrown against the sink and my stomach instantly hurt from the blunt force. I heard the lock click and I looked up through my tear filled eyes in the mirror to see who my attacker was. I felt anger and fear like never before when my eyes landed on Scott, who was standing behind me with a malicious smile on his face.

“Finally alone, baby girl,” he said.

Chills ran down my spine. “S-Scott, what are you doing? Why can’t you leave me alone?” I groaned, holding my stomach.

I heard him move closer behind me and my stomach rolled. “Because you’re mine, Everleigh. You fucking

took away what was mine and I'm tired of waiting around. I'm taking it back. It's been three years since I've had a taste of you and I want more," he said, taking a step toward me.

Despite the throbbing pain in my abdomen I stood up straight and turned to face him. "You are *not* touching me, Scott. I am not yours and I never will be. I love Ryder and he's going to kill you when he finds out what you tried to do," I said, fear prickling at my scalp.

He cackled and I cringed. "You think I'm afraid of that piece of trash rocker? He's back at the table partying with his loser friends and your drunk friend is in the bathroom next to us and probably hasn't even realized you're

gone. By the time they find you I'll have already fucked you so hard you will be begging me for more," he said and I moved to the side, trying to get away from him.

"You stay the fuck away from me!" I screamed. "Someone help!"

Before I could react Scott lunged at me and pressed me up against the wall, slamming my head. I screamed out in pain. "The music's loud baby girl. No one can hear you scream," he said, putting his hand on my thigh. "I watched that scumbag bring you in here earlier and I know you've already fucked him once tonight in this bathroom. Let's see if I can get you off faster than he did."

His hand started to slide up my

skirt and I fought hard to get away from him. This was not happening...I wouldn't let it. "No! Let go of me! Help! Someone please help me!" I screamed loud. Before I could scream again I felt a hard slap across my cheek and I wailed out in pain.

"Shut up, you fucking dick tease," Scott growled and I heard his belt buckle being unfastened.

"No! Don't touch me!" I screamed and I got one of my hands free. I wasted no time and dug my nails into his cheek and scraped down, drawing blood.

"You bitch!" he yelled and he slapped my face again.

"Leave me alone!" I shouted, still struggling against him. Suddenly I heard

banging on the bathroom door.

“Open the fucking door!” Ryder.
Thank God. “I’m going to fucking kill you if you touch her!”

Scott glared at me and cocked his head to the side. “Guess we will have to make this a quickie,” he said.

As his hand slid up higher and tried to pull down my panties I freaked out and started struggling harder. I was able to wiggle enough to get some room and I kneed him as hard as I could in his balls.

He groaned and doubled over.
“Fuck!” he screamed out. I ran toward the door but I felt him grab a fistful of my hair and tug hard.

I let out a bloodcurdling scream as

he pulled me by my hair and slammed me into the bathroom stall. I felt warm liquid start to drip down the side of my face...I must have been cut. "Help me please!" I screamed louder.

I heard hard frantic banging on the bathroom door. "You are dead motherfucker! Do you hear me? I'm going to kill you, you piece of shit!" Ryder yelled.

"Ryder, help me please!" I screamed out as Scott came charging at me again.

Before he could reach me the bathroom door burst open and Ryder came charging in, tackling Scott to the floor. I looked up and saw Jessie walking toward me and she pulled me

away from the struggle and hugged me.

“I’m so sorry, Everleigh, I got here as soon as I could. I saw him drag you in here and I ran to get the guys. Oh my God, you’re bleeding!” she exclaimed, her eyes wide.

I blinked a few times and tears were pouring down my cheeks. “Thank God you guys got here in time,” I cried. I looked down at Ryder and he was still hovering over Scott, beating his face to a pulp. I tensed up and pulled away from Jessie. I stepped beside him and pulled at his arm. “Ryder, that’s enough! You stopped him!”

“Ryder, you have to stop before you kill him!” Jessie screamed.

Danni came into the bathroom at

that moment and ran to me as Kris, Jude, and Beau came in and slowly pulled Ryder off of Scott, who was now dazed and looked like he was blacking out.

“Come on, man, stop! The cops are on the way, let them handle it!” Kris said.

“This fuckwad isn’t worth spending a night in jail, dude,” Jude said as Ryder was pulled to a standing position. “Go make sure Everleigh’s okay.”

Ryder’s nostrils were flared and his eyes were full of rage as he stared down at Scott’s limp body. “Ryder,” I whimpered, my eyes spilling with tears. “Please. I need you,” I cried.

His eyes snapped to mine in an instant and he quickly pulled me into his

arms. “Did that piece of shit hurt you?” he asked through gritted teeth.

“He did, but not in the way you think. He just threw me around a little bit. You guys got here in time before he did something worse,” I cried.

I heard a terrifying growl come out of Ryder’s mouth and he tried to lunge at Scott again but I held on as tight as I could. “Let go of me, Everleigh! I’m going to kill him!”

“Ryder, don’t! Please, just let the cops handle this! I need you right now!” I begged, tugging on his shirt. “Don’t let me go, please.”

He looked at me again and when his eyes landed on my face he looked horrified. Instead of rage his eyes were

now filled with tears that were threatening to fall. He was breathing like he'd run a marathon. "Ev-ver-leigh..." he choked out. "Shit, you're bleeding," he whispered, trying to contain his emotions. He sounded like he had a lump in his throat as he finally took in my injuries, which apparently must have looked pretty bad judging by the look on his face. He tenderly placed his shaking and bloodied fingertips on my swollen cheeks and said, "I'm so, so, so sorry gorgeous," before tears spilled from his eyes.

"Ryder, it's okay. You got here in time before things got worse," I said, looking into his blue eyes. They were filled with anger and despair like I'd

never seen. “You saved me.”

“Evie...” he whispered. I reached up and wiped the tears from his cheeks with my thumbs. “I’m so sorry.”

“You didn’t hurt me Ryder, don’t apologize.”

“I should have never let you go off on your own with that sick fuck running around. I should have known better,” he said, his jaw tensing.

“Hey, it’s not your fault. Even I didn’t know Scott would do something like this. Please, Ryder,” I cried, feeling heartbroken that he was actually blaming himself for what happened.

He pulled me into his arms gently and ran his fingers through my tangled hair. “I love you so much, gorgeous, and

I promise you that son of a bitch will never touch you again, okay?”

I nodded against his hard chest and cried harder. “I love you too, Ryder.” He held me tight in his arms and just rocked me against him for several minutes as we both cried.

All too soon, someone tapped my shoulder. “Everleigh,” Jessie said gently, “the cops are here.”

I pulled away from Ryder and looked at his shirt. It was soaked with tears and some of my blood. My stomach did another deep flip. “O-okay,” I said, terrified of what I would see when I looked in the mirror. Judging by everyone’s reactions Scott must have done a number on my face.

Ryder led me out of the bathroom before I could peek in the mirror and into the hall as two police officers and two paramedics went inside. An overweight cop with gray hair came up to us and said, “Are you Everleigh Stone?” I nodded. “You mind telling me what happened here?” I told him every detail of Scott’s attack on me, including what he was ultimately planning to do. Ryder tensed up listening to the details and I could feel burning anger radiating out of his body.

As the cop wrote down everything I said, he turned his questions to Ryder. “And how do you figure into this, tattoo boy?” he asked, his eyes giving Ryder a once over.

His eyes narrowed. “How do you think, rent-a-cop? That fucker tried to rape my girlfriend. I did what any normal guy would do and beat the shit out of him. I want his ass thrown in jail and a restraining order against him.”

“Do you think you can just tell me what to do because you are some famous person?” the chubby cop said. “I don’t take orders from some punk like you and you need to show some respect.”

Ryder’s face was hard and he said, “I’ll show respect when it’s earned, *officer*.” His eyes were full of contempt as he stared the cop down, daring him to do something.

Before the cop could respond, I interrupted. “Please, officer, he’s telling

the truth. If Ryder hadn't busted in when he did Scott would have r-raped me," I choked out.

"Be that as it may, it looks like Scott may be in bad shape thanks to your, um, *boyfriend*, so I'm going to have to take him into custody," the cop said, looking at Ryder like he was a piece of gum on his shoe.

"What? No, you can't do that!" I shouted. "Scott attacked me, beat me up, tried to sexually assault me, and you are arresting the man that saved me from him? Ryder was defending me!"

"That doesn't matter right now until we get the facts. He violently attacked a man unprovoked and for that he needs to be taken to jail," said the

cop.

At that moment, one of the other cops came walking out of the bathroom and tapped the one that harassing us on the shoulder. “Hey, Johnson, this guy is going to be fine. He just got knocked out and he’s already coming to. No need to arrest this one. We have witnesses that have corroborated their story.”

Chubby Cop looked pissed and he glared right at Ryder. “You got lucky this time, tattoo boy, but I’ve got my eye on you. You screw up one more time and I’ll have your ass in the back of my squad car before you can even blink, you got it?”

Jessie came over to us at that moment and glared at the cop. “Hey,

stop harassing them and go do your job and arrest the one that started all this,” she said angrily.

He turned and gave Jessie an angry look. “You’d better watch yourself too, little lady,” before walking away from us.

Ryder wrapped his arms around me and said, “Come on, let’s get out of here and get to the hospital.”

I blinked. “Why?”

“Everleigh, you were attacked and your face looks like Scott used it as a punching bag. We need to have you checked out and make sure he didn’t do any real damage,” Kris said, walking over to me.

“I just want to go home and get a

shower,” I said but Ryder shook his head.

“No, we are going to the ER and making sure you are okay,” he said. It was no use arguing with him right now. He’d just beat the hell out of Scott for me and was almost arrested...the least I could do was go get looked at by a doctor. I sighed and nodded and as soon as we saw the police taking Scott into custody he got my coat and we left the club.

Three hours later, I was finally home from the ER. I tried to get out of Ryder’s Escalade and walk to the house

but before I could get out of the car, my door opened and Ryder lifted me into his arms. I was too tired to fight him so I let him carry me into my house.

Thankfully nothing was broken and I didn't have any internal damage, but Scott had left a pretty nasty cut on my forehead, my lip was slightly busted, and I had a pretty bad headache. All in all I was lucky that it wasn't worse. Ryder, however, apparently didn't hear that I would be okay in a few days because he was treating me like I was breakable again.

Once we were inside my house, he shut and locked the door while I was still in his arms and then he carried me down the hall to my room. He hadn't

said anything since we left the hospital and I was getting worried. After he gently placed me on my bed, he was about to walk to my dresser and get pajamas for me when I stopped him. “Ryder?” I said softly. “Will you please talk to me?”

He placed both hands on my dresser and leaned over it, taking deep breaths. “The cops better keep him in jail, Everleigh, because the minute he is free I’m going to kill him,” he said, his voice deep and terrifying.

A wave a fear shot through me. “Ryder, don’t. He’s not worth it. We will just have to...I don’t know what we will do, but I know that between you, the band, and your security team you will

keep me safe,” I said, cautiously coming up behind him and placing my hands on his biceps.

He slightly jumped but stayed still. “I have never been that angry before. If the guys hadn’t pulled me off him he would be dead right now.”

I leaned in and kissed his shoulder blades and moved over to his arms. “You did stop, though. Even when you wanted to attack him again you stopped. I am so thankful for you, rock star,” I whispered, trailing my kisses around his bicep and taking his hand.

“Hearing you screaming for help and then seeing you all bloody...I’ve never felt so helpless. I don’t know what I would have done if he had touched

you,” he said, his upper lip lifting in a snarl.

“Believe me, I wouldn’t have let him. He tried but I kneed him in the balls before he could touch me. You are the only one that gets to do that,” I said, pulling him away from my dresser and wrapping myself around his waist.

“You know he’s going to get out,” Ryder said. “I can hire all the extra security in the world but that fucker will still be free.”

I could see the wheels in his head turning and I was desperate to get his mind off of Scott. I needed him to stop thinking of what could have happened so I tried to use the only weapon I had in my arsenal. I pressed my lips to his neck

and slowly slid my hand down his chiseled abs to the waistband of his jeans. “Well, for tonight, he can’t bother us. It’s just you and me, rock star.”

“Evie,” he said, tensing up. “I’m not-”

“Take a shower with me?” I asked, my tongue darting out past my lips and licking the vein in his neck.

A deep groan rumbled from his throat. “I don’t think this is a good idea right now, gorgeous.”

“The doctor said I was fine, Ryder. We are both bloody and need to wash this night away. Please?” I asked, batting my eyelashes at him. “Please, I need you.”

“I don’t know...” he said, his

breath increasing and his body responding to my touch. I felt warm chills spread through me knowing I affected him this way.

I slid my fingers into his jeans and my fingertips grazed the tip of his dick, which was already solid as a rock.

“Please,” I begged again, “I just want to forget. Make me forget him, Ryder.” I barely spoke his name before his lips gently claimed mine.

“I’ll make you forget, Evie, I promise you,” he whispered between kisses. He gently guided me into my bathroom and I quickly turned on the water before returning to his arms. I found the bottom of his tee shirt, which had been torn in the struggle, and pulled

it off him. My breath caught at the sight of him...I didn't think I would ever be able to fully appreciate his beauty no matter how long I lived.

I tried to kiss his neck but he stopped me by saying, "Lift your arms, gorgeous," and I obeyed. He slid off my top and tossed it to the floor. When his eyes roamed down my body he gasped sharply. His jaw squared as he looked at my stomach. "Fuck," he whispered through gritted teeth. I looked in the mirror and saw what he saw...I had a huge bruise across my stomach from where Scott threw me against the sink.

I blinked a few times...how did I miss this? I'm sure the doctor told me it was there but I just wanted to be home

and in Ryder's arms again that I didn't listen. I looked at him and placed my hand on his cheek. "I'm okay, it doesn't hurt."

"Evie, I can't do this," he said, his voice clouded with different emotions.

"I promise you it doesn't hurt," I said and before he could protest I reached for his hard cock again.

Unbuckling his belt and unzipping his pants until he sprang free, I took his strong thick length in my free hand and said, "I want...no, I *need* you so much right now. Please don't stop."

He closed his eyes tight for a moment and looked away. When his eyes met mine again, they were full of desire and promise. He was going to take my

hurt away...*all* of it.

He gently pushed my skirt down past my hips and it fell to the floor. All I had on was my bra and panties and my black boots. My fishnet stockings were ruined by Ryder before the struggle with Scott so I had thrown them out at the hospital. I slid out of my boots as he unfastened my bra and pulled it off my shoulders.

I was about to take my panties off but he stopped me. He knelt down in front of me and got on his knees. He placed feather light kisses on my bruised stomach before sliding his fingers into the hips of my panties and gently tugging them down. He kissed his way lower as the panties fell to the floor and my knees

buckled as his tongue darted across my entrance. He gripped onto me as he licked and tasted me. All thoughts of Scott and this horrible night were right out the window as he sucked my clit and nibbled it gently with his teeth.

I threw my head back and moaned loudly as the steam from the hot water fogged up the bathroom. Ryder relentlessly licked and sucked until I was so close I was about to scream. “Ryder, I’m close!” I shouted.

“Oh fuck, you taste like heaven,” he groaned, sliding a finger into me slowly. He flicked his tongue quickly across my clit and I was done...I came hard against his mouth, my release dripping down on his hand. I looked

down at him and his eyes met mine. He had a satisfied look on his face as he withdrew his finger and sucked it into his mouth. "Mmm," he moaned.

I pulled him up to his feet and I tugged roughly at his pants so I could get them the rest of the way down. Just as he was stepping out of them I fell to my knees before he could stop me. "Evie, baby, you don't have to-oh holy fucking shit!" he shouted as I grasped his cock with both hands and wrapped my lips around the tip. I pulled him into my mouth as far as I could take him, relishing in the flavor of him. He was so strong yet smooth, like silk over granite.

I worked him up and down with my hands since he was too big to take all

the way into my mouth. I released him a few times to run my tongue along the base of his shaft and tease his round hard balls with the tip of my tongue.

I took his length back into my mouth for just a moment before he gently shoved me back and I released his cock with a soft pop. “What’s wrong?” I asked him.

He shook his head. “Nothing. I want you. Now,” he said, and he guided me to my feet and pulled back the shower curtain. I stepped in and he followed. The hot water felt amazing on my sore muscles.

I turned to face him and he guided me against the wall. Neither of us spoke as he lifted my legs and I wrapped them

around his waist. “Hold onto me,” he said, water spraying our naked bodies.

I gripped his shoulders with my hands as he thrust his hips and sank his thick cock into me. We both moaned loudly and I leaned my head forward and started kissing and sucking on his neck. “Harder, please,” I cried out as he slid in and out of me slowly.

Ryder stilled. “No, baby, not tonight.”

“But-” I protested, but he shushed me.

“After what happened I can’t be rough with you. I am trying to make you forget what he tried to do and I can’t do that if I go too hard. I need to be gentle with you, Evie.”

I bit my lip to hide my emotions. I nodded at him and answered him with a deep kiss. We stayed silent as the water beat down on us and he slowly and gently made love to me.

An hour later, we were lying in my bed, our bodies still connected from making love again. His fingers trailed up and down my spine and my head was resting on his heart. The gentle yet strong rhythm was soothing to me.

“I am so sorry all of this has happened to you, gorgeous,” Ryder whispered.

I sighed. “Will you stop

apologizing? You didn't do any of this to me. My dad was sick long before I even knew you and Scott has been an asshole for years. I am just shocked that he took things as far as he did tonight," I said.

"You know he's going to try this again when he's released from jail, Evie," Ryder said sternly. "The fact that he tried to rape you in the bathroom of a crowded club on a Friday night just proves that he's fucking psychotic. I won't take any more chances with your safety."

My head snapped up off his chest. "What are you saying, Ryder? You're not planning on attacking him, are you?" I was terrified at the thought of Ryder being in jail for assaulting Scott because

that meant I would be all alone and he would have an easy way to get to me.

Ryder looked into my eyes. “No, Everleigh, I was thinking of doing something else entirely,” he said, his face serious.

“W-what?”

He brushed a damp lock of hair from my forehead and tucked it behind my ears. “Come to New York with me.”

My jaw fell open. “New York? Are you serious?”

“I’m deadly serious. While you were being examined by the doctor I got a phone call from our manager Steve. The dickheads that run our label are pissed that we all blew off their orders and came to Indiana to record so they

are pretty much forcing us to fly up there and finish so they can ‘keep an eye on us’ until this album is finished. I told them I’d play ball but I wouldn’t come there without you.”

“Ryder, I can’t let you jeopardize your relationship with your label for me,” I said, feeling guilty.

“Hey, it’s a done deal, Evie. I love you so much and I won’t leave here without you, gorgeous.”

“I don’t know. My dad just died, Ryder. I think I have estate papers to go over and all of that. I need to pack his things up...” I said, but he cut me off.

“It won’t be for long, I promise. We have to make plans to deal with Scott. The stuff with the estate can be

done over the phone. I have to go to New York but I refuse to leave without you. Come with me? Please?"

His eyes were locked with mine for a long moment as I thought about what he was asking me. I was a little worried about leaving my home where I was comfortable and anonymous (for the most part) and running off to New York with Ryder. I would be thrust into his world of celebrities, paparazzi, and gossip magazines and I was a little scared. I also knew that he loved me and would do anything in the world to protect me.

I cleared my throat. "Okay."

"Yeah? You'll come with me?"

"I'll go to New York with you,

Ryder,” I said, and he visibly relaxed.

“Thanks, Evie. Don’t worry about the house. I’ll make sure that someone watches it for while we’re gone.”

I leaned in and kissed him. “Thank you. So,” I said, snuggling into him again, “when do we leave, rock star?”

He looked over to the window and the sun was already starting to rise. “How about now?”

It's fucking cold out here. I should have worn a better coat or brought a bottle of Jack with me. Fuck that...this is all that little cunt's fault. Her and her fucking rocker prick boyfriend...I shouldn't have to fucking hide in the bushes like some stalker but she brought this on. Everleigh was mine and last night was the last time that bitch says no to me. She wants me, I know she does.

When we are back together I'm going to have to punish her for cock teasing me all these years. I hope she fights me...it makes my dick hard to

think of her struggling against me. Once I get my cock in that hot little pussy of hers again she won't fight me anymore. She'll be begging for it.

I bet they are already awake and fucking. She's probably riding his dick and telling him he's the best she's ever had. The thought makes me roll my eyes. I know I'm the best that bitch will ever have and she's lucky I'm willing to give her another chance after that fucking asshole got a few lucky shots in on me at the club.

Suddenly, the front door opens. I see Everleigh and that asshole walking through the front door...they are carrying suitcases. What the hell? Where could they be going at eight o'clock on a

Saturday morning? As the rock trash put their suitcases in the back of his ritzy Escalade, two black SUV's pulled into Everleigh's driveway. I hunched down farther so no one would see me.

Some big dude with black sunglasses on got out of the driver seat and shook the rocker's hand. I gritted my teeth as I watched each of the sleazy fucking rockers take turns hugging my Everleigh.

As I tried to calm myself down they all climbed back into their cars. I saw Everleigh get into the front seat of the prick's Escalade and back out of the driveway. As soon as they were on the road I watched him lean in and kiss my girl before they drove away.

I'm fucking pissed! Where the hell did she think she was going? What gave that mother fucking rat bastard the right to take her away from me? The only thing keeping me calm was the fact that he was a celebrity. If he thought he could hide her from me he was wrong because wherever they went it would be live on some social media or entertainment site within a few hours.

I *will* get her back. I *will* feel my dick in that sweet pussy again. I *will* fuck her so hard she'll scream my name as she comes. I *will* get her back...and I *will* kill whoever stands in my way.

**Ryder and Everleigh's story will
continue in Renegade: Bad Blooded
Rebel Series #3, coming in February
2014!**

Acknowledgments

Holy shizballs! I cannot believe how much you all have loved this story so far! Your response to the boys in *Bad Blooded Rebel* has been phenomenal! Thank you so much for all of the kind words, reviews, and messages telling me how much you love Ryder and the boys! There is so much more to tell... trust me, I'm not done with Ryder, Everleigh, and the gang yet. Not by a *long* shot, my friends.

Thank you so, so much to my faithful band of Rebels! Dawn, Sammy, Leanne, Fiona, and Tiffanie...you girls

are my rocks, I swear. I love each and every one of you and I hope you know how blessed I feel to have crossed paths with you all. I am such a lucky girl to have all of you!

I want to take a second to thank a very, *very* talented author and friend Terri Anne Browning...I really feel that without your advice, suggestions, and help the Bad Blooded Rebel series wouldn't be what it is and has the potential to be. You know rockers inside and out and to have your approval of Ryder and boys means the world to me. If it weren't for the sinfully hot and beautifully broken guys of Demon's Wings I wouldn't have tried my hand at writing a rock band, which is something

I have always wanted to do. Thank you so much and keep those hot rocker boys of yours coming!

As always, thanks to my salon family...you know how much I love you all!!! Thank you for *always* making me laugh and putting a smile on my face no matter what.

Thank you to the family that has supported me and encouraged me. Hopefully you know who you are.

Thank you to my husband and our three beautiful daughters...thanks for letting me tell Ryder and Everleigh's story with minimal complaining, haha.

I encourage all of you to please donate to a special trust account set up for my late friend Casey Krebs' children. She was an amazing mother and wonderful friend who was taken way too soon. She would have done anything for her children and I want to help them now that she can't. The information is below...please donate if you can. Do your part to put an end to domestic violence!

PrimeTrust Financial Account
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3700 W. Bethel Ave.
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I love, love, LOVE to hear from and interact with readers and other authors, so look me up! I am on Facebook (Mellie George), I have an author page for you to “like” (https://www.facebook.com/pages/AuthorMellie-George/329475417182667?bookmark_t=page), I’m on Twitter (@AuthorMellieG), and I am also on Instagram and Pinterest! Come and stalk me, you know you want to, lol! See you all again soon!

Also available from Mellie George on

Amazon and Barnes & Noble:

Say Yes (Glenbrook Girls Series) Book
1

Back To Life

Rebel: Bad Blooded Rebel Series #1

Coming Soon from Mellie George (in
NO particular order):

Renegade (Bad Blooded Rebel Series
#3)

Redeemed (Bad Blooded Rebel Series
#4)

Come Back Home (Glenbrook Girls
Series) Book 2- coming in 2014

Fighting For Us (Sequel to Back To

Life)-coming in 2014

Spotlight (Working Title for Beau and Danni's story)-coming in late 2014/early 2015

Watch for Kris and Jude's stories to follow!

Soundtrack

Ryder's Playlist

1. Coming Back Down- Hollywood Undead
2. Lay Me Down- We As Human
3. Unity- Shinedown
4. Addicted- Saving Abel
5. Smile- Sixx:A.M. (um... SWOON!)
6. Evil Ways (Justice Mix): Bues Saraceno
7. Afterlife- Avenged Sevenfold
8. Breakdown- Seether
9. Legacy- Memphis May Fire

10. Outside- Hollywood
Undead
11. The High Road- Three
Days Grace
12. Sure Feels Right-
Sixx:A.M.
13. *Comin' In Hot-
Hollywood Undead- (I had to
throw one in here for Jude)

Everleigh's Playlist

1. Fire and Rain- James Taylor
2. A Thousand Years- Christina
Perri
3. If I Knew- Bruno Mars

4. Not Like The Movies- Katy Perry
5. Lovesong- Adele
6. Everything Has Changed- Taylor Swift and Ed Sheeran
7. Wanted- Hunter Hayes
8. Look At Me- Carrie Underwood
9. Some People- LeAnn Rimes
10. I Melt- Rascal Flatts
11. The Only Exception- Paramore
12. Glass- Thompson Square
13. Angel Standing By- Jewel

Excerpt from Renegade: Bad Blooded Rebel Series #3...Coming in February 2014!

Everleigh was bouncing back and forth in anticipation. “You okay, gorgeous?” I asked her, smiling.

She nodded. “I am more than okay. I know this is going to hurt but I am just so freaking excited,” she said, grinning like I’d never seen her. “This was something Daddy and I always joked about doing together. I always

complained about the needles but he told me to stop being such a baby about it. He would have been so proud of me right now,” she said with a nostalgic look on her beautiful face.

“He *is* proud of you, Evie,” I said.

“I hope so. You know what the best part of all this is?” she asked.

“What, baby?”

“I’m paying for it,” she said, grinning.

I cocked an eyebrow at her. “You think so, huh?”

“Oh, I know so. I got a thousand dollar tip at my job about a month ago from this really hot lead singer in a pretty famous rock band so I can definitely afford it,” she said, grinning.

I smiled at her. “Shit...I was hoping you’d forgotten about that,” she said, referring to the first day I showed up in Muncie and left her a one thousand dollar tip with my phone number tucked inside the money as a way to get her to call me.

“I’m a girl, Ryder. I don’t forget,” she said, smiling.

“Come on Evie. You hardly ever let me buy you anything. Let me do this for you,” I said.

“This of it this way...whether it’s this money or not, either way you are paying for it, rock star.”

I grinned. “Yeah, I guess you’re right. Well played, Miss Stone,” I said, giving her a quick kiss.

Just then the curtain pulled back and Jake came walking toward us, a big goofy smile on his face. “Well if it isn’t the second sexiest motherfucker in the world!” he shouted. “What is *up*, man? How the hell have you been?” Jake was a good looking guy and got about as much action as I used to and was giving Jude a run for his money. He had jet black hair that he wore kind of long and shaggy (I loved to tease him and call him an Emo bitch boy with a tattoo gun), he had piercing blue eyes, and had an eyebrow and lip ring like I did in addition to a bull ring through his nose and two dermal piercings in his cheeks.

“I’ve been good, bro, I’ve been really good,” I said, shaking his hand

and pulling him into a back pounding hug.

As soon as Jake released me his eyes flicked to Everleigh and he gave her a quick once-over before he turned his eyes to mine. “Yeah, I can see that,” he said, a big smile on his face. “So, this must be your girl, huh?” He cocked his eyebrow and stared at her like she was the hottest thing he’d ever seen.

“Eyes in your head, tattoo boy,” I said, slapping the back of his head and he laughed. “Jake, this is my girlfriend Everleigh Stone. Evie, this is Jake Riggins. He’s the one that’s doing your tattoo tonight. That is if I don’t break his fingers.”

Jake laughed and held his hand out

to Everleigh. “It’s nice to meet you Everleigh. Sorry to hear about your dad,” he said and Everleigh smiled sadly. “I’m actually really honored Ryder asked me to draw this up for you.”

“Well, I am glad that you are willing to do it. I’ve seen Ryder’s tattoos and they are really beautiful. I can’t wait to see what you came up with.”

Jake held his hand out and pointed to the curtain. “Well, step into my office and let’s take a look,” he said, showing us the way. Everleigh went first and I heard Jake whisper to me, “Damn dude! How did a shithead like you get a smoking hot chick like her?”

I grinned at him and whispered back, “Easy. I have a monster sized cock,” I joked, and he laughed.

“Seriously, man, she’s fucking killer. Hang on to her because I might snatch her up if you two ever hit the skids.”

“Okay, joke time is over. You are about to tattoo her naked hip. I was serious about breaking your fingers, dude,” I said, patting him on the arm a little harder than I probably should have.

“I’m just messing around. Come on, let’s look at the drawing,” Jake said and we all went back to his tattoo room.