



Chapter Thirty-one: At a Barnes & Noble

I laid down for a nap after the whole ordeal. I didn't wake until the next morning. Jasper didn't bother me. I think he understood more than most what it was like to have something like that happen. It was like being manhandled by Michael Myers or Freddy Kruger.

The following day, he was sitting up beside me while drawing. My nose was close to his leg, just an inch away. I had a flashback to almost a year before. Pushing my face into it, I smiled. This time there was no hesitation or fear. I could touch him and be as affectionate as I wanted to be. My fingers curled around the fleece.

Chuckling, he rubbed the back of my head gently. "Hey there. Are you feeling okay?"

"Yeah. I was just... exhausted. I'm fine," I promised as I gazed up at him. "The adrenaline rush was a little too much for me."

"That's understandable."

When I rolled over onto my back, I realized there were dozens of balloons around the couch. Giggling softly, I tilted my head to the side to read all the messages. Most of them were

birthday wishes, but some were 'you are number one' or something like that. They were all done with long ribbons that were curled to the floor.

"Wow."

"Sam got you those. He delivered them a little while ago," he told me quietly. "Happy birthday, darlin."

"Thank you." I lightly laughed. I could only assume he went to the dollar store down the street. He went overboard, but it was adorable. I liked it.

"And... congratulations," Jasper drew out before shaking his head. "Number one for a debut novel is very impressive. But I'm not surprised. Especially with the reviews that it's getting. The one from the LA Times I was reading this morning called it an 'addicting masterpiece from beginning to end with more unexpected twists than a maze. You'll want to read it a second time as soon as you finish the last word.' Which is what I've been saying for years now!" He spoke so dryly it took a moment for his words to register. His smile slowly grew.

I brought my hand up to my mouth. "It's number one? Seriously?"

Nodding, he bit his lip for a moment. "It was a close one, but you got about a thousand more. You knocked out someone who had been there for almost a month."

Sitting up, I pushed my hair out of my eyes. "Who?" I asked in surprise. I hadn't been looking on purpose. It scared me, to be honest. Plus, I didn't want to give myself an ego or get my hopes up too high. Either was bad. I wasn't better than anyone else on it, and I knew it was just luck sometimes.

Jasper picked at the blanket before his eyes met mine. "John Grisham. The third was Stephen King, and the fourth was James Patterson."

We were both silent, letting the names hang in the air. He gingerly rubbed my back as I stared straight ahead. I couldn't move. After a minute, he reached over and took something from the dresser. It was his copy he ordered. The torn-up packaging was up on the bedside table. He took a blue pen from the cookie tin and passed it to me.

"May I be the first to have your autograph, Goddess?"

Laughing, I hugged it to my chest. I had received my personal preview copy from the publisher, but it was so different since it was purchased. Taking the cap off, I placed the tip on my lips. "What should I write, sir?"

“Hm,” he hummed and pushed his face into my hair. “I don’t know. I think that’s up to you.” He kissed the back of my neck.

Smiling wickedly, I glanced at him. “I should put something dirty, so you can’t show it to anyone.”

He chuckled. “Well, I will have more than one copy, so go ahead.”

I nodded gravely, opening the book. “Dearest Daddy, I love your cock so-” I began in a childish voice. He didn’t allow me to finish, laughing as he tackled me onto the bed. He tried to pin me down, but I rolled over onto my stomach. Jasper straddled my thighs. “I love it when you put it in my-” I continued. He whacked me hard. “Oo, yes, Daddy.”

“It sounds so wrong when you say it like that.”

“Doesn’t Alice call you Daddy?”

“She’s not currently doing it, no,” he deadpanned. I flexed my thighs, pushing on him. “You could seriously kill a man with this ass,” he continued to mess with me.

“You know what I mean!” I laughed, doing it again. He put both hands on it and squeezed tightly.

“It’s just different. It wasn’t really my thing. I don’t hate it, but I’ve never thought of you as an age-player like her. You have some ‘little’ tendencies, but that comes with being a bratty switch. I admit I like some aspects of it. When you wear innocent clothing, like the long Johns or your crop top. I enjoy tucking you in and feeding you, but I think that’s because I enjoy taking care of you outside of domination. It’s not something I’ve done with others.”

I rolled over while he still straddled my thighs. Moving my hands over his hips, I batted my eyelashes seductively at him. “I enjoy taking care of you too, Daddy,” I said as breathily as possible.

Rolling his eyes, they tilted back up towards the ceiling before shaking his head. “I keep imagining a day when we have kids and-” He laughingly began, but I interrupted him.

“Do you want to have kids?” I asked him in surprise.

He looked at me in shock, his mouth opening up a little. Jasper blinked several times. I don’t think he realized what he was saying until I pointed it out. “I don’t know, to be honest. It’s something I’ve thought about. I wouldn’t... I wouldn’t hate it with you. If you want them. If you don’t, it’s fine. It’s not a big deal. It’s just when I see our future-”

Sitting up, I wrapped my hand around the back of his neck and pulled him down to me in a kiss. "Do you want children?" I repeated. I ran my nose across his, our forehead's touching.

"Not today. Or nine months from now. But maybe in a few years? I probably don't want to wait until I'm fifty, or I won't see our grandchildren for sure," he answered softly, almost like he was nervous about doing so.

I laughed. "Grandchildren. Wow. We're not even married yet."

Jasper flashed a quick smile. "One day," he remarked, kissing my chin. "If you want to," he added. "It's not really up to me."

"The idea is growing on me," I admitted, pecking his lips lightly. "I like the idea of forever with you."

"We'll have that even if we don't get a piece of paper, I promise. I just- I just wanna claim you as mine and show everyone that I'm yours, too. No. It's more than that. I want to tie myself to you permanently. And I don't see either of us wearing collars in our day-to-day lives," he joked. His cheeks were slightly flushed. "Rings might be a better option."

"I am yours. I'm wearing one already." I touched my throat. My lock and key never came off. "It might not be spiky leather, but I know what it means to both of us."

His fingers moved over the chain. "It doesn't feel like enough."

"You just want to get your mom off your back," I jested to lighten the mood. He laughed softly before kissing the nape of my neck. His lips were touching the necklace. "She'll be so mad at you when we elope someday." I paused for a moment. "But not at me. She loves me."

"She can be angry. I don't give a damn. I love her, but I enjoy my sanity. As stunning as you would be walking down the aisle, it wouldn't be worth it if we both become alcoholics before the event." I shook with my giggles. "No. You can laugh. I saw what it did to my sister and Em."

"She'll still throw a big party."

Shrugging, he pursed his lips. "I can't stop her from doing that, but this is one thing I'd like to have control over. The moment I bind myself to you, it will be special and private. Ours and no one else's. I won't allow anyone to take that from us, even my mother."

I pulled him to me to kiss, my fingers tangling with his beautiful honey-colored curls. They were so thick and soft. "You can be so romantic sometimes."

He smirked at my words. "So, can I take you to breakfast, Goddess? After we eat, we can go to the bookstore."

"Sounds perfect. What should we do tonight?" I questioned. The trial had made it hard to plan on anything. It was too emotionally draining.

Burying his face in my neck, he lightly suckled on my skin. "Whatever you like."

"I don't want to think for a while," I admitted, tilting my chin to the side to give him better access.

"Do you want me to take care of everything?" I nodded my head, smiling a little. "I can do that. Would you like to do a scene, or do you just need to be spoiled?"

I bit my lip. "Can we do a scene, sir?"

His smile grew. "Of course. I have some things in mind I think you'll enjoy. I'll make a reservation for tonight, and we'll eat somewhere nice first. Perhaps I'll take you out dancing. Shall I dress you, too?"

"Yes, please."

Jasper swallowed, licking his lips before meeting my eyes. "When would you like to start?"

I kissed him again. "Right now, sir."

He smiled for just a moment before nodding. "Okay, but I want you to tell me what you need today when you need it. No matter what it is. I want to take care of you, Isabella." Leaning forward and kissing him again, I let my lips linger there for a long moment. I nodded in answer. "I love you, darlin."

"I love you, too, sir."

"Now. You still need to sign my book and don't put anything naughty in there, young lady. Or, I'll beat your ass," he stated sarcastically.

Challenge accepted.

Grinning wicked, I reached for the hardback that landed on the floor. "Dearest Daddy-" I started.

“Really?!” He laughed, flipping me over so I was on my stomach. He thwacked me playfully. I was only in his shirt and panties, the hit connecting with my thighs. I was giggling as I struggled against him. “Alright. If that’s what you want to do, you can call me that all day long. I’ll make you do it in public, too.” He pinned my arms above my head. “Make you wear pigtails and something cute.”

“Oo, that’ll backfire on you, Daddy,” I said cheerfully, wiggling my butt against him. “It sounds like too much fun.”

“You’re probably right. Am I going to have to take you over my knee?” He ground his erection against my ass. I could feel it through the thick fabric of his sleep panties. “Oh, wait... Don’t I have to give you birthday spankings, anyway?” Snickering, I pushed my face into the blanket. “Oh, I know what I want you to wear today.”

We took a shower together, and he had me blow dry my hair and put on light makeup. When I came out, my short black flared skirt was on the bed, a pair of knee socks beside them. He paired it with a simple white t-shirt. My panties were cute polka-dotted pink. There was no bra.

I stood there in just my underwear and socks. “Um, did you forget something?”

“Nope.” He grinned. “Don’t worry. You’ll be in a sweater, too. I don’t want you to get too chilly.”

“My tits are too big to be hanging out everywhere,” I commented, sliding on my skirt first. I buttoned it on my hip.

He was putting on his blue jeans and a black button-down. I liked the color change. It contrasted beautifully with his hair and skin. “They’re perfect just like that, and everyone should see how incredible they look. I would have you walk around like that if it were legal.”

“Are you sure you want everyone to see them?” I asked, running my hands over my nipples slowly.

“Yes, but no one else can touch them but me. They’ll get to view perfection, but they can’t have it. Only I can.”

Jasper was going to fluff my ego so much. It was lovely, and I adored it.

Pulling on my t-shirt, I slipped on the Mary-Janes he had picked out to go with them. He went into the bathroom, spritzing on his cologne before picking up a brush and a hairband.

“Sit on the bed,” he ordered.

When I did, he came behind me. Gently, he combed my hair so that it was straight down my back. I closed my eyes, enjoying this kind of attention. When satisfied with it, he braided it in a thick rope. He kissed my neck lightly before placing something around it. I brought my hand up to feel the simple black collar. It seemed nothing more than a slightly gothy choker.

He helped me slip on my sweater. It was something comfortable and baggy. It was cashmere and buttoned down the front. He did them for me, rubbing his knuckles over my nipples through my shirt before. Jasper made them rock hard.

We had breakfast at a sweet little brunch spot that was super busy. We sat close together. Under the table, his big hand rubbed my thigh just beneath my skirt. He kept whispering in my ear how beautiful I was, how enraptured he was by me, and all the dirty things he wanted to do to me once we were alone.

Next, we drove to Barnes & Noble. It was quiet, still early on a Saturday. We strolled together, hand in hand, to the front. As soon as we entered, my book was on a table for everyone to see. It had a sticker that said, “#1 NYT BEST-SELLER!” I laughed, overwhelmed with my emotions at seeing it for the first time.

“Oh, the best part,” he commented as he walked ahead of me to a section at the entrance. It had all the top ten of the week in a row. There were so many big-name authors. I giggled again, putting both hands over my mouth to hide my grin. “I told you, and it’s not even been a year.”

“Hi! Can I help you?” One of the employees, a middle-aged woman with hoop earrings and dreads, asked.

“No, thank you. We’re just looking.” He beamed at her innocently.

“If you’re interested in this one,” she pointed at my book, “I just started it on my break, and it’s fantastic! I’ve only gotten to chapter three, and I can’t wait to get back to it tonight.”

Jasper grinned impishly. “Oh, really? This one?” He picked it up. I smiled at him. I liked it when he was in a playful mood. “Actually, it’s one of my favorite books.”

“Oh, you’ve read it? Yeah, I heard she self-published first.” She nodded thoughtfully.

“Yeah. I’m probably her biggest fan. I was trying to get her to sign my copy this morning, but she was a real pain in the ass about it for some reason,” he joked, looking directly at me.

Snorting, I stuck my tongue out at him. “You told me I could put whatever I wanted!”

The woman looked at me in confusion, slowly smiling. "Wait, are you the author?" I nodded, grinning at her. "No shit! Can you sign my copy?"

I laughed awkwardly. "Sure."

"Awesome! I got to run to the break room to get it. Why don't you wait in the café and I'll get you a drink?"

"Okay! Cool," I answered. She hurried to go fetch it.

My boyfriend started towards the cashier with the book. He picked up one of the many pens they sold up at the front. I didn't even bother to ask what he was doing. When he finished, he took my hand and walked with me to the coffee shop.

"You have to sign mine first," he whispered in my ear. I had been too feisty earlier in the day.

I sat down and took the bag from him with a roll of my eyes. Biting my lip, I relaxed away so he couldn't see what I was scribbling. He smirked.

Tapping it against my lips for a moment, I held his gaze before I started writing. "To my love, best friend, and future, I adore you with all of my soul. Finding you has been the greatest joy of my life. I can't wait to spend seventy more birthdays with you. You inspire me in every way. I love you.

Your Isabella."

Just as I finished, the woman came skidding over with her copy. There were two other employees with her. One of them definitely had their cell phone out to double-check to see if it was really me. His eyes got wider.

"So, I need you to know that this is my very first for real autograph. He doesn't count," I teased, winking at him. I passed Jasper back his book. "What should I write? Just sign my name?"

"That works!" She answered. "Do you mind doing theirs as well?"

"Of course not."

As I signed, he opened his to see what message I wrote. I think he was expecting it to be dirty. Slowly he licked his lips, reading over the words more than once. When I finished, I met his eyes again.

“Oh, my god! This is dope! What can I get you and your husband to drink? On the house!” The woman swiftly stated, almost bouncing in place with her excitement. The other two employees went back to work.

“You know, I’d love a small mocha frappé.”

She pointed at him. My boyfriend put his hand up. “No, thanks.” When she left to get that, he leaned down to kiss me thoroughly on the mouth with his fingers on the back of my head. Jasper brought his lips up to my ear to whisper. “Thank you for signing my book, Goddess. I will cherish it always.”