

## Chapter 21 – By Fate I Conquer Cora

I carefully picked up a piece of clothing, acutely aware of Maddox's eyes following my every move. From the messy pile, it was hard to tell if the clothes were dirty or clean.

Maddox let out a low laugh as he perched on the windowsill and blew smoke outside. "Everything's clean. But as you can see, I don't have a wardrobe, so the chair has to do."

"Ironing and folding too complicated for you?" I asked after I'd picked up a simple black T-shirt and black boxers. It felt strange touching Maddox's underwear. The idea of wearing them felt even stranger. My relationship with Giovanni had always been too formal for me to get the chance to run around in his clothes, not to mention that he would have never allowed me anywhere near his underwear.

"Be my guest if you want to stay in your dirty clothes."

I grabbed the T-shirt and his boxers and disappeared into the bathroom. The room was clean but small. Maddox was right. I'd never been in a bathroom as simple as this. Even my friends came from money and had bigger and more luxurious bathrooms than most people. I washed my underwear in the sink with soap but my pants and blouse were ruined. After a quick shower, I dressed in Maddox's clothes. His shirt reached my thighs and his boxers hung low on my hips, almost slipping off. It felt strange being this vulnerable around a man like him.

When I left the bathroom, Maddox was gone. I walked toward the window, unsure what to do. Lying down in Maddox's bed felt like a bad idea. I was dead tired but my suspicion kept me wide awake. After a while the door opened and Maddox came in with a plate stacked with sandwiches. He paused briefly, his eyes tracing from my bare feet over my naked legs all the way up to my face. He didn't give away anything. Usually men always went slack-jawed but usually I dressed up.

"I have some sandwiches for you."

"You made them?"

He shook his head with an amused expression as if the mere suggestion was absurd. "I had Cherry make them. She's a decent cook."

"The girl you got cozy with a few days ago?"

He nodded, as if it was no big deal. "Didn't she mind that she had to make dinner for another woman who'd spend the night in your room?"

"We aren't dating, only f\*cking. She's a pass-around. She doesn't care. I'm not the only guy she's got an eye on. If someone else asks her to be his old lady, she'd dump me in the dust in the blink of an eye. All these girls want is a cut that declares them a biker's property."

My lips curled. "A pass-around, really? How s\*xist can you be?"

"Don't act so high and mighty. In your circles women are used as bargain. I mean, who still uses arranged marriages?"

"They worked for centuries," I said haughtily. "And I'm not promised."

"Anymore. Weren't you and that sappy guy supposed to marry in two years?"

"We didn't have a date yet. But for your information, I chose him, not my parents."

"You chose someone your father allowed near you so you would choose him."

I had never seen it that way, but it was true that only certain boys had been allowed near me once I hit puberty. All of them well-behaved and respectful, not to mention terrified of my father. "You know nothing of our life. But it's certainly better than this lawless hillbilly life you lead."

"I'm free to do as I please. You are bound by your old-fashioned rules."

Even if he had a point, I couldn't just let it drop. I motioned at the hellhound tattoo on his upper arm, the sign of his club. "You can't just leave the club either. That's not freedom."

"I live for that club. I'd never leave it. It's my f\*cking life."

"And my family is my life, so I'm not less free than you."

"I don't think you really understand what freedom means."

I'd often longed for freedom, but not away from my family and the world I grew up in.

Maddox held out the plate again, then set it down on the nightstand. "You can eat in bed if you want, I don't mind."

"What about crumbs?" I asked, more to gain time and get rid of my sudden nervousness.

"These sheets have seen worse," Maddox said with a chuckle, making his way over to the armchair.

My lips curled. "I think I'll sleep on the floor."

Maddox gave me a pissed-off look. "I changed them this morning, so don't get your panties in a bunch. But if you prefer the floor, be my guest. I don't give a f\*ck."

He removed his cut and draped it over the backrest. It was the first time I saw him without it since the kidnapping. The way he looked at it, the piece of leather seemed to be important to him.

He slanted me a warning look. "Don't touch my cut while I take a shower."

"Don't worry."

He turned in the doorway to the bathroom. "And don't try anything or I'll dump your perky ass in the kennel again." He closed the door.

"Asshole," I muttered, but I was almost thankful. If he really did this to protect me, then it was a nice gesture. However, I couldn't believe it was only because of that.

I'd inherited my father's distrustful nature and it was rearing its head now. When water began running, I headed for the door and pushed the handle down but it was locked. Male voices and boisterous laughter sounded downstairs, so the locked door was probably for the best anyway.

Glancing at the stack of sandwiches and hearing my stomach's angry rumble, I finally took one with cheese and ham. I usually didn't eat carbs or dairy. One made you fat and the other gave you pimples, but I really couldn't bring myself to care. I stuffed one-third of the sandwich into my mouth and bit off, chewing eagerly. After living in a stinking cage for days and being at the mercy of those bikers, most of my previous worries seemed awfully irrelevant. Briefly my mind touched on the video, wondering who had seen it, but I shoved the thought aside. It wasn't useful at the moment. The past was the past. I needed to figure out a way to improve my future.

Sooner than expected, Maddox came out of the bathroom and I almost had a heart attack. He wore nothing but boxers, revealing a muscular upper body covered in tattoos. Now the pull-up bar hanging from the ceiling by the window made sense. That body required work. I had to force my eyes away from him. His body screamed bad boy. I'd grown up around bad men, but Maddox carried his very own forbidden, bad boy aura.

Maddox looked at me as if I were an intruder in his space, as if I'd asked to be here, as if any of this had been my choice. He walked over to the small table and grabbed the cigarette package that lay there. "Did you touch my cut?"

I rolled my eyes. "It's a piece of leather."

He raised his eyebrows.

“No, I didn’t touch it.”

He nodded, obviously satisfied. He picked up the packet of cigarettes from the windowsill.

“You’re smoking in your bedroom?”

He put the cigarette into his mouth, lit it and took a deep drag before he finally deemed me with a reply. “Got a problem with that?”

I shrugged. “It’s unhygienic and disgusting. Not to mention dangerous, considering how many people fall asleep with a burning cigarette and set themselves aflame. It’s your health. But I’d prefer if you’d choose something that kills you quicker than nicotine.”

Maddox’s expression twisted with anger and he stalked toward me. I forced myself to stay put and not back away from his fury. “I’m the only thing that stands between you and a bunch of horny bikers who want to get a taste of mafia p\*ssy.”

Why did this enrage him so much? He’d been particularly tense since we arrived in his bedroom. I stiffened. “Why do you even care? Why don’t you let them have a go at me if you hate my family so much?”

“I hate your father. You only annoy the f\*ck out of me because you don’t even realize how privileged you are.”

Due to his outburst, he’d come very close to me so the scent of his brisk, minty shower gel flooded my nose. His hair was still wet and messily hung down his forehead. My eyes were drawn to the tattoos all over his upper body and arms. Images of hellhounds, knives, skulls and bikes.

“Stop playing the victim here,” I said eventually.

Maddox glared at me but something in his eyes made me feel hot. “I was a victim a long time ago, I’m not now.”

My eyes flickered from the piercing in his tongue to the bar in his nipple.

“I have more,” he said and took another drag.

“Where?” I asked.

His gaze moved down to his boxers. “Two more.”

My mouth fell open, trying to imagine where exactly he had them. My cheeks became hot. “You’re toying with me.” I narrowed my eyes. “You just want to make me nervous.”

“Why would two piercings in my dick make you nervous?” he asked, but his voice had a new, deeper timbre.

I shrugged. “They don’t.”

He smirked, seeing right through me. Everything about Maddox made me nervous. “Go to bed, princess.”

He always succeeded in making the word sound like the worst insult imaginable.

Not wanting to appear scared, I sat on the very edge of the bed, my toes on the floor. The bed linen smelled fresh and not like smoke or sweat. Maybe he normally only smoked with the window open and just didn’t to annoy me.

By Fate I Conquer Cora Reilly

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“I’m not worried about that.”

He nodded, narrowing his eyes in thought. “Then what are you worried about?”

“Isn’t it obvious? I’m not too thrilled about sleeping beside my kidnapper without protection.”

He pointed at his chest. “I’m your protection, and you sure as f\*ck don’t need protection from me. Your pussy is safe.”

I gritted my teeth, then finally laid back on the bed. It was much harder than I was used to from home but felt like a soft cloud after the hut.

Maddox finished his smoke but even then he stayed in front of the window, looking out. The letters Tartarus MC were written across his back and shoulders, and below it a skull was spitting fire, the same image as on his sternum. "Why the skulls?"

He glanced down at his chest. "My father had the same tattoo. I don't remember much about his appearance. Whenever I try to recall how he looked, I see the bloody pulp your father turned him into. That tattoo is all I got."

I swallowed. "I'm sorry for what my father did."

He nodded, watching me intensely. "Not your apology to hand out, and I doubt your old man will ever utter the words."

He probably wouldn't.

I looked away from his too personal stare and scanned his other tattoos. The words "no regrets" graced his left forearm.

"You only regret the things you didn't do," I murmured. It was a quote I'd read on a motivational post on Instagram once and it had resonated deeply with me.

Maddox sent me a confused look until I pointed at his tattoo. He smiled wryly. "What do you regret not doing?"

The list was long, but nothing I felt comfortable discussing with Maddox. I tore my eyes away from him and stared up at the ceiling. The fan was spinning around in slow, mesmerizing circles. "Nothing."

He laughed and my belly flipped. He appeared at the bedside, towering over me, still only dressed in his boxers. "I don't believe you. I'm sure there are plenty of things you're dying to do but can't because your ol' man is always watching your back."

I didn't say anything. Maddox sank down on the other side of the bed and I curled my hands into fists. "Don't try to smother me while I sleep. If you try anything, I'll hand you over to Cody myself."

I nodded, not trusting my voice. I felt too hot when Maddox stretched out beside me. His bed was entirely too small for two people who weren't dating. Our arms were practically touching. You could hardly count the half inch between us. I folded my hands on my belly to bring more space between our arms.

"For someone who's been flirting with me in the kennels, you're awfully quiet now," he joked, his face tilted toward me.

I turned my head in his direction. Despite our closeness, I wasn't half as scared as I should have been. If I wanted my plan to work, I should have been flirting with him now, but this was definitely out of my comfort zone. "I thought you wanted to sleep."

"I do," he said, but his eyes said something else. I swallowed when he finally looked away and extinguished the lights.

I listened to his breathing, clinging to consciousness, hoping he'd fall asleep before me. But I just knew he was wide awake. I wondered what kept him from sleep. It couldn't be worry for his life. Maybe he was imagining all the things he could do to me. My pulse sped up. Problem was it wasn't only from anxiety.

When I woke the next morning, I jerked up in bed, looking around. Maddox perched on the windowsill. His cheek dimpled upon meeting my eyes. "You survived, see?"

I cleared my throat and brushed down my hair, feeling vulnerable knowing Maddox had seen me sleep. It was a very personal thing, and one I'd never shared with anyone outside my family. The sun had only just risen, but Maddox looked as if he had been awake for a while.

"Why are you up?"

Maddox shrugged. "You took up too much space in bed."

I tilted my head in consideration. It almost appeared as if Maddox felt uncomfortable with me in a bed. At least, I wasn't the only one who wasn't at ease. I got up and stretched. Maddox followed the movement. Maybe he was scared of his own desire. I needed to use this. As I strode over to him, under his unwavering attention, my courage slipped away. Like he had said, he wasn't like Giovanni. Maddox wouldn't hold back from fear of my father. He'd probably send him a detailed recount if we ever had s\*x.

A hot wave passed through my body at the thought.

I wrapped my arms around my chest as I stopped beside him, and the cold morning air hit me. My nipples hardened and I was acutely aware that Maddox could see it through the thin fabric of the T-shirt.

"I'll be gone on runs most of the day but I'll leave enough food and water, and keep the door locked."

I nodded, following his gaze out over the horizon and marveling at how strange the situation was. In a blink, my life had been turned upside down and I had a feeling this was only the beginning.

I checked out Maddox's profile, the sharp angles, then lingered on the scar that looked like a dimple. "How did you get that scar?"

Maddox touched the spot and smiled wryly. "When I was nine, I tried to set Earl's dogs free on a fight night. A few of them managed to run off. He hit me with one of the spiked collars he uses on the dogs."

"That's horrible. But why did it heal so badly? The wound couldn't have been that deep."

"He said if I wanted to pick the dogs' side, I'd be treated like one and their wounds always have to heal without treatment. He locked me in the cage for a couple of days too, so I know how it feels."

My mouth fell open. "No wonder you're so messed up."

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I leaned against the wall, frowning. "But Earl was supposed to take care of you after your father died not scar you mentally and physically."

He sighed and shook his head. "I don't know why I even told you."

"Because you don't have anyone else, you trust enough to share it with."

I spent all day sitting on the windowsill. At first, I'd been surprised that Maddox didn't lock the window. But I soon figured out why escaping through the window, apart from the risk of jumping down from the second floor, wasn't an option. I spotted guards patrolling a wire-fence, and one of them had a Rottweiler on a leash. He'd probably send the beast after me if I tried to run. Remembering Satan's sharp teeth, I shuddered to think what they'd do to my flesh. Satan and I had made—at least temporary—peace but I wasn't blind to the danger the dogs posed.

I searched the horizon for signs that Dad was on his way. I wasn't even sure what I was looking for exactly. He'd certainly try to keep his attack secret for as long as possible to surprise the bikers. I knew he was searching for me but being unable to contact him or anyone else from the family felt as if a part of me was ripped away. Even when I'd been away from home, I'd always had my phone with me to contact them whenever I pleased. Now I felt more alone than I ever had in my life.

Maddox came home after nightfall, looking disheveled and pissed.

"What happened?" I asked, sitting up in bed.

"Your father."

He didn't elaborate, only disappeared in the bathroom. I couldn't help but smile.



Maddox came out ten minutes later and got into bed without another word, but he didn't turn down the lights.

"I told you my father would stop at nothing to save me," I said, not able to hold in my giddiness.

Maddox scoffed. "How did he brainwash you into being his biggest fan, despite all his faults? Whatever drug he gave you must be worth millions."

"He's my father, of course I believe in him. And the drug you're looking for is love." I cringed inwardly at how sappy that sounded, but it was true. Dad didn't only spoil me with presents and money, he spoiled me with love and affection as well.

"I'm going to throw up." Maddox twisted around, facing me fully. "Come on, be honest for a moment. You must realize what kind of man your father is. Don't tell me you don't care."

"I know what kind of man he is. Everyone in my family is involved with the mafia. And your family members are outlaws so don't tell me there's much of a difference. You justify your actions with club loyalty and your cut, and the members of my family justify it with their oath and the loyalty to the tattoo on their chest."

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“Of course, didn’t you see them?”

I rolled my eyes. “Not for fun, or pass-arounds. I mean as members.”

“No, it’s against the rules.”

“So if you had an older sister, she couldn’t get involved with the club?”

He frowned. “Okay, both the club and the mob don’t allow women. But you seem like a girl who’s used to getting what she wants. It must be hard to be in second place, and not even that. Your word will never mean anything in the Famiglia. If you marry some pompous Italian mobster, he’ll rise in rank in the Famiglia and you can raise his kids and give him blowies if he returns home from a hard day at work.”

“Blowies?” I repeated with a disgusted twist of my lips while heat traveled up my throat in a very embarrassing way.

Maddox used his tongue to tent his cheek in a very obvious way.

“That’s disgusting.”

“A blowy or my interpretation of it?”

“Both,” I muttered.

“Don’t tell me you never gave that poor asshole a blowy in two years of relationship. No wonder he always looked so pinched. I would too if I didn’t have a nice long blowy in years.”

“Stop saying that word,” I muttered. I’d never wanted to give Giovanni oral, and he would have never dreamed of asking me. He’d never even allowed me near his fly in our relationship. “This discussion is over.”

“Do I make you feel uncomfortable?” Maddox asked, obviously enjoying himself.

He made me uncomfortable for various reasons, none of which I’d discuss with him, especially not while sharing a bed.

Flirt with him.

That had been the plan but following through was more difficult.

Maddox watched me and my palms became sweaty. My body had never reacted to someone's presence like that. I made others nervous, not the other way around.

"Why would anyone pierce his genitals?" I blurted, wanting to break through the silence.

Maddox's answering smile only made me feel hotter. "To receive more lust, and even more importantly, to give more lust."

My mind went into overdrive. Maddox and I stared into each other's eyes, then he shook his head with a chuckle and rolled over on his back. "Go to sleep before we both do something we might regret."

"I doubt you'd regret me," I said.

Maddox closed his eyes with a sardonic smile. "I wouldn't."

His confirmation stunned me. My eyes traced his chest, which wasn't covered by the sheets.

"And you, would you regret me?" he asked eventually.

"Definitely," I said. I didn't even want to consider the social media shitstorm I'd be submitted to if word got out that I'd slept with a biker, even if it was to save me. In our circles, women were condemned in the blink of an eye. And my family? Dad would lose it.

Maddox nodded, his eyes still closed. "Yeah. You'd definitely regret me."

Marcella had spent the last three nights in my bed, and every night had been more torturous than the last. I felt her presence everywhere. When I lay awake beside her at night, and I hardly slept anymore, I was driven almost insane by her scent and by the images of her body replaying before my closed eyes.

I'd half hoped, half dreaded Marcella would make a move at me, even if only to save herself, but so far she'd held back. Despite her killer body, she wasn't used to making advances on men. I wasn't sure if it was due to her conservative upbringing or because she was used to men throwing themselves at her feet.

I had half a mind to do the same.

Some women dressed in expensive dresses and put on tons of makeup to look presentable, but Marcella in my clothes and no makeup was an apparition that put them all to shame.

"What are you thinking?" she asked out of the blue.

"Isn't that a question you ask your fiancé when he spends the night?"

She shrugged. "Giovanni never spent the night."

Douchy name for a douchebag, then my brain registered her words.

"Why?"

"We hold on to our old values," Snow White said matter-of-factly. "And I live with my parents."

I couldn't stop staring at her blue eyes, glowing against the dark coal of her hair.

"Let me guess, your fiancé pissed his pants because of your ol' man."

She smirked. "Most people do."

"Not me."

"No," she agreed in a soft voice. "Not you, Maddox."

F\*ck. I wished she'd stop saying my name in that gentle lilt. Yet, I'd never ask her because the moment the last syllable died on her lips, I longed to hear it again. She was like a drug I couldn't resist, and I hadn't even tried it yet. She'd be like crack, without a doubt. One taste and you'd be addicted, and ultimately, she'd ruin you.

"What's your favorite childhood memory of your father?"

I hadn't expected that question. No one had ever asked me something like that. I racked my brain, trying to come up with an answer. Most of my memories weren't happy. My old man hadn't been the best father, but he had been a father.

Images of my father fighting with my mom, or sitting on the couch with a beer, or not present at all flashed through my mind.

"He died before we could make many good memories," I said. But deep down I knew that happy memories would have been few and far between even if Vitiello hadn't killed him. But having a bad father was better than not having one at all.

"But you miss him?"

Most of all, I missed what could have been. I missed that we never got the chance to have a good relationship. I missed that my old man never got the chance to be a good dad. "Of course," I said, but the words sounded hollow.



Marcella tilted her head so her hair fanned out like pitch on the pillow. "What about your mom?"

"She became my uncle's old lady a few weeks after my old man got killed."

That should answer her question. My mom never really missed my dad. She might have missed the position as the old lady of a prez if my uncle hadn't immediately made her his.

I motioned at her. "Your turn."

I still couldn't get over the fact that Marcella Vitiello was lying in bed beside me, in my black T-shirt and my boxers, and talking to me as if it was the most normal thing in the world.

"You want me to tell you my favorite childhood memory? Are you sure you want to hear any stories about my dad?"

I sure as \*uck didn't want to imagine Luca Vitiello as a good dad. I wished Marcella's memories of him were as bleak as mine of my dad, but I wasn't a p\*ssy. I could take the truth. "Go ahead."

Marcella's gaze became distant, then a soft smile curled her lips, one I'd never seen on her usually so controlled and cautious face before. "When I was seven, I had a phase when I was convinced monsters were in my walk-in closet and under my bed. I could hardly sleep. So Dad made sure to check every possible hiding place in my room every evening, and even when he came home late in the night after a difficult workday, he still snuck in my room and made sure I was safe. Once he'd checked the room, I knew the monsters were gone and I always fell asleep within minutes. But seconds before I drifted off, Dad would always kiss my forehead."

I couldn't imagine Luca Vitiello as Marcella described him, as the loving, caring father. He had been the monster that still haunted seven-year-old me. When I thought about him, I always saw the ax and knife wielding madman who slaughtered the people who were like my family. He was the man who'd been our enemy even before I had been born. This wasn't a new feud, but it was one to last generations.

Marcella regarded me. "You don't believe me?"

"I believe that's how you see him, but it doesn't change my feelings toward him. Nothing can erase my hatred, nothing ever will."

"Never say never."

"You'll rather learn to despise your ol' man before I'll forgive him, that's a fact, Snow White."

I cringed. This was the second time I called her by that name outside of my head.

Her eyebrows puckered and she regarded me as if she was trying to see right into my brain.

“Snow White?”

I shrugged and rolled over on my back, staring up at the ceiling. She kept watching me expectantly.

“Come on, don’t be surprised. I can’t believe no one’s ever called you Snow White before. Black hair, pearlescent skin, red lips.”

One dark brow twitched up, and I realized I was only digging myself a deeper grave with every word out of my stupid mouth. The ghost of a smile passed her lips, and it was all I could do not to pull her on top of me and kiss her.

Women have a certain place in motorcycle clubs, and it isn’t on equal footing with men. They were only supposed to speak when spoken to and had to please their man. I’d never just talked to a woman for more than the meaningless chitchat before and after s\*x, and if possible, I’d even avoided that. The only woman I’d ever shared a halfway decent conversation with was my mom, but in recent years, I’d closed off even around her.

I wasn’t sure what it was about Marcella that made me want to talk, or at least listen. She was sophisticated and chose her words carefully. I’d never talked to a woman who was even half as educated and intelligent as her. And sometimes I just enjoyed getting a reaction out of her. “What happened with your fiancé? Did he dump you for not putting out?”

Her lips thinned. “Girls like me don’t get dumped. I broke up with him.”

“So f\*\*king arrogant. You think you’re a gift to men that no one would dump your perky a\$\$?”

## **Chapter 24 – By Fate I Conquer Cora**

“Nobody would dump me because of my father,” she muttered.

I perked up at the bitter note in her voice. “Too scared of the old man, I get it. But why do you sound like this pisses you off? Don’t you enjoy the perks of being feared because of your scary daddy?”

“I’d rather be feared or rather respected for who I am.”

Her words surprised me, but I couldn't hold back a snide comment. "People generally don't respect or fear people for their extraordinary shopping skills."

She narrowed her eyes. "There's more to me than shopping. You don't know me."

"Then enlighten me, Snow White."

"My life's not a fairy tale, so stop calling me that."

My grin widened at her obvious anger. "Pity, I'm sure the big bad wolf would love to eat you."

A blush traveled up her throat and her cheeks, making her look even more like the fairy tale princess.

"I study marketing and I'm among the best."

I couldn't stop smirking.

She glowered. "I suppose you see yourself as the big bad wolf, Mad Dog?"

I would definitely love to eat her.

She shook her head and became very quiet. "It's been over a week. When's this going to be over?"

I hadn't asked Earl again. He'd punished Vitiello with silence, hoping the asshole would die from worry over his daughter. And I didn't mind having a few more days with Marcella.

My smile died. "Soon. When your old man is dead."

She closed her eyes. "What would it take for you to give up your plan?"

"Don't waste your time looking for a way to convince me. I won't lie, my dreams are filled with images of your naked body on top of mine, but even that won't change my mind, so don't try to manipulate me with s\*\*x."

"Nobody said anything about s\*\*x," she murmured. Then she tilted her head curiously. "So you'd prefer if I didn't try to seduce you?"

"I've been waiting every f-cking night for you to finally try, but don't do it for any other reason than because you want to."

"As if you'd care why I'd make a move on you."

I smirked. "I wouldn't, as long as I ended up between your thighs. But I want to spare you the disappointment if you don't get anything out of it except for dirty, amazing s\*\*x."

"If s\*\*x is all I wanted, I could have slept with more s\*\*xy guys than I can count. There are few men who wouldn't say yes to a night with me."

Without a doubt...

"Maybe you didn't choose one of them because all of those men cowered before your father. I'm the first guy that isn't scared of him, and that, admit it or not, turns you on."

She didn't deny it, only looked at me in a way that sent a rush of desire through me.

I perched on the windowsill, peering out. As so often I tried to find landmarks that would give me a clue where I was, but the forest around the clubhouse didn't offer any hints. After ten days in the hands of the bikers, I was starting to give up hope that Dad and Matteo would find me. A floorboard creaked in the hallway, causing me to tense.

Whenever Maddox wasn't around, my nerves were frayed. No matter how insane it was, he protected me. I'd seen the looks the other men gave me, hungry and hateful. I couldn't expect mercy from them, and even though I'd like to say I didn't want their mercy, I was terrified of what they might do to me.

"Oh, Spoiled Princess, where are you hiding?" Cody called in a sing-song voice. It was his favorite hobby to lurk around in front of the door when Maddox was gone and torture me with comments of how he'd rape me. He made loud sniffing sounds. "I can smell that Italian p\*ssy. Let a real man fill that dirty hole."

I made sure not to make a sound. Maybe then he'd go away. Instead he rattled the door handle. Even though I knew he was trying to scare me on purpose, I couldn't help but feel anxious. Only a door and the bikers' respect for Maddox kept me safe. Both weren't things I wanted to rely on.

The longer my captivity took, the higher the chances got that Earl White would eventually snap and hurt me to pressure Dad. I didn't want to wait for that to happen but escape without Maddox's help was futile.

He had made it clear that he wouldn't help me no matter what I did, but at this point, I wondered if I shouldn't test his theory. I'd heard him murmur my name in his dreams at night.

The roar of an engine turned my head toward the driveway and I couldn't help but smile when I spotted Maddox on his Harley coming to a stop in front of the porch. He removed his helmet and ran a hand through his unruly hair. I had to admit that the sight of Maddox mounting his beast of a motorcycle was strangely attractive.

Even his biker outfit with the cut looked good on him. He swung off his bike then looked up to his window. Our eyes met and my belly twitched in a way I didn't even want to analyze. I turned away from the window as if I didn't care that he was back, but the overwhelming relief in my body spoke a very different language.

It was dark and Maddox's warmth was everywhere. Eventually I rolled over. I could hardly make out his silhouette. The curtains kept too much of the moonlight out. Maddox wanted me, and even if I'd never admit it, I felt attracted to him. Turned on even, as he'd said.

I could follow my desire and hope it would save me, or I could deny myself what I wanted and rely on others to save me. Maybe I was a spoiled princess, but I didn't need a prince to wake me from eternal slumber.

The dark seemed to cover us in a cocoon full of possibilities. I lay on my back beside Marcella. She smelled like trouble and temptation. She'd shifted and now her knee lightly touched my thigh, and the touch seemed to electrify my whole body. Her closeness wreaked havoc with me. She was warm and so goddamn close.

Being close to her every night was torture. Earl had mentioned that he'd contact Vitiello soon to make the exchange, and instead of looking forward to getting revenge, my only thought was that I'd lose Marcella before I even had her. I was such a d\*ckhead.

"What are you thinking?" she asked.

"That I'll regret ever inviting you into my room," I said.

"Why?"

I had a feeling she knew of her effect on me. It was almost impossible for me not to check her out, not to fantasize about her day and night. "I think you know," I said gruffly.

She moved, bringing us closer, but still only her knee touched me. I wanted to roll over and pull her against me, kiss her, taste her, especially that p\*ssy I had been fantasizing about.

"Do I?"

My patience snapped. I rolled over, bringing our faces impossibly close. Even her breath was sweet as she exhaled sharply. I didn't touch her, even though every part of me wanted to. "I can't stop thinking about your p\*ssy and if it's dripping," I said crudely, hoping to make the spoiled princess shy back, but she only swallowed.

"Nothing's stopping you from finding out," she whispered.

I was sure I'd misheard her. I touched her hip and after briefly tensing, she softened under my touch. "What are you doing? Do you think you can seduce me into helping you? How often do I have to tell you that's not going to work?"

"And even if I were, wouldn't it be worth it to get a taste of the spoiled princess?"

F\*ck. I couldn't resist. I stroked along her upper thigh then trailed my fingers inside the boxer shorts. Marcella's warm breath brushed over my lips as she exhaled when my fingers slid under her underwear.

I stifled a groan at the feel of her silky warm flesh. Her p\*ssy was so f\*cking soft. She held her breath as I brushed my index finger along her slit. My fingertip discovered the subtle hint of wetness between her p\*ssy lips. "F\*ck," I groaned.

Determined to tease more of it out of her, I traced my finger up and down her slit.

Her breathing was still slow and controlled but picked up when I began to scissor her p\*ssy, stroking her between my index and my middle finger, and brushing my finger joints over her clit. She began to pant and soon my fingers were slick with her arousal. I couldn't resist. I dipped one finger into her and stifled a curse.

She felt as if I'd died and gone straight to heaven. She was so tight, Cody's words came back to me. Maybe he was right. F\*ck, I fingered her leisurely, wanting to savor every moment of this.

She grabbed my shoulders and began to move her hips in rhythm with my fingers, chasing the heel of my palm with her clit. I slowed, and as I'd hoped she rubbed herself against my hand, driving my finger into herself over and over again. My cock was ready to explode.

"Don't stop," she whispered thickly.

"F\*ck, you really think anything would stop me from fingering you until you cream? I'd even keep doing it, if my fingers fell off."

"Shut up," she groaned, then sucked in a sharp breath. I pumped faster, almost drunken on her moans and the feel of her tight walls around my finger. I added a second finger, my d\*ck twitching at her sharp exhale. Her lips found mine for an uncoordinated kiss.

And then she exploded with a cry, her walls clenching around my fingers. Her orgasm was like an unstoppable avalanche, her juices running down my fingers and wrist.

"Dripping," I rasped.

Marcella only moaned softly as I kept pumping in and out of her slowly, prolonging her orgasm. Eventually I stopped but kept my fingers inside of her, relishing in the

occasional spasm that took hold of her walls. I pulled out my fingers and brought them to my lips, licking them clean, making sure that she could hear what I did.

## Chapter 25 – By Fate I Conquer Cora

“That’s disgusting,” she whispered.

“I have to disagree.” I smirked as I inhaled her after orgasm scent. “I’m still not sure this isn’t a dream.”

Marcella turned on her back. “I’m sure you’d get off in your dream.”

I laughed, even if my d\*ck pulsed with raging need. “That’s not going to earn you extra points.”

She leaned over and brushed the softest kiss across my cheek. “Sleep well, Maddox. I can’t wait to hear you murmur my name in your sleep again.”

F\*ck.

Of course, I dreamed of her and woke with a hard-on. Maybe the blood hadn’t left my cock all night. My balls hurt like a bitch anyway. After a quick shower, I pranced around completely naked in my room, done playing hide and seek with Snow White.

She followed my movement with an indignant expression but her eyes held the same desire I felt. Soon my cock stood proudly again. Marcella’s gaze took in the bar piercing at the base and the one at the tip.

The latter had actually been the result of a lost bet but I’d quickly realized I enjoyed the feel of the cool metal and the ladies did too.

Marcella’s fascination was definitely worth it. I stroked over the piercing at the base, bringing her attention there. “This one is positioned so it stimulates the clit,” I said, my voice rougher than usual. “And this one,” I continued, touching the piercing at the tip. “Stimulates the G-spot.”

Marcella didn’t say anything but after last night she couldn’t pretend she wasn’t turned on by me. I knew I’d find her wet again if I touched her p\*ssy.

Last night with Maddox had been a revelation. His simple touch had ignited my body. Maybe because I’d been starving for touch.

I’d worried that I’d feel regret after but regretting something you want to do again seemed hypocritical. I tried to console myself with the fact that I was in an extraordinary

situation that couldn't be judged by standard rules. Yet deep down, I wondered if that was the only reason for my desire.

When I came out of the bathroom that night, Maddox lay stretched out on the bed, watching me with a hungry smile.

He was only in boxers, showing off his muscled, inked body.

I feigned disinterest.

"Earl said he's getting there with your ol' man. This might be one of our last nights together."

My heart sped up. "Really?"

"Can't wait to be rid of me?" he asked.

Surprisingly, I wanted more time with Maddox, no matter how infuriating he could be. Being locked in Maddox's bedroom, away from the disgusting bikers, I'd almost forgotten the danger I was in. This had seemed like a strange version of a sabbatical away from my usual life.

"Maybe you should use tonight to have your p\*ssy eaten out before you return to your fiancé."

"Ex-fiancé," I said immediately.

Giovanni had never gone down on me, only touched me a couple of times through my jeans (because he'd been scared to have me naked in case my dad burst into the room), which wasn't an experience I'd enjoyed very much.

Yet, considering that his tongue had felt as if a goldfish was floundering for its life on land in my mouth whenever we'd kissed, I hadn't been overly eager to have him go down on me.

I hadn't come the few times he'd touched me, which had been a blow to his confidence, and which he'd blamed on me wanting to wait until my wedding night... at least subconsciously. That was utter bullshit of course.

Maddox lay on his back, grinning dirtily. "I could make you cream real good."

My lips curled. "Cream, really? Don't waste your breath, I'm not into oral."

"Giving."

"Receiving," I snapped back, even though I couldn't really know.



I hadn't ever gone down on a guy. Giovanni had been too terrified of my father and didn't dare to sully me like that before our wedding day.

Maddox's smile became even dirtier and heat washed through me. I was slightly slick between my legs only from looking at him. "Your fiancé's a real loser. He didn't eat you properly or you wouldn't be spouting this bullshit. If you were my girl, you'd be squirting like a fountain just thinking of my tongue in your cunt."

I didn't correct him in his assumption that Giovanni had gone down on me. It was irrelevant to what we had. I stepped closer to the bed, glaring down at him. "You have a foul mouth."

You only regret the things you didn't do.

"I have a magic tongue," he growled, flicking his tongue out so the piercing flashed in the light. I couldn't stop wondering how it would feel to have him pleasure me with the piercing.

Just thinking about it, my thighs clenched in anticipation. If this was really one of our last nights, this was also my last chance to get him on my side... and enjoy myself a little while I did.

I wasn't sure why I did it, but I stepped on the bed and glared down at Maddox.

He dipped his head back so he could look beneath my shirt. I wasn't wearing panties. He whistled between his teeth. "F\*ck, Snow White, let me eat that royal p\*ssy."

I raised one eyebrow. "Only if it shuts you up."

He grinned devilishly. "Straddle my head. Come on. Spread those milky thighs for me."

I gave him my most condescending look and stepped up on the bed so I was towering over him with my feet on either side of his shoulders. I knew what kind of premium view I was giving him, and he enjoyed it.

Yet, I couldn't deny that I too got increasingly aroused by the situation, by Maddox's dirty mouth, by the hungry gleam in his eyes. I'd doubted myself so often in the past, but with Maddox, his desire for me was blatantly clear. There was no room for doubt.

"Kneel so I can eat you out."

"Vitiellos don't kneel."

He grabbed my calves and tugged so hard, I lost my balance and fell forward, my knees sinking into the soft mattress beside his head.

"I could have smashed your face in with my knee!" I hissed. Maddox was my only chance out of this hellhole. Even if I wanted to kill him, which I wasn't entirely sure about at this point, I'd have to wait until I was free.

Maddox grabbed my ass and jerked me toward his face. His eyes captured mine and then his tongue slid out slowly, a dirty grin on his face. The tip of his tongue brushed over my p\*ssy lips, parting them to caress the sensitive inside. I shivered at the almost overwhelming sensation, momentarily worried I'd come from the brief contact.

"F\*ck," he said in a low rumble, his lips vibrating against my pulsating flesh. He began licking me with slow movements, the piercing teasing my clit. I tore at his hair, jerking his mouth closer to my p\*ssy and he took me up on the invitation, dipping his tongue into me. I rotated my hips, riding his mouth, his tongue deep inside of me, his piercing teasing what I assumed was my G-spot.

I watched him as he took his time, sometimes even closing his eyes as if he was having a tasty meal that he needed to savor fully. The piercing flashed as his tongue flicked my clit leisurely. I gripped his hair, tugged almost viciously but Maddox only smirked and closed his lips around my clit. My teeth sunk into my lower lip to keep a moan in.

"You need to scream and moan. All women do when they're in my room. My club brothers will get suspicious if you're silent like a church mouse."

I glared.

Maddox only seemed to take it as a challenge to coax sounds from my lips as he sucked and licked, nibbled and flicked. Soon my breathing came in sharp bursts and my hips rocked almost desperately. By now I was riding his mouth without shame. Maddox's strong hands cupped my ass-cheeks, kneading and guiding my movements. He pulled back about an inch and I almost jerked him right back by his hair. So desperate for release I was close to losing any semblance of control.

"Come in my mouth, Snow White," Maddox growled. His blue eyes stayed locked on mine as his lips cupped my clit once more. Pleasure radiated from my core, through every inch of my body in unstoppable waves. I came so hard, every muscle seemed tightened to the max. I gasped, my hands flying to Maddox's muscled shoulders to steady myself.

Closing my eyes, I succumbed to the sensations and screamed as if nothing around us existed. And it felt so good. I rocked my hips back and forth, driving his tongue deeper until the waves of pleasure began to ebb away. Eventually my lids peeled open and I peered down at Maddox.

Maddox lapped up my release eagerly, smirking, his face shiny with my juices. I watched him and kept grinding my p\*ssy against his lips. Loving how dirty this was, how

wrong. This—Maddox—could be my salvation, or it could be the fall from grace so many had been waiting for.

I still kneeled above him, my chest heaving.

His lips and chin were shiny. “See, I told you I’d get you to cream in my mouth.”

“You realize that sounds disgusting, right?” But deep down, I was wickedly turned on. Maddox was forbidden and crude and daringly free of conventions. This was meant to be a means to an end, but I couldn’t bring myself to feel guilty for enjoying it at the same time.

Maddox raised his head and stretched out his tongue. Tracing its tip along my folds then sucking one of them into his mouth. “Who doesn’t like cream? Especially if it tastes this good.”