

Epilogue

Garrett

Five years later. . .

The sun is just beginning to rise as I push my way through the finicky old French doors to reach the second-story balcony. The scent of lilacs and coffee drift up to greet me on the cool spring breeze, mixing with the familiar sweetness of vanilla that I've come to associate with my mate.

Even though it's just after six, Ava has already found a modest patch of sunshine and is leaning out against the iron railing, slowly sipping her coffee. She's a vision in a pink silk robe, which billows out around her curves when the breeze catches it. Her long dark hair tumbles down her back, gleaming like a raven's feathers in the golden light.

Vines have nearly overtaken the side of the old buildings across the street, with their many chimneys and potted plants crowding narrow balconies. A young Parisian man on a bike speeds by below, bumping on the uneven cobblestones.

It's too early for the usual buzz of city traffic. Only the birds and bikers are out this morning, and with the kids still snoozing in the adjacent room, all is right with the world.

"Bonjour, mon amour," I murmur, coming up behind Ava and wrapping my arms around her middle.

My mate lets out a squeal of surprise, and I reach down to caress her belly through the thin silk of her nightdress. She's not very far along, but I can just feel the start of a bump. Ava says it's only bloat, but the mere hint of another pup fills me with feral pride.

"Bonjour," Ava giggles, her accent coming out a tad self-conscious.

Even though we'd been trying for baby number three, she didn't tell me about it right away. I think she worried I'd want to cancel our trip, but I've become so attuned to the change in her scent when she's pregnant that I knew almost immediately.

Pregnant or not, there was no way I was passing up the chance to show my family the most beautiful city in the world — especially since Ava has never been. I was recently hired by one of the country's largest energy companies to oversee the transition to renewables, but I insisted on two weeks of paid vacation with my family.

The French guys laughed at that request. Apparently, four weeks is standard here.

Our hotel is situated directly across from Jardin du Luxembourg, which is one of my favorite spots in Paris. Yesterday, we rented model sailboats from a man by the pond and spent half the morning watching three-year-old Aster and almost-five-year-old Emmett sail while munching on chocolate croissants.

“What’s on the agenda for today?” Ava asks, leaning back against my chest and snuggling into my warmth.

“Anything you’d like, angel. The world is our oyster.”

We’ve already done most of the touristy things in the three days we’ve been here — the Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe, and shopping on the Champs-Élysées. I still want to take Ava to the Louvre, but honestly, I’d be content to spend this entire vacation holed up with my beautiful mate and two rambunctious pups.

“Hmm . . . I’m craving another one of those chocolate croissants,” Ava hums, snaking her hand up along my neck and threading her fingers through my hair.

“Your wish is my command,” I say, grinning as I dive in to nuzzle her under the jaw.

There’s a little pastry cart strategically located between our hotel and Luxembourg gardens, and despite the buffet of world-class cuisine Paris has to offer, the chocolate croissants are about all the kids and my newly pregnant mate will eat right now.

I feel Ava’s face crack into a smile as I leave a trail of kisses down her neck. She tilts her head to one side to give me better access, and her usual sweet vanilla scent mixes with the musk of her arousal.

Reaching forward to cup her breast, I feel her nipple pebble up beneath the thin material of her nightdress. With my other hand, I slip beneath the hem of her gown and find her perfect soft mound already wet and bare for me.

“Angel,” I growl, parting her damp folds and running my hand along her crease. She is so wet for me.

Ava shivers as I circle her entrance. I insert the very tip of my finger, and the tiny little breath she sucks in is enough to awaken my beast.

I spin her around so fast that she gasps, coffee sloshing over the side of her mug and splattering the balcony.

“We don’t have much time,” she breathes, leaning in to give me a slow sensual kiss as her fingers caress my bare chest. “The kids will be awake any minute . . .”

“Don’t worry,” I say, taking the mug from her hand and setting it on the rickety little table beside us. “I’m a professional.”

Ava laughs, and I swear it’s the most beautiful sound in the world.

Dropping down onto one knee, I skim the silky fabric up her legs to expose her perfect curvy thighs. Her thin robe billows out behind her, completely blocking me from view if anyone in the building across the street were to look over.

“Garrett!” Ava hisses, pushing down the fabric of her gown as she tries to cover herself. “Someone will see!”

“Let them look,” I murmur, flashing her a devilish smirk as I ease her hands away. I tug her nightdress back up her thighs until her blushing pink folds are completely exposed.

Ava gasps at my brazenness, and a fresh drop of nectar slips out of her. I bend forward to lap it up, delighting in the sweet tang of her cream.

I know there’s no real danger of anyone seeing what we’re up to, but it gives me a secret thrill that someone might catch a glimpse of my mate’s gorgeous face when she comes all over my mouth.

Parting her pussy lips with my fingers, I lap gently at her entrance. Ava leans back against the railing, and I plunge my tongue deep inside her.

She tastes like vanilla and lust, and I’m overcome with the urge to mark her all over again. Her soft moans are lost on the cool spring breeze as I find my rhythm, plunging in and out until her juices coat my face.

Once she’s panting and ready for me, I lick my way up to her swollen nub and capture it in my mouth. I knead it slowly with my tongue as I slip a finger inside her, methodically stroking that magical spot that makes her knees go all wobbly.

Ava trembles, white-knuckling the railing, and I insert another finger. She moans as I stretch her hot, sticky walls, playing her like a finely tuned instrument as my thumb joins in massaging her clit.

Ava’s hands tangle in my hair, tugging on the strands until I know she’s close.

I press my lips down on that swollen bundle of nerves, and Ava slumps back against the balcony railing, arms outstretched on either side as she grips the metal for dear life.

With my free hand, I scoop one leg over my shoulder and attack her pussy with savagery. An uncontrolled cry rips from her throat, sending a small flock of birds flying out of a nearby tree.

I feel her convulse around my fingers, and I continue to stroke and lick her sweet little nub, easing her through her orgasm.

Slowly, I slip my fingers out and pull myself into a standing position. I press my lips against hers in a lazy kiss, my cock twitching at the knowledge that she's tasting her own sweetness on my tongue.

"Da-Da!"

Our daughter's raucous voice drifts through a crack in the French doors — as effective as a record-scratch at shattering the moment.

I snort against Ava's lips. I can't help but be impressed by Aster's god-awful timing.

Ava pulls back, chuckling uncontrollably, and I tug down her nightgown until she's fully covered.

"I told you we didn't have much time," she groans, looking up at me with a mixture of amusement and longing as she cups my hardness through my sweats.

"It's all right," I say, adjusting myself with a grimace. "I told you I was a professional, and this is an occupational hazard."

Ava tilts her head to the side, the humorous pout on her lips almost enough to make me bend her over the railing and take her right now. "I'll make it up to you tonight. I promise."

"There's nothing to make up for, angel," I murmur, bending down to plant one last lingering kiss on her velvety lips. "You . . . them . . ." I jerk my head back in the direction of our little family. "You three are what I live for." I skim a hand down the front of her torso, grinning as I reach her belly. "Correction . . . the four of you."

Ava closes her eyes and cups my face with both hands, kissing me fiercely as our son's footsteps echo from the next room.

If my five-years-ago self could look at me now, he'd never believe his eyes.

I'm here in the city of love with two little monsters, not getting laid, and staying at a — gasp — four-star hotel. I have no fortune, no yacht, and no fancy cars. I drive a hybrid SUV with third-row seating, for crying out loud.

But even with the world's worst case of blue balls, I'm happier than I've ever been in my life. I'm mated to the most incredible woman in the universe. I have two happy pups and one on the way.

Life is fucking beautiful.