



**YOU ARE READING**  
**MASON AND SAGE**

ROMANCE

Mason and Sage were two weeks away from their wedding until, in a moment of weakness, he made a mistake and kissed his ex-girlfriend. A er Sage le him, he had to prove to her that he regretted that kiss like nothing else and earn back her love a...

#alpha #angst #angstwithhappending #cheating

## Epilogue ~ Mason

### Some years later...

A er I proposed to Sage, she launched into wedding preparations right away. Although she had loved her old dress, she wanted something di erent, something that didn't remind her of the wedding that wasn't-- and why -- so we donated her old dress and she went shopping. Somehow, in just four months, Sage had organized the wedding she wanted, with me helping when I was asked to -- learning pretty quickly that unless my input was specifically requested, I should leave the wedding to the experts and just show up when I was told to. I refuse to use the term Bridezilla because I would never say that about my sweet Sage, but...I will say I was ecstatic when my beautiful bride walked down the aisle to me, looking so beautiful I swear she made my heart stop...and maybe just a little because wedding planning was over and done.

All of the lead up to this day had been worth it just to see her smiling at me and feeling my answering smile practically split my face in two. The surprise during the ceremony -- that even I didn't know about -- was Sage having Cashew as the ring bearer. She'd asked one of our friends not in the wedding party to walk him up the aisle, and he looked so damn cute wearing a little black bow tie around his neck and the fake rings on a white ribbon around his neck. For the rest of the ceremony, our boy lay beside my feet, as good as you please.

I'd felt a sense of rightness when my bride walked down the aisle to me. Something finally happening that should have happened much earlier and would have had I not made that almost-fatal mistake with my ex. I do know that I learned a lesson that would stay with me for a lifetime about being careful to guard that which is precious in your life. Every moment of the rest of my life I would nurture my love for Sage, constantly vigilant to keep our connection safe and protected.

**Hi! I'm sure you've been dying to hear about our wedding and all I can say is IT WAS SPECTACULAR!!! The whole day from beginning to end was exactly what we wanted! It was beautiful and intimate with only fi y of our closest friends in a gorgeous little church nestled at the foot of a mountain. Our breathtaking ceremony was followed by a lovely reception for more of our friends at a nearby mountain resort. Talk about amazing views! We hope you enjoy seeing the enclosed pictures. I especially love the one taken right before Mason kissed me to seal our vows. You can almost feel the deep, deep love between us.**

**Everybody said they'd never seen Mason look so happy or so in love. The look in his eyes as he spoke his vows to me was intense, so full of love that just about everyone started crying, including Mason. A erwards he said he wasn't ashamed to cry in front of everyone because he'd never before in his life met a woman worth crying for...until me. As you can imagine, the sweetness of his words made me cry.**

**I'd write more, but we're about to leave on our honeymoon! I'll be sure to send you some pictures of our two-week island love-fest. Wink-wink! Tahiti is a beautiful location, but somehow I doubt Mason is going to let me out of bed for any sightseeing. ;-)**

Sage had wanted to write the letter to Eva about our wedding, and she'd whipped that note out in less than ten minutes.

"Every word is true, and I hope she chokes on each one," my wife said with only a touch of spite shading her voice. Eva hadn't reacted well to it, and -- you guessed it -- time added to her sentence for bad behavior. I'd watched Sage when I told her that her letter had made Eva melt down, and she smiled a vicious little smile.

Just about every day, I would find myself watching Sage from across a room and marveling that she ever came back to me. That she could find it in herself to trust me again. That I had been given such an incredible gi , such an amazing woman. Safeguarding us was mission one.

I'd started a business as a security consultant, and as my business grew, I took on the administrative side so I wasn't traveling for work. I could work from home a couple of days a week, and once Sage and I started having children, we didn't have to find child care since Sage began working part time and was home three days a week and I was home the other two.

Two years a er we were married, Sage announced she was pregnant with our first child, and we were awestruck as we watched her body change and then began feeling our child kick and squirm inside of her. It was a magical time for us, so we had to share.

**Hi! No real letter this time. Just wanted you to see our gender reveal invitation! We are SO EXCITED!!! All of our friends will be there, and we know you wish you could join in our beautiful day, too. If only!! We'll be sure to send you lots and lots of pictures -- so you can feel as if you had been celebrating right along there with us!**

Enclosed with the letter was the exact same invitation Eva had sent to Sage, except this time, there was a verreal picture of me standing beside Sage, looking down at her adoringly, my hand next to Sage's on her baby bump. Sage, my perfect, petty kitten, had even tracked down the exact same outfits Eva and her stand-in had been wearing in her faked gender reveals invitation, and we were wearing them in our picture.

"Twinsies, bitch, but mine is real," Sage was muttering when she'd showed me the outfits. She was still salty about that faked invitation, and I couldn't blame her.

We'd even used the exact same wording:

**We're so excited to find out whether our little blessing is going to need a pink or blue nursery! Please join us at our home for our baby gender reveal!**

Eva's meltdown from the gender reveal invitation had gotten her into so much trouble, she'd had six months added onto her sentence.

That was the single greatest addition to date. Twenty years was getting closer and closer with each month. Once we eventually reached the twenty-year mark, we eased o on the letters and limited them to once a month. The infrequent letters seemed to inflame her even more and now she was creeping up on a sentence of twenty-five years.

Of course, that wasn't our real gender reveal invitation, simply because we didn't actually have a gender reveal. Sage didn't want to find out the baby's gender, so we didn't. Although I wanted to know, since Sage was doing all the heavy li ing, I le it to her to decide. So it was a sweet surprise when our little girl was born. We named her Sura -- new life-- and began our new life as a family of three.

As a man, you love your wife. But seeing your wife pregnant and giving birth? Becoming a mother to your child? That takes your love and respect for her to entirely new levels. Although we both worshipped Sura, I found my eyes on Sage just as much as on our baby. Our baby girl might have looked like me, but her sweetness was pure Sage. My girls could get away with murder and I'd be happy to hide the body for them. Sage was everything a mother should be, everything a man could want for his children, and she o en told me I was the dad she'd always imagined her children would have. There's something to be said for mutual admiration societies, and our love gave me the desire to be everything everyone in my family needed me to be.

We added a little boy, Macklin, two years a er Sura, and then about a year later, we received Skyla as a huge -- but very welcome -- surprise. Then Sage sent me to be neutered, as she called it, and our family was complete. Cashew, when he could be bothered to stop sleeping, enjoyed playing with the munchkins as they got older.

Sage once asked me if I would have told her about kissing Eva in the alley that awful night. I told her I would have and that was the truth. I asked her if she recalled seeing me right when I got home that night I'd just as soon forget. She and I both remembered her walking into the house, locking the door and pressing my head against it, with my fists on either side of my head. For once, I let my body slouch down, even if it was just for a minute. I'd realized during my three hours of walking that I had no choice but to tell Sage and let her decide where we would go from there. My respect for her demanded it, my honor demanded it and our future demanded it, regardless of the outcome.

I couldn't let her marry me in two weeks without her knowing the full truth. When I had slouched against that door, I'd known my future with Sage might not survive my confession. Had she been asleep, I would have allowed myself one last night with her and told her when she woke up in the morning. Seeing her awake, I asked her to go upstairs with me so I could confess. But since she already knew what had happened, I hadn't had the opportunity to come clean.

She listened to my story of coming home that night, her eyes on mine, and then she simply said she believed I would have.

"You never once lied to me, Mason," she'd said. "And moving ahead without telling me would have been a lie, so I believe that."

"I don't deserve you," I used to tell her in the early days of our marriage until she begged me to stop saying that.

"You do," my kitten would purr into my ear as she straddled my lap.

"Yes, you did something awful, and you broke my trust, but, Mason, you worked hard to rebuild that. You did everything possible to show me that would never happen again, that you regretted your actions...and you still haven't forgiven yourself, have you?"

"No, not really" I told her. "Not sure I'll ever forgive myself for hurting you, hurting us like that. I almost lost you forever, Sage; that's not something I can rest easy about."

She put her little hands on my chest and looked right at me. "I've forgiven you, Mason. And if I can forgive you, then I want you to forgive yourself."

That required a kiss, so I gave her a good one. When she pulled back, she looked a bit sassy. "So, here's a hypothetical for you: in the extremely unlikely event that sometime in the future I should make a mistake, would you forgive me?"

"Of course," I told her immediately. And that was the absolute truth.

"And what if I couldn't forgive myself?"

I grinned at her, knowing exactly where she was going with this. "I'd want you to forgive yourself."

"Well, there you have it!"

"I'll work on it," I assured her. But deep down, I sort of liked that I hadn't really forgiven myself, because that uneasiness kept me on my toes, kept me working hard every day to be the man Sage deserved. I'd heard once that marriage was hard work, every single day, so you never fell into complacency. I'd been stupidly complacent once, and I had vowed to never let that happen again.

When I'd been in the jungle, sure I was going to die there, Sage was all that kept me alive. My love for her urged me on, kept me fighting and working hard to make it back to her.

Now I enjoyed working hard every day for Sage, for us, for our family. I surprised her o en with little gi s that didn't necessarily seem like much, but just showed her I was thinking about her, that she was on my mind, that I wanted to bring a smile to her face, give her a little bit of happy.

And Sage worked just as hard on our marriage as I did. She was forever doing little kindnesses for me, always working to bring a smile to my face -- although that didn't take much from her. Her very existence made me smile and filled my heart with happiness.

I think of all the things we did for each other, it was the simplest one that meant the most to each of us. Words we began and ended each day with, and said them liberally in between.

I love you, Sage.

And I love you, Mason.

I know what I lost when Sage le me, so to me, there was no better, more meaningful gi than those three words.

It's the gi of forever.