

## Chapter 4 – Their Beautiful Strong Queen

Nonna came in and checked on me when she got home last night. After i talked to her for a few minutes she left me to go back to sleep.

Today's Saturday and we are open until midnight tonight. I don't have to be at work until three today. We stay open late on Saturdays to make up the fact that we are closed on Sundays.

Nonna has always said that Sunday is God's day. She goes to church every week, she always has. When Nic and i got old enough to decide for ourselves if we wanted to go or not she left the decision up to us. She said she'd never force us to go. I don't go every week but i do go with her occasionally.

I wake up on Saturday around ten and get a shower and put on shorts and a t-shirt for now. I go ahead and pull my hair up in a ponytail and then braid it and wrap it in a bun.

When i'm done i head downstairs to find breakfast. When i get to the kitchen i find Nic, Dante and Enzo all sitting at the table drinking coffee and talking.

"Good morning all" I say while yawning. "Good morning" they all three say back. "Hey Riv i got that piece on your car. Now only i can track you and if someone tries to put a tracker on your car i'll know the instant they do. I'll get a notification and their tracker won't work at all" Enzo said.

"Awesome sauce, that's one less thing for me to worry about then. I gotta find a new coffee shop close to campus. I'm not going back to Sips. That jerk in there is about a creep" I said.

"What are you two talking about? What did you put on her car?" Dante asks Enzo. While Enzo explains what he put on my car and why, i get the stuff out to make breakfast.

I decide to make eggs, bacon, fried taters, sausage gravy and biscuits. I'm pretty hungry this morning and i know the guys will eat to, they always do. So i make sure that i make plenty.

While the guys are talking about yesterday and Enzo filling them in on what i told him last night Nicco says "Dude, that place must bring in psychos or something. The meeting that Zain and i had yesterday was with the CEO of Lombardi Hotels and Casinos. He was a few minutes late and said that he was behind some tiny little girl and the guy wouldn't give her coffee to her. He said she told the guy off and when he still wouldn't give it to her he stepped in. I guess after the girl went outside he talked to the owner about what a stockerish asshole the guy was. When he finally got outside the girl was cussing out his main bodyguard slash best friend because they had her matchbox car blocked in and wouldn't let her out. He was quite pissed off because she told him off and then rolled up

her windows and was ready to leave. He said that she intrigued him” Nicco said while laughing.

I was so embarrassed but pissed off as well. It had to be the walking fucking tree and meathead that i seen yesterday because thats what happened to me.

I turned around and said “This guy that your talking about, is he a giant looking tree and his meathead in the men in black suit a big buff looking guy? If so that was me, that he was talking about.”

When they all looked at me weirdly i explained to them what happened yesterday. I even explained how they followed me to school and then he looked pissed when i was hugging the guys and when Gio had his arm around me.

“Dude, do you know who he is. There are rummers that he’s the godfather of the Italian mob. You know the whole mob, like he’s over everyone” Dante yelled.

“He’s still just a man like every other that i’ve met. You know one brain, no heart, little dick and no soul. I dont plan to see him again anyways” I said.

“Yea that might not be easy. Were having dinner together tonight. Apparently his dad and mine were friends and so is his mom and mine. His family is coming to the diner for dinner with us and mom” Nicco said.

“That’s an easy fix ill work in the kitchen so i won’t have to see him then” I said. I finished up with breakfast and we all made plates and sat down to eat. We just all sat down when Nonna came in with Uncle Zain.

“River your not working tonight i got one of the other girls to cover for you since you worked her shift this week. We are having dinner at the diner with an old family friend and her family tonight. I want you all there. Her whole family will be there and so wont we. Well those of us who count anyways. Im not inviting Loretta or her family but you all i want there. We are going to meet there for dinner around seven. I’ve got the private room set up for us” Nonna said.

“I would rather work Nonna. I met the giant walking freaking tree this morning and he’s a condescending ass. I can just stay in the kitchen and cook” I said.

Nonna just gave me the look. You know the one that says that your going to do it weather you like it or not. Even after explaining to her why i didnt want to have dinner with her friend, i was still told that i had to.

“Fine Nonna ill go but im not wearing a dress. I just got a new pantsuit and ill wear it. Im not getting all dressed up though” I said. “Fine just be ready to go at six” Nonna said.

After i finished eating, i finished cleaning up the kitchen and put the rest of the food away. There wasnt much left after the boys ate. I got the dishwasher ready to start for when they were done. All they had to do was put their dishes in and then start it.

When I was done I went up to my room and got my clothes out for the night. I never wear anything that shows from my collarbone down to my stomach. If i wear a spaghetti strap shirt i always wear a crop top hoodie over it.

I never go swimming in public places. Even when playing sports i always wear a tshirt that covers me. The reason for that is because i have a scar that goes from my breastbone down to my pubic bone.

Before Nonna was able to take me away from the Montgomery's one of the twins took a knife and cut me because someone said that i was prettier than them. When the nanny called Nonna to tell her what was going on it was because they wouldnt let her take me to the hospital.

When Nonna came and got me she brought me back up with her. After that i never went back to the house of hell. I tend to stay far away from them, even now.

I've been working on a tattoo design that will cover it and i've been consulting with a tattoo artist that specializes with scars. I want to cover it and not let them have power over me anymore. I don't want to hide anymore.

I think that i've come up with a design that i want to do. It's going to be a phoenix holding a sword and the blade is going to say "you can cut me but you'll never make me bleed. From these ashes i'll always rise."

I just got my clothes laid out and was working on my tattoo design when my friend, and stand in dad, Christian calls me. "Hey what's up? I was just thinking about you" I said.

"Only good things I hope. I called to see if you were busy today I had a cancellation and i've got about four hours free. I wanted to see if you wanted to start the outline on your tat."

"Always good things, and hell yea. Id love to as long as im done by four, five at the latest. I have to get ready for a family dinner with friends of my Nonna's tonight. I gotta leave here at six, dinners at seven at the dinner" I said.

"You'll be done in time. The outline should only take a couple hours. I should have it done by three at the latest three- thirty."

"Ok let me change my shirt and ill be right there" I said. After hanging up the phone I changed into a button up tshirt. I didnt put a bra on because i knew i wouldnt be able to wear one back. Not that it matters my boobs are small so it wont be noticable if i go

without. But i did put nipple covers on, the kind that you wear with dresses so i didnt show anything.

When im ready i grab my purse, keys and phone and head downstairs. The boys are in the living room and Nonna and Uncle Zain and Aunt Bella are in the kitchen.

“Hey im heading out for awhile but i should be back by four, four-thirty.” “Where are you heading to?” Uncle Zain asked me. “Christian got ahold of me, he had a cancellation and hes going to do the outline of my tattoo today. It should only take a couple of hours to get it done” I said.

“What tattoo, you dont need a tattoo, your a girl” Dante said. “And your a sexist pig. Dante your covered in tattoos, so you have no right to say that i dont need one.”

“They make girls look trashy when they have them though” he said. He had me pissed and i was ready to kick his ass and he knew it. I went to go towards him when he yelled out and ducked behind Uncle Z. “Im just joking with you, Im just joking. Dont hit me.” He sounded like a little girl when he yelled.

“For your information young man, i have a tattoo. Its on my shoulder and its got your Nonno’s name and our wedding date in it. Its also got my kids names and birthdates under it. All four of them” Nonna said.

“But you only have three kids Nonna” Enzo said. “Technically i do but i have raised River since she was five and i added her to my tattoo when she was fifteen. Thats when we first started talking about tattoos and her getting one” Nonna said.

“Its took me alot of years to decide if i wanted to cover up the scar with a tattoo considering where its at but i finally decided that i wasnt going to let the “perfect” twins have a hold on me anymore. Im getting the tattoo so that i can start feeling comfortable about wearing reveling clothes. You know like a spaghetti strapped shirt without a hoodie over it. Now i gotta go if i wanna get back here in time for dinner tonight. I love you all” I said.

After hugging everyone and telling the boys that they couldnt come with me i took off. It didnt take long to get to Christian’s shop. Him and his husband have owned this place for years.

I met Christian when i was around ten. Him and his husband came into the dinner to eat and i was sitting at a table working on homework. I had to do a picture for art class. I was working on a dragon and when he seen it as he was going past my table to go to the bathroom he was amazed at the fact that i drew it.

He new Nonna already and after that day him and Ren came in whenever they could to have lunch or dinner with me. I jokingly call them pops and pappa because they’re more like dads to me.

They were there for all of my games and concerts and for birthdays and christmases. They came to my highschool graduation. Ive met both of their parents a few times as well.

When i get to the shop Christian is waiting on me by the front counter. I walk up to him and give him a big hug. "Hey pops did ya miss me?" i asked with a smirk. "Like a wort on my ass" He said while laughing and hugging me back.

After asking about Ren he said that he was busy with a customer and we headed back to his room to get started. After getting me situated and making sure that my girly bits were covered but he could get to the spots that needed to be tattooed he got started.

We were about halfway through when Ren knocked on the door. "Hey its Ren, can i come in?" "Yea as long as its just you. Ive got bambolotta in here" Christian said.

Ren came in and came over and kissed me on the forehead. "There's my bambolotta. Where have you been hiding we've not seen you in while?" He asked me.

"Hey ive not been hiding, I've just been really busy. Between school, end of the year exams, baseball and work i've barley had a moment to breathe. I had last night off and went home after class and went to bed. I was supposed to work tonight but because i filled in for another girl this week, Nonna switched me with her so id have off. We are apparently having dinner with an old friend of hers and that friends family tonight at the dinner" I said.

"Ok well tomorrow you come to the house and see us and ill make dinner. It wont be as good as your food but ill try. Chris, i came in because your cousin Dom is here and he wants to talk to you. I told him you were with a client but he wants to know how long you'll be and if you could take a break to talk to him."

"It wont take me long to finish this tell him he can wait or he can come back. I told River that id have this done in time for her to get home for dinner. It should only take me an hour more" Christian said. "Ok ill tell him" Ren kissed me on the head again and then left the room.

"He wont be happy but he can wait" Christian said. "Who is he?" I asked. "Just my cousin on my dads side of the family. My dad and his mom are brother and sister. Im a few years older than him." "Aww, ok."

It didnt take Christian long to finish up my tattoo outline. After it was done he cleaned it up and after i looked at it and told him it looked good, he got it bandaged up and explained after care to me.

When he was done i fixed my shirt and shorts and was ready to go. Christian walked me to the counter so i could pay. He didnt want me to pay for it but i insisted and i paid for it. After i finished paying and scheduled my next appointment i gave him a hug and a kiss on the cheek.

