

*His gift bonus  
chapter*

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One

## Bonus chapter



*Conrad*

***E**xplosions. Outside this room. But inside there's Harper. On the floor. Hurt. Huddled in on herself because I can't reach her. And then I'm outside. Trying to get back in. Bullets fly, hitting me. I don't care.*

*I need her. Nothing else matters. Healthy, wounded, dead or alive, it makes no difference. I still need her. My gift. The woman who brought me so much joy that sometimes I think I can't handle it.*

*My breath is short. My eyes race wildly over the door. No lock, no handle. It doesn't budge when I throw myself against it. But Harper is still inside. I hear her voice. Calling me... Conrad. Conrad.*

"Conrad."

Gasping as if I'm coming up for air, I realize I was dreaming. She's here, straddling my waist, giving me a pissed-off stare, her pussy hot and wonderful over my cock. Then she cants her hips, and I'm inside her.

Fuck.

"Welcome back."

"What are you doing, my gift?" My voice is strained. She sheathes me perfectly and brings me to my knees even though I'm still flat on my back.

"I'm using blackmail to get what I want, since I can't get it any other way?" She undulates slowly, just enough to make a growl rumble deep in my throat. "What the hell are you dreaming about? You have to talk to me. You don't want to talk with a therapist, and I can understand that—kinda. But you'll talk to me. Or I'll keep torturing you."

A smirk stretches my lips, and my hand cups her cheek, my thumb stroking her soft skin.

"That's sweet, but I can turn us around and get what I want."

"You wouldn't dare." The conviction in her tone makes my heart swell. She's right. I wouldn't. Not against her will. But I can coax her. I grab her hips and raise her slowly, then bring her down hard and fast. We both moan. Why can't I do this twenty-four seven? Right... because she has a career she loves.

"Stop. That's cheating. Please. It's getting worse. It happens almost every night. I don't want to know you're in pain and I can't help." Her voice is wobbly, emotions pouring out. Fuck.

"I'm not in pain, sweetheart. I've never been happier in my whole life. They're just memories and... fears. They don't count. This counts." I flex under her, grinding, stroking her clit. My beautiful girl is so sensitive. "Waking up with you every day counts." I cup her nape and pull her closer, flat on my chest, her hair wrapped around my fist and her teeth nibbling my prodding thumb. "Knowing that you love me counts. Listening to you talk about the things that excite you counts. Not a nightmare."

Harper grunts and then bites my thumb. Hard. "You're being deliberately dense, and you know it. Let's make a deal. I'll let you flip me over and destroy me if you promise to talk. Just a little. Let me in. Please."

It's that *'let me in'* that tugs at my heart.

"I prefer you like this, where I can see everything." I push her back, brushing her hair from her face. "How beautiful you are. How your breasts bounce when I do this." I raise and lower her slowly, making both of us feel each inch. Every incredible point of connection. "How your blue eyes

get clouded with pleasure. And how you come apart on my cock." I keep going, slow, controlled, even though I want nothing more than to let go.

"Flattery will get you nowhere. Promise." My stubborn, amazing gift. I don't want to. I really, fucking don't. But... *'let me in'*. She did it. She let me in. She trusted me even when I gave her little reason to. She took all of me. The obsessive, violent, controlling man who took her from her apartment and thought that was it. That it would be enough.

"I promise. But you have to promise just to listen." She nods. I don't believe her. She wouldn't be my all if she weren't the most determined, resourceful human being I've ever met. It doesn't matter now. I can't resist her anymore.

I flip us over, latch my lips to her hard nipple and drive her crazy. Drive myself crazy. I let the pleasure build until our voices are all I can hear. Moaning, begging, praising, crying out. And then I finally deliver, pounding inside her until she explodes, milking my cock like a fist, dragging me under, making me come so hard I see black for a second. Just a second, then I squeeze my eyes shut and bask in my gift's glory. Sweaty, out of breath, flushed. Still glaring at me a little.

Huffing, I get on my knees, admiring my girl, her pussy dripping with me. I don't want kids and neither does she, but the unhinged need to come inside her, fill her, marking her as mine never subsides.

"Come here, my bad girl." I wrap Harper in my arms, her head on my chest. Maybe she'll go to sleep. *Ah, wishful thinking.*

She's waiting, her fingertips dragging on my back and making me hard all over again. I won't get what I want if she doesn't. I know that.

Still, I don't talk.

Harper waits, patient, for a while. Then she raises her head and traces the scar on my chest. The bullet wounds.

"It's about this, isn't it?"

"It is, and it isn't." I sigh. Damn. "It had never been a problem before you. Before I realized I'd fallen in love with you. Of course, I wasn't happy about the outcome, but... I never felt anything about it. It started when I was in the hospital, after that sicario tried to kill you. And I haven't been able to get rid of it." I sigh again. "It doesn't matter."

"It matters to me. Maybe if you talk about it, it'll get better."

"I did talk about it. They wouldn't let me be otherwise. I had to report the incident. But it didn't stop there. They didn't stop until they had dissected everything. What would be different now? Harper... let it be."

"I don't want to dissect it. I want to know what you feel. Because you said it, you feel something now. And it's not just what happened back then. You call my name too, most of the time. And I wasn't there."

"I feel what normal people would feel. At least I think so. And you're always on my mind." I don't add that her disappearing on me makes me fear it can happen again. I don't need to. My gift knows. And she kisses me. Gently. Tenderly. But she doesn't let me go deeper. Stubborn, stubborn girl.

"You really don't want to talk about it, huh?"

"I really, really don't." We stare at each other. Something is churning inside that brilliant brain of hers. I wait with bated breath.

"Will you ever? I want to respect your boundaries. But I want everything that you are. You know that. The good, the bad. It doesn't really matter. I want everything."

"Oh, fuck me, Harper." I break free from her embrace and stand. "You're not playing fair. And I shouldn't complain since I'm the king of not playing fair, but you've learned a little too much from me."

Turning, I locate a towel discarded on the floor and wrap it around my waist. It's tented by my cock, hard no matter what because it'll never stop wanting Harper. At least I feel less exposed.

"Fine. I was dreaming about the attack. Bits and pieces. But the important part was that you were there. That you were in danger. So maybe... it's not about what happened back then and more about... the fear I might lose you. Or both. I don't know. It doesn't matter. It's just ghosts. I don't deal in ghosts. Or feelings, unless we're talking about you."

She goes on her knees, letting the sheet fall and crawling to me. *Fuck me.* And I mean for real.

"I'm not going anywhere. I married you. I'm staying married to you. Levi's giving us quarterly updates, and they all say the same: no one's searching for me. The Bratva has bigger fish to fry. You're stuck with me. Shouldn't have kidnapped me otherwise."

"Would it be terrible if I said I'd do it all over again?"

She huffs and rolls her eyes, so I pick her up, wrapping her legs around my waist and kissing the soft skin of her neck. I breathe her in.

"Harper... I've changed so much since I met you, and yet, I haven't really. The nightmares are not pleasant, but they don't play a role in my life. I hope they'll go away. If they don't, I'll live with it. And Levy can give me all the reassurance he wants—I'll never stop keeping my ear to the ground. There's only one thing in this world that would affect me, or rather, send me out of my mind. And that's losing you. Can you trust me? Maybe it's not healthy, but I don't want to deal with more feelings. The only thing I want to feel is how much I love you. From now until the day I die. And even beyond that. If there's an afterlife, I'll love you there. If there's reincarnation, I'll find you again. Can you just be happy with that?"

She cocks her head and nods, then kisses my cheek. "Promise if that changes, you'll come to me."

"I do."

"Good. And Conrad... in the next life, just come to my door with a bouquet and a smile, okay?"

She chuckles, and I raise my eyebrows at her. "So traditional, my gift." Then I drop her on the bed, following immediately after, my body cradled between her thighs. "Thank you. Now, if you want my cock, you have to work for it." I press my forehead to hers, taking in the mischief in her gaze, then get rid of the towel and settle back against the headboard. I don't have

to wait long until she's back in my arms. "Are you okay with our deal?" I want to drop this topic so badly, but I need to know she's happy. I'd rip my heart out of my chest if it'd make her happy.

"Yes. And thank you for talking to me. And in the next life, maybe I'll be the one kidnapping you. Now that I know what it means to have you, I wouldn't go a day without it, not to mention an entire life."

Fine by me.