

Chapter One

- Alexander -

It's been sixty-six days, twelve hours, and twenty-nine, wait—thirty minutes since the last time I have seen her. She doesn't know she's mine yet, but she is. She's all I ever think about. She's all I'll ever need. I know she's an innocent, and I'm a selfish bastard, but I don't care. I need her in more ways than one.

Finding a woman like her took some time. She's smart, independent, and beautiful. She has no family, and she has no idea how valuable of an asset she can be to my image within my company. Falling in love with her is unacceptable. I don't do love so getting her to marry me will be the hard part. The proposal will be simple, *"Be my wife, and I will make all your dreams come true"*. What do I get out of this bargain? I get a wife and to keep the majority shares in my company. Time is running out and I can't wait any longer.

I've taken my company and made it what it is today. With the stroke of a pen, all I've work so hard for will go to a group of shareholders and investors and remove me as CEO. For the past three years I've waited. I've waited for her. She's everything I can ever want, so she's the only one who can help make this situation right.

Even in death my parents haunt and mock me. Eleanora and I are our parents' only children. We inherited everything and, as the oldest, I have the majority control of the company.

But there was a stipulation in their will. I have to marry by my thirty-sixth birthday, which is four months away, or forfeit majority shares of our family corporation to the next majority shareholder in the event of my parents' death.

Thereby making me head of the board of directors, but no longer the CEO. Because and I quote my father in his deep Scottish bawl;

"Marriage settles a man down. Ye get the responsibility of a wife 'n' bairns, ye gain priorities. Ye bring in a woman with wealth that adds tae yer own. I dinnae care if ye dinnae like her, I dinnae like yer mam and I still dinnae."

Our parents, if I can call them that, wouldn't be a far stretch from an evil nightmare. They were two of the vilest, selfish, and evil people I have ever had the misfortune to know. From Maddock, my father's evil seed, and Valentina, my mother's deviled egg, they produced my sister Eleanora and I. How we got here, I'll never fucking know. They hated each other and us.

No one else knows about this stipulation to Maddock and Valentina's will, not even my beloved sister Eleanora. Needless to say, I found the woman who will help me keep my company and hopefully be a good fuck. Does being a good fuck matter? No, but it sure as shit helps.

I had interviewed two roommates for Eleanora. That's how I met Gladys; she was an interviewee. Once I got to know more about her whenever I visited Eleanora at the university in Edinburgh, it became much more. I confess I'm attracted to her and making her my wife would help me save my shares in my company. As I've said before I'm selfish. My attraction to Gladys isn't enough. I need to have her want to be with me so we at least have a mutual attraction toward one another. Love is optional. She can think of this marriage not so much as a relationship but a business contract with benefits.

Now at thirty-five, I'm as fucked up as I was when I was teaching Eleanora how not to shit in her pants. The truth is I've been agitated all week because the one woman I want most in this world can bring all this crashing down just by turning me down. The only other sweet spot is that Eleanora is coming home too, and she's bringing both her roommates, and one of those roommates is my woman, Gladys. That also means I don't have to do any shopping with her, nor do all that other girly shit Eleanora makes me do.

I knew it the moment we met that Gladys is the woman the future mother of my bairns, my children and wife for me. She'll fight me, and she may even deny she's attracted to me. I'm not blind. I see it in her eyes every time I've visited my sister and she was there. Her eyes would glaze over, her nostrils flared, and she'd bite her bottom lip. I know when a woman is interested. Hell, I've known that look since I had my first piece of ass.

You think I give a shit she's my sister's best friend? I don't give a fuck. I've waited long

enough as it is. I don't care she's ten years younger than me either.

I purposely waited until she was done at the university before I decided to make her mine. I'm not going to stand in the way of her dreams. I have my piece of pie, and I'm going to make damn sure she gets hers.

And now, I'm sitting at the bar in Smithy's, drinking my favorite Scottish whisky, and stewing. I'm not even good company for myself that's why I'm not at home. I need a distraction but there aren't any here, not when my company is on the brink of slipping through my fingers and the one woman on this planet who can help me keep what I've built is over twenty-five hundred miles away.

I grab my untouched tumbler of whisky, turn around with my back to the bar, and look out over the crowded room.

Smithy's is my home away from home and owned by one of my best friends, Bartholomew or, as everyone calls him, Bull. Smithy's is located ten minutes outside of the city away from downtown Hartford, Connecticut, but close enough to enjoy the city nightlife for members who enjoy a variety in one night. Smithy's Members Only Gentlemen's Club and Whisky Bar is the very essence of opulence. The gated property is private and surrounded by twenty-five acres of manicured lawns. There are secluded gardens all designed to add the presence of sophistication and bridge the present with the past of southern charm, paying homage to Bull's grandfather, the son of Irish immigrants and a gentleman Dom.

Bull created a fresh new atmosphere on each floor of Smithy's. The four-story building's exterior façade is made of brown brick and tall leaded-glass windows. An extended overhead awning attached to the building covers the entry .

Spanning over four levels Bull created a fresh new atmosphere on each floor. The building's exterior façade made of brown brick and tall leaded glass windows, glazed over in dark red, with an extended overhead awning attached to the building, over a U-shaped red brick

driveway.

The lower level can hardly be considered a basement. It's outfitted so that any Dominant can enjoy an evening of play. This exclusive level is only assessable via a passcoded elevator, and then through coded doors. Each member is given their own member ID and passcode to use for their discretion and security. This is the dungeon.