



# A MOTHER'S JUDGMENT





"Looking good, little brother," said Payton Holt. She was a little shorter than Jesse, but with their matching blonde hair and piercing blue eyes, no one would ever believe they weren't related. Their looks, at least, they'd gotten from their mother, who stood nearby, looking for all the world like she'd just eaten something sour. The two siblings ignored her. "You clean up good."

"Well," corrected Jesse, straightening his tie as he looked around at his peers. Some still wore the graduation robes, but most, like Jesse, had discarded their heavy garments. "But thanks."

Graduating high school was supposed to be bittersweet. It was an important milestone, and for many, it signaled an end to their protracted childhoods. However, it also meant saying goodbye to familiarity, which, for most graduates, meant the beginning of the end of lifelong friendships. Everything, they knew, would soon change. For Jesse, that change couldn't come soon enough. High school hadn't been easy for him, and he couldn't wait to move on.

"Where's your little friend?" asked Jesse's mother, Caroline. Her question brought Jesse back to the present. The elder Holt was a buxom, blonde beauty who always seemed to have a judgmental expression upon her face. That sneer only deepened when she referred to Jesse's best friend, Maddy. "The Alexander girl?"

Jesse shook his head. "She didn't want to walk," he said, leaving out the part about her family not being able to afford the many fees associated with graduation. The girl had put on a brave face, saying that she thought the whole ritual was silly, but Jesse knew her well enough to know the truth. "She said she was protesting the whole thing."

"I'll never know what you see in her," Caroline said with a sigh. "But who am I to get in the way of young love?"

Jesse gave her a nervous smile. "Yeah," he muttered, glancing at his older sister. Payton knew good and well that Jesse and Maddy were just friends. In fact, she knew a lot about her brother that their mother didn't - chief among them that he was gay. Deciding to change the subject, Jesse asked his mother, "You said you wanted some pictures?"

"Right," Caroline said. Waving the siblings together, she lofted her phone, ordering, "Go on. Get together. That's it."

As Jesse endured his mother's far-too-involved photo session, he couldn't help but feel optimistic about the future.





"She's going to find out sooner or later," said Payton, crossing her legs like a perfect lady. "You may as well tell her now."

"Yeah," Jesse replied, sitting across from his sister. "Because she definitely wouldn't overreact to that news, right?"

"That doesn't change the fact that she deserves to know," responded his sister.

She couldn't understand his perspective, of course. As far as their mother was concerned, Payton had always been the perfect child. Pretty. Popular. Proper. She was exactly what Caroline imagined a daughter should be. Jesse, on the other hand, had never lived up to his mother's expectations. In fact, he had never even come close. He wasn't overly masculine. He didn't take charge. And he certainly wasn't interested in living out his mother's dream for him. A wife, kids, a white picket fence, PTA meetings and church - that's what she imagined for his future. And he wanted none of it.

"How about this?" he suggested. "You tell her about dating Tyrell, and I'll tell her I'm gay."

"That's different," complained Payton. "I'm not dating Tyrell."

Jesse nodded. Strictly speaking, that was true. She'd only had sex with him a few times. They'd never actually been out on any dates. "Or what about Will? Thomas? Keith? Tell her about any of your special friends, and I'll come clean about my sexuality."

She fixed him with a look that sent shivers up his spine. "She can't know about any of that," she said. "You know she'd freak out."

Jesse smiled. "I don't know what she'd think is worse - that you're sexually active or that you prefer black guys," he said. "But whatever. That's your business, just like when I tell mom about being gay is mine."





Madelyn, or Maddy, as her friends called her, groaned audibly, collapsing onto her bed. In a lot of ways, Madelyn Alexander was Jesse's sister's polar opposite. Slim. Brunette. Unconcerned with anyone else's opinion. It was one of the reasons Jesse liked her so much. "I'm bored!" she mock-screamed. "We should go out."

"Where?" Jesse asked.

"What about that new club? You know, the one downtown," she suggested. "You like to dance, right?"

"You know I can't do that," he said. "If someone saw me..."

"God," Maddy said. "You care way too much what people think of you."

"Not 'people'," I corrected. "One person. If my mom finds out that I'm...you know...she'll cut me off. She'll kick me out. And then, I won't be able to go to college. I won't get a good job. And -"

"And you'll end up living in a van down by the river," she provided. "Yeah. I've heard it before."

"You don't believe it," he said.

"Your mom's a bitch," she allowed. "Yeah - I get it. But she wouldn't abandon you just because you're gay. I'm sure she wouldn't like it, but in the end, she'd accept it because she loves you."

"I don't think you know my mom," Jesse stated, wishing for all the world that she was right. But he knew his mother better than that. She was the worst sort of hardcore, Bible-thumping, evangelical Christian. That ideology didn't leave a lot of room for gay acceptance.

"Whatever," Maddy said. "I still think we should just go. You could finally hook up with someone instead of spending every night jacking off to those websites you like."

Jesse's jaw dropped. "I don't...y-you know...I don't..." he stammered, trying to get the denial out of his mouth. It didn't work.

Madelyn patted his forearm. "It's okay," she said. "Everybody does it, sweetie. There's nothing to be ashamed of."





"I think you can do better," said Caroline, Jesse's mother. She wore a black skirt and a multi-colored blouse, topped off with a pair of black heels. The ensemble left her lower legs bare, exposing the tattoos encircling her ankles. They were the lone remnant of the life she'd left behind when Jesse's father had been sent to prison. Back then, she was a different person. "That's all I'm saying."

Jesse shook his head. "I know you don't like her," he said. "But Maddy is a really good person."

"Oh, honey - she can't be that good of a person," Caroline responded. "She doesn't even go to church. I know you've been together since your freshman year, but it's time to grow up. She was okay for high school, but it's time to move on to bigger and better things."

Jesse wanted to respond angrily, but he bit his tongue. Caroline's judgmental nature wasn't anything new. Nor was her disapproval of what she thought of as his relationship with Madelyn. But for some reason, in that moment, it struck him as particularly frustrating.

"I don't want bigger or better things, mom," he said, careful not to outright lie. He'd never actually called Maddy his girlfriend. He'd simply let his mother assume as much when, after a failed attempt at a date, the two became close friends. It was a natural assumption for a woman who simply never considered that her son might not be straight.

"So you keep saying," she said. "Is she going to college, at least?"

"Community college," Jesse answered. "She's going to get the basics out of the way first, and then she's going to transfer to -"

"Community college," Caroline muttered. "I suppose that's the best some people can do."

Jesse resisted the urge to point out that his mother hadn't graduated from college. She'd barely even finished high school and had no room to judge anyone. But he kept his mouth shut as he endured his mother's judgment of Madelyn. It was better than she latched onto the girl's "inadequacy" as opposed to searching out the truth of his sexual orientation.





“So,” said Payton. “Any clue what you’re going to do?”

Jesse shook his head. “I’m going pre-law,” he said. “You know that.”

“I didn’t ask what your major’s going to be,” she pointed out. “I asked you what you wanted to do. Because becoming a lawyer definitely isn’t it, and we both know it.”

Jesse looked away. He knew exactly what he wanted to do, but that desire had the misfortune of being both stereotypically gay and unacceptable in his mother’s eyes. For most of his adult life, he’d been fascinated with photography and fashion, and more than anything, he wanted to parlay that fascination into a career. However, that seemed incredibly unlikely, given his fear of his mother’s judgment. It was more than that, though. He knew making a living as a fashion photographer was a longshot, at best. Law was far safer.

“I don’t want to talk about it,” he said, not looking at his sister.

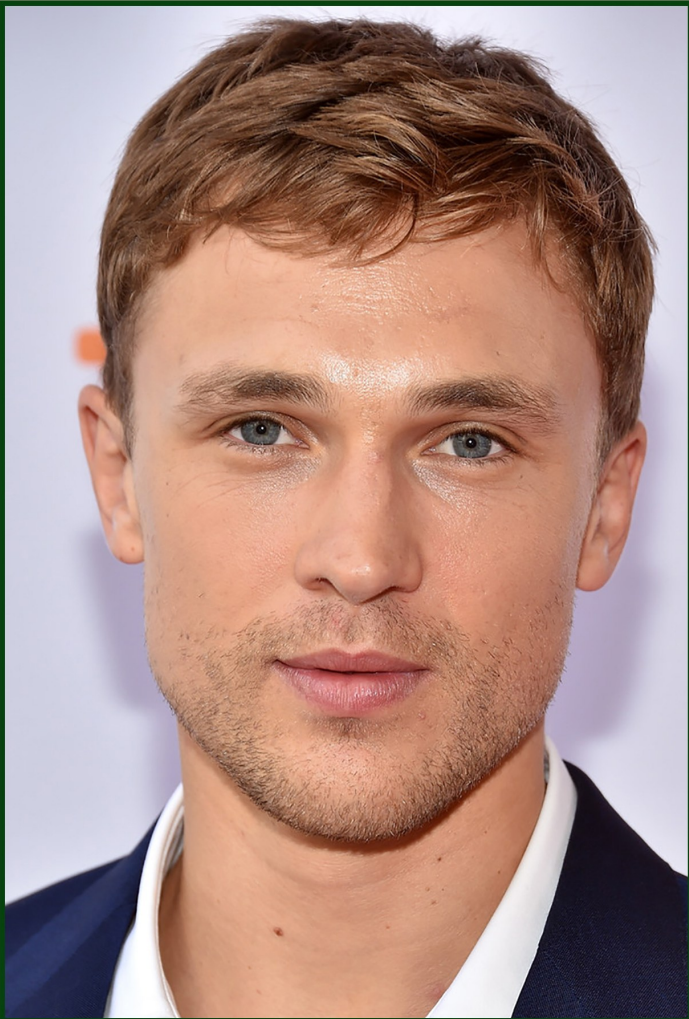
“You could always minor in photography,” she suggested. She knew about his dreams of becoming a photographer, and she’d never been anything but supportive. What’s more, she hadn’t told their mother, which was far more important to him.

He shrugged. “Maybe,” he said. “I could tell mom I was doing it to meet girls or something. She might accept that.”

Payton gripped her brother’s shoulder. “It’s going to be okay, you know,” she said. “In college, nobody’s going to care that you’re gay. You’ll see.”

Jesse couldn’t bring himself to believe her because his every experience – from school, to church, to his few failed attempts at athletics – anyone who was even slightly different would never be accepted. And there was nothing society looked at as more “different” than people like him.





“Are you stalking my brother again?” asked Maddy, looking over Jesse’s shoulder.

“What?” was Jesse’s quick response as he thumbed the “back” button on his phone. “No. I was just looking at your profile, and I accidentally clicked his.”

He knew the excuse wouldn’t fool his friend, who knew all about his crush on her older brother, Caleb. If pressed to give an opinion, she actually thought it was cute. However, that didn’t mean she was above teasing him about it.

“If you’d have kept scrolling, you would’ve seen some pictures I took at the beach,” she said. “He’s wearing a speedo, and you can see, like, everything.”

Jesse gulped as his face went red. “R-really?” he whispered. “Um...I mean...I don’t care. He’s good-looking, I guess. But...I mean...I know he’s straight.”

Madelyn laughed. “Like you’d ever work up the nerve to ask him out in the first place,” she said. “Not that I think you should. Even if he was into guys, he’s really not your type.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Jesse asked, feeling a little indignant. “I’m not good enough for your big brother?”

“What? No,” she said. “He’s not good enough for you, stupid. He’s an asshole. And, like, a complete dude-bro jock. And what’s worse, he’d do just about anything to get ahead. I’m pretty sure he doesn’t have even the slightest bit of a conscience.”

“Oh,” Jesse said, Caleb’s face burned into his memory. Madelyn’s assessment of her brother might be true, but he didn’t care. He wasn’t interested in Caleb’s personality. Or his conscience. He was far keener on other, more physical parts of his best friend’s brother.





Jesse plastered a huge, fake smile on his face as he dropped the phone to his side. If he pretended everything was okay, maybe it would be. "I...um...I have to go home," he said, looking up at Madelyn. "My mom said she needs to talk."

"About what?" asked his unconcerned friend. "Did she find out that you didn't officially declare your major yet? Because -"

"I...I think I left my computer unlocked," Jesse said, his smile wilting.

"And? What's on it?" she asked.

"You know what's on it," he said.

"The porn?" Madelyn asked. He nodded. "Seriously? You don't have it set up to automatically delete your browsing history when you close the browser? Don't you know about incognito mode?"

"Can we not talk about why it's on there?" he asked. "Let's just agree that it was and that she might have found all of it, okay? What the hell am I going to do? What am I going to say? I could tell her it was a virus or something, right? She would believe that, wouldn't she?"

"Your mom works with computers all day," Madelyn said. "She practically built her company's website. There's no way she would believe that."

Jesse sat down on the nearby bench, looking around. Dozens of pedestrians strolled past, unaware that his life was on the verge of utter disaster. If his mother had found all the pornography on his computer, she'd know, beyond the shadow of any doubt, that he was gay. No excuse he gave would matter.

Madelyn sat beside him. "Maybe this is a good thing," she said, her hand on his back. "You could get out from under this, you know? You could finally live out in the open. Maybe you could date and -"

"She's going to kill me," Jesse said, interrupting his friend. "Like, literally. She's going to kill me."



"Yes," said Caroline, the phone to her ear. "I know. I'll definitely think about it."

Jesse stood barely a few feet away from his mother, but he felt a distance stretching between them. They'd never been particularly close, but mothers and teenage sons rarely are. He loved her, and he thought she loved him.

Caroline finished her conversation, hanging up the phone with a quick goodbye. As she set the device on the table, she looked at her son. "You know why I asked you to come home," she said. "I found that disgusting pornography on your computer."

"I...I can explain," Jesse managed, his voice a mere whisper.

"Don't," she said. "I don't need to hear about your perversions. All I need to know is that it's over. You won't act on that filth ever again."

"I...I don't...I don't know what to say," Jesse admitted. She'd just asked him to change his very nature. It's difficult to know how to respond to that.

"I'm going to make an appointment with Reverend Paul," she said. "He'll know what to do about this. He'll know how to get the devil out of you."

"I...the devil isn't...isn't in me," Jesse said, summoning what courage he had left. "I...I know you mean well, mom. I do. But this is who I am. I'm...I'm gay."

He expected many things. Yelling. Screaming. Insults. Perhaps even a physical confrontation. But what he hadn't expected was her cold, unyielding stare. "I see," she said. "Very well. If that's how it is, that's how it is. I suppose this conversation is over, then."

Again, Jesse was at a loss for words. So, he simply backed away and retreated up to his room where he wondered what, exactly, had just occurred. Hours later, lying in his bed, he still hadn't come up with an answer.





“Yeah, no – I don’t know,” Jesse said, grinning. “She’s just sort of let me be.”

“That doesn’t sound like her,” said his sister, and Jesse had to agree. For the past week, he’d been expecting the other shoe to drop, for his mother to light into him about his homosexuality, but it had never come. Certainly, she was cold, and she barely spoke to him, but she seemed to have accepted him. And he couldn’t have been happier about it. The resulting sense of freedom felt almost overwhelming. “Like, at all.”

“I know,” Jesse admitted. “But I don’t know what else to tell you.”

Jesse had been fully prepared to leave, should his mother prove irrational. He’d had his bags packed. He had already made arrangements to sleep on his older sister’s couch. And he’d mentally prepared himself to leave his life behind. If he was honest, he was a little surprised that none of that had been necessary.

“This is a woman who never misses a chance to go to church,” Payton said. “If the doors are open, she’s there. There’s no way she’s just going to accept this. There’s something going on. I don’t know what it is, but it’s there.”

Jesse’s smile faded. “I can’t prepare for something if I don’t know what it is,” he said. “I mean, if she tells me I’m not welcome in her house anymore, I’ll just stay with you. I might not be able to go to college right away, but I can get a job. I can work. I’m okay with that.”

“I hope everything works out,” Payton said. “I really do. But I’m here for you, Jesse. I’ll always be here for you.”

“Thanks,” he said. “That means a lot.”



"I don't trust your mom," said Madelyn. "You know that, right?"

"You've made it clear that you don't like her," Jesse agreed. "So, that isn't exactly new, Maddy."

"Yeah, but what about her says that she's just going to accept you?" she asked.

"Besides the fact that she has?" Jesse asked. "I mean, it's been almost a month. She's even talking to me again. Obviously, she doesn't like this, but she loves me, right? She wants me to be happy."

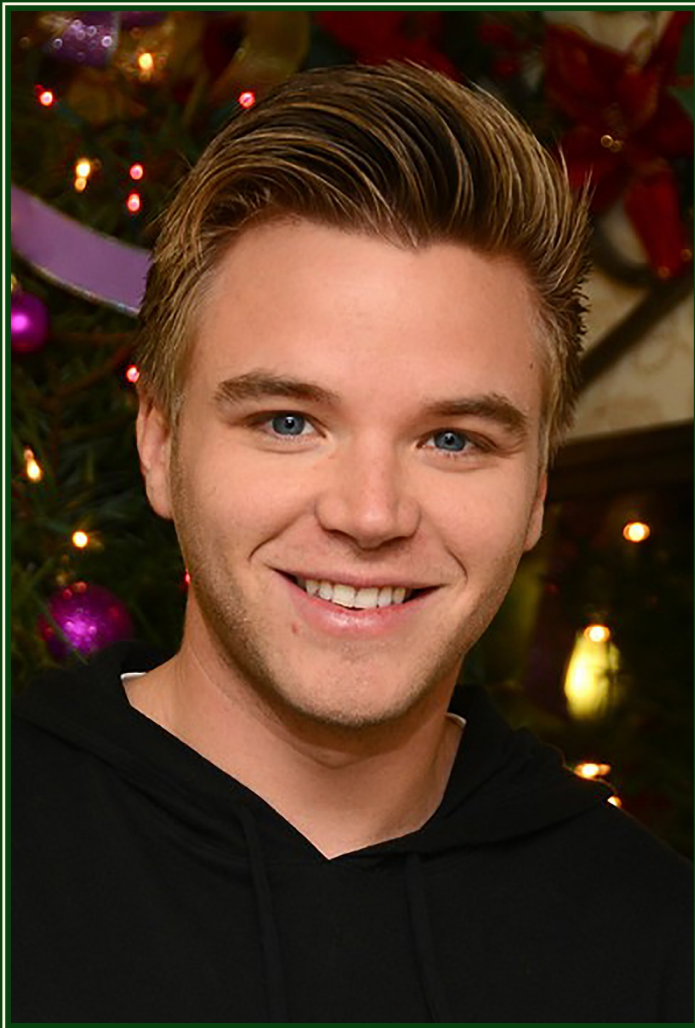
"Because that really jives with everything you know about your mom," Maddy said. "She's not the type of person to just discard her beliefs because of facts. She doesn't even like the fact that our school taught evolution."

"I know," Jesse said. In fact, he remembered that year quite well. She objected to its inclusion at a PTA meeting, was shot down, and then, almost a year later, campaigned to have the principal who'd opposed her fired over some petty mistakes. In the end, she won. Principal Lewis was fired. Evolution was still taught, but at least she had her small victory.

"Just be careful," Madelyn said. "I don't know what she's going to do, but I'd be willing to bet that this isn't over. She might cut you off right before school. She might not pay your tuition. I don't know. But she's not going to just let this slide. You know she won't."

Jesse shook his head. "I think you're wrong," he said. Although, he suspected she wasn't.





“God,” Caroline groaned, looking at her son. Months had passed since he’d “come out” to her, and she’d still yet to truly accept it. Oh, she knew he liked men. Those disgusting photos and videos on his computer made that abundantly clear. But she didn’t accept that there was nothing she could do about it. “Wipe that ridiculous expression off your face. It’s Christmas. At least try to act normal.”

“I was just smiling,” Jesse pointed out. “Like you said, it’s Christmas. People can be happy at Christmas.”

His mother hadn’t quite warmed up to his sexuality the way he’d hoped, peppering their every conversation with homophobic digs. Clearly, she was struggling with it. But at least she hadn’t acted; he’d been able to go to complete his first semester of college without incident.

“I think it’s time I let you know about what’s going to happen,” she said, setting down her glass of non-alcoholic eggnog.

“What do you mean?” he asked.

“I mean that you’re not going back to school,” she said. “Not immediately, at least. No – you’ll be spending the next nine months in a special program. That’s your Christmas gift, actually.”

“W-what kind of special program?” Jesse asked.

“The kind you need,” she said. “The kind that will give you the sort of life you deserve. It’s one of the top programs in the world.”

“For what?” he asked, hoping she’d be a little more specific.

“To make you normal, of course,” she answered. “That’s what you want, right? I read your journal. All that wishing you could be normal. Well, this is your wish come true. You’re leaving just after New Years.”



"That's all she said?" asked Madelyn without looking up from the sheaf of papers on the desk in front of her.

Jesse was close to panic. It was New Year's Eve, and his mother still hadn't elaborated on what she had planned for him. When he asked, she simply responded with, "You'll see." It was maddeningly frustrating.

"I told you everything she told me," he said. "I don't know what she's signing me up for, but it sounds like it's one of those pray-away-the-gay camps or something."

"Just do it," Madelyn said, finally looking up. "It's not like they can change who you are, right? So, just go along with it. Make her happy. Get through college, and then live your life. It's not rocket science, Jess."

"I don't want to pretend anymore," Jesse said, turning around. He ran his hand through his hair as he stared out the window. He'd gotten used to the sense of freedom being out had afforded him, and he wasn't eager to surrender that empowerment.

"We don't always get what we want, do we?" she said. "Like, I don't want to be registering for classes at a freaking community college, but that's just how it works, right? Just put your big-boy pants on, do what you have to do, and quit whining about it."

"You make it sound so easy," was Jesse's response. "It's not. This is who I am."

"And I get that," she answered. "It's humiliating. Dehumanizing. I know, but that doesn't change the fact that you don't have much of a choice. You depend on her too much. So, just do what she wants you to do. Or don't. You can register for classes with me."

Jesse didn't answer because he had no idea what he was going to do. Despite the fact that he'd lived most of his life hiding who he was, Jesse had absolutely no interest in going back to that. It was like Madelyn said - dehumanizing. But in spite of that, he couldn't deny her logic.





"I'm glad you've decided to get your life straightened out," said Caroline, standing up from the white couch. It was the first time he'd seen her smile since he'd come out to her. "It gives me hope."

"Hope," Jesse muttered. He had decided to take his friend's advice and simply play the part his mother wanted him to play, at least long enough to graduate from college. Still, he couldn't keep a note of bitterness from his voice as he said, "Yeah. That's what this is about."

"That's exactly what it's about," she said. "When I was younger - not much older than you, really - I was in a bad, bad place. I was on drugs. I was drinking. And I wish I could have had someone to set me on the right path. That's what I want for you, sweetie. I want to help you. That's what this is all about."

Jesse didn't immediately respond because he knew it was a lie. She didn't want was best for him; she never had. She wanted for him what would reflect best on her twisted sense of morality. She wanted to brag to her church friends about her son. She wanted to tell them about his respectable life. And his being gay simply didn't fit into that idea.

"So," he said. "What's this program, anyway? Where am I going?"

"It's in Texas," she said. "I actually heard about it from my friend, Brenda. I think you know her daughter."

"Brenda," Jesse echoed, trying to place the name. Finally, he realized who she was talking about. "You're talking about Jerry Sims' mom?"

"That's right," she said. "But I don't think she goes by Jerry anymore. If I remember right, her name's now Jennifer."

Jesse nodded. He hadn't known Jerry personally, but that didn't mean he wasn't aware of the boy's story. Sophomore year, Jerry had disappeared for almost an entire year, and when he came back, he was unrecognizable. As it turned out, he'd always been transgender, and he'd spent the year transitioning.

"The program helped Jerry become Jennifer," Caroline said. "And it'll help you become the person you need to be, too."



"I still have no idea what that's even supposed to mean," Jesse said. "She's being so freaking cryptic about it all. But I guess it can't be all that bad, right? I mean, if it helped Jerry with his...I mean, her transgender issue, and they didn't try to brainwash her into being a guy, maybe it's not what we think it is."

"What's the alternative?" asked Madelyn. "That it's some sort of therapy? Like, a love yourself for you, helping you adjust sort of thing?"

Jesse spread his hands. "I have no idea, Maddy," he said. "I'm in the dark here. Nothing but mixed signals all over the place."

"But you decided to go anyway," she said. "You've got no idea what they're going to do, and you just went along with it?"

"That's what you told me to do," he pointed out.

"I didn't think you'd do it, though," Madelyn responded. "Just...be careful, okay? That's all I want you to do. Keep your head down. Do what they want you to do so you can come home."

"Yeah," Jesse said. "Don't make waves. That's what people on the internet said to do."

"You looked up how to survive gay conversion camp online?" she asked, shaking her head. She grinned. "Never change, Jess. Never change."

"That's kind of my goal here," he said, returning the smile.

"Mine, too," she said. "Mine too."





"Mom's going to freak out if she sees you in that," Jesse said, looking at his sister's outfit. Her denim shorts were far too small and her navy blue tee-shirt exposed way too much midriff.

Payton smiled. "Like she cares about what I'm doing while you're around," she said. "She's way too focused on you and your little trip."

"Little trip," I muttered. "She said it might take a full nine months. That doesn't sound like a little trip to me."

"You don't have to go," suggested Payton. "My couch is still available."

"No," Jesse said, sitting down. "I don't know. I think I have to do this. I mean, she is our mother, right? She's doing what she thinks is right."

"She's doing what her preacher told her is right," Payton said. "I doubt she's ever stopped to question anything that man says."

"She wasn't always like that," Jesse said. "She was always a little judgmental, but it wasn't this bad. She even voted Democrat a few times."

"I remember," Payton stated. "But she's way past that now."

"I know," Jesse said. "But she's doing this because she thinks she's saving my soul or something."

"Then she's stupid," Payton said. "You can't save someone by hating what they are. That's just not possible."

Jesse shrugged. "I know," he said. "I wish she'd get that memo, though. But whatever, right? Maybe I'll get to this facility, and they'll help me. Maybe they'll do for me what they did for Jennifer Sims."

"Brainwash you?" Payton asked. "Because that's what happened to Jerry. Before he left, there wasn't a transgender bone in that boy's body. I knew him pretty well. But after? He really believed he was a girl. I don't know what they did to him, but they didn't help him. I can promise you that."



"I'm going to miss you," Jesse said, wrapping his arms around his friend's shoulders. He let her go, backing up a step. "I wish I didn't have to do this."

"You don't," was Madelyn's predictable response. In the past day, she'd done a complete one-eighty, and started to try to convince him not to go. Part of it, Jesse was sure, had to do with the fact that she didn't really have any other friends. She knew she'd be lonely in his absence. "You can tell her no."

"No," said Caroline, standing by the door. "He can't."

Without averting her gaze from Jesse's face, Madelyn said, "Nobody's talking to you, lady."

"He's going," Caroline said, stepping forward. "And there's nothing you can do about it."

"I know," Madelyn said. "But he can."

"I...I have to do this, Maddy," Jesse said. "I know you don't understand it, but I do. That's just the way it is."

Jesse wished he was as confident in his decision as his words indicated, but he was terrified of what lay ahead. His sister's memory of Jerry, while easily explainable as faulty, had struck a chord with him. Had the facility brainwashed him? And for what reason? Jesse knew that thinking about it was pointless; he wouldn't come to any real answers until he got to Texas.

But that didn't quiet his thoughts.

"Just be good," Madelyn said. "Don't let them bully you."

"I won't," Jesse insisted.

"Come on," his mother said, gripping his arm. "Or you're going to be late for your flight."

"Yeah," Jesse said, picking up his suitcase. He'd packed light, according to the instructions he'd been sent. Looking at Madelyn, he gave her a half-grin.

"See you later," he said before leaving the house.



Jesse woke up in a cold sweat. Tossing aside his clammy sheets, he sat up, looking around the stark room. It was windowless, featureless, and felt more like a cell than a dorm. He'd only had twenty minutes to explore his new, temporary home before lights out, but even that small span of time had been excessive. There simply wasn't anything to see.

Suddenly, the door swung open, admitting a man dressed like an orderly. Jesse hated judging people based on their appearances, but like anyone else, he sometimes had trouble holding himself to that standard. And looking at the orderly, he couldn't help but feel a little creeped out. The man's face seemed slightly off, like a mask made by someone who'd only once seen a human face. The pieces were there, but they didn't seem quite right.

"You're up," the man said in a sneering voice. "Good. You've got a big day ahead of you. Follow me."

"Can't I get dressed?" asked Jesse. "Take a shower? Brush my teeth?"

"No," the man said. "Your clothing was removed in the night. You won't be needing it. And as far as hygiene is concerned, we'll take care of that."

"O-okay," Jesse said, rising. He wore nothing but a gray tank top and a pair of boxer briefs, so he felt almost naked. The tile floor was ice cold under his feet as he followed the man out of the cell and down a long, narrow hall. After a few minutes, they reached their destination - a wooden door with a simple stencil of the word "Director" on it.

"Go in," the creepy man said.

Jesse knew better than to disobey, so he did as he was told. When he pushed through the doorway, he found himself in an office nearly as stark as his cell. At an old - but spotless - metal desk sat a bald man in a cheap suit.

"Have a seat," the bald man said, gesturing to the chair across the desk. Jesse did as he was told, barely noticing the office's door closing behind him. "Good. I trust you rested well?" Jesse could only nod. "I'm certain that you're wondering what, exactly, is in store for you. Well, I'm pleased to say that we're not going to try to change your sexual preference. Our research has told us that that is impossible. Genetics are what they are."

"T-then, why am I here?" asked Jesse.

"We can't change that you like men," the man said, an evil grin stretching across his face. "But we can change you. Over the next nine months, we're going to turn you into a young lady. Then, your abnormalities won't be so abnormal. Isn't that wonderful?"





"Jesus," Jesse said, looking in the mirror. He had never been a particularly muscular guy, but in the three weeks since he'd come to the nameless facility, his muscles, such as they were, had practically melted away. It wouldn't be long, he knew, before he had the willowy limbs associated with the fairer gender. No doubt, the changes were due to the shots they'd been giving him each morning.

The revelation that they would turn him into a girl seemed silly, at first. Nobody could do that – not if he didn't want them to. But he'd quickly learned that his skepticism at the doctor's claims was far from warranted. More than once, he'd caught glimpses of other unlucky boys in various stages of transformation. Even the few girls he'd seen were probably once male.

That first night, he'd tried to escape. After finding out that his cell was kept locked, he waited until the creepy orderly – who he'd soon found out was named Tom – unlocked his door. He pounced, trying to overpower the man. However, Jesse had never been physically imposing, and Tom easily brushed aside the attack.

Jesse hadn't tried again, resigning himself to enduring whatever they could put him through. After all, it wasn't like he had much of a choice.

Taking a deep breath, he reached up to the light above the mirror, and shut off the room's lone source of illumination. With practiced steps, he climbed onto the hard, thin mattress, and closed his eyes.

A moment later, the night's ever-present music – a soft, almost toneless noise – filled the room. A few seconds later, he was asleep.

Over the course of the night, he awoke numerous times, but each time, the music remained the same. And finally, after an exhausting night, the door swung open to reveal Tom's horrible visage.

"Get up," he said. "Your journey starts today."





"It's not perfect," sneered Tom, pushing me into what Jesse quickly surmised was a Salon. "But it'll do."

"That'll be fine, Tom," came a feminine voice. Jesse turned to see a pretty woman – a little older than him – standing near one of the chairs. "You can go."

"Yes, ma'am," said the orderly before backing out of the room. Jesse heard the distinct click of a series of locks as the door shut.

"Don't mind him," said the woman. "He's a bit menacing at first, but he's mostly harmless."

Jesse wasn't so sure, but he was in no position to argue. Besides, the woman was the first person he'd met since coming to the facility that didn't seem overtly strange. In fact, when he looked into her kind eyes, he felt an almost instant kinship that he couldn't quite explain. Deciding that he might not get another chance, he said, "You've got to help me. I'm being held against my will, and –"

"Stop," the woman said. "I'm sympathetic enough, but I can't help you."

"Why not?" Jesse asked.

"Because I'm a prisoner here, same as you," she said. "I have no power. And even if I did, I wouldn't dare go against them. I've seen the price of disobedience, and I've no desire to incur their wrath. So, just take a seat. I'll try to make this as painless as possible."

Jesse's heart wilted in disappointment as he obeyed her instruction. "I'm Jesse," he said.

"I know who you are," said the woman, stepping behind him. She rested her hands on his shoulders, smiling weakly. "I'm Brittany. Of course, that wasn't my original name. I used to be Bryan. But that was before my girlfriend sent me here."

"W-what is this place?" Jesse asked.

"It doesn't have a proper name," she answered. "Or at least, I don't think it does. But that's not really what you're asking. You want to know what they do. To put it plainly, they feminize men. Some have been sent here by cheating wives or girlfriends. Others come here willingly. But they all receive the same treatment. Just like you'll get."

"Is there any way out?" was Jesse's next question.

"No," Brittany said. "Now, let's clean up those eyebrows, yeah? Pay attention, because you're going to have to learn to do this yourself."



“Damn,” Jesse whispered, staring at his reflection. He marveled at how something as simple as plucking his eyebrows could change his face so much. But it had.

“I had the same reaction,” responded Brittany, smiling sympathetically. “It was a little more dramatic with me, though. I had a beard.”

“You did?” asked Jesse.

“I was also quite a bit more muscular,” she said. “The hormones saw to that, though. The electrolysis got rid of the facial hair. And now look at me. Impressive, right?”

“Not really the word I’d use,” Jesse answered. “Horrifying would be more appropriate.”

Brittany laughed. “It’s not so bad, really,” she said. “I’ve come to terms with what I am now. I don’t know what else Ellen has planned for me, but I’m okay with being a girl. I do still miss the beard, though.”

“How long have you been here?” Jesse asked.

“Eighteen months,” she answered. “I go home in four months, I think. Maybe six or seven. If I pass my test, I mean. But at least they let me do this to pass the time. But like I said, I had a lot further to go than you do. If you had long hair, you could almost pass right now. You’ve got really pretty eyes.”

“T-thanks,” Jesse said. “I guess.”





"W-what's that?" Jesse asked, feeling incredibly vulnerable. It had been almost a month since he'd been confined to the facility, and his body had continued to change. He'd almost gotten used to it, along with the daily injections from the doctor. However, on this particular day, there was someone different in the old doctor's place. "Who are you?"

"I am the head physician," said the man. "The students affectionately refer to me as the Doctor. So, that will suffice. As to what this is," he said, lofting a needle. "Well, that's a bit more complicated. To understand that, you need to understand what's been done to you thus far."

"I just want to go home," pleaded Jesse. It was the same thing he'd told anyone new he met in the facility. "Please."

"Don't be silly," the Doctor said. "Now - to answer your question. This vial contains a fairly revolutionary genetic therapy that will effectively rewire your endocrine system to mimic the body chemistry of a young woman. Until now, you've been subjected to antiandrogens. Testosterone blockers. But now, the real fun begins. Now, we can truly begin to help you."

"I...I don't want this kind of help," Jesse said.

"Of course you do," the bearded man said. "I saw your diary. I saw how much you want to be normal. Well, this is your chance. In any case, you signed over your rights. You admitted yourself to our care. And we have the right to administer that care in whatever way we see fit."

"T-this is all legal?" Jesse asked.

"It is," the man said. "Now, take your clothes off so I can begin my examination. And then, we'll give you your medicine. Won't that be nice? A few injections over the next couple of weeks, and you won't have to take pesky hormones anymore."

"This is permanent?" muttered Jesse.

"Of course," the Doctor stated. "What sort of treatment isn't?"



"I hate my hair," Jesse said, brushing it out of his eyes. It had grown quite a lot over the past few weeks, and it always seemed to get in the way. "I don't know why they won't let me cut it. Or at least tie it back."

"You need to concentrate on what you're doing," reminded Brittany.

She'd taken on the role of mentor, a fact which Jesse didn't really mind.

She was nice, and she understood what he was going through better than anyone else in the facility. However, that didn't mean she wasn't demanding. Every moment of each day was spent in the pursuit of their ultimate goal: making Jesse walk, talk, and act like a girl. It was exhausting and awkward, and Jesse was sure that he'd never get there.

But Brittany assured him that he would.

"I'm tired of walking in these stupid things," Jesse said, wishing he could take off the modest heels. He gripped the leather jacket. "And this is ridiculous, by the way. I would never wear something like this."

His ensemble made him feel incredibly self-conscious. He wore a black, leather jacket, a low-cut top that, if he'd had breasts, would have left a generous amount of cleavage bare, and a pair of ridiculously tight jeans that were artfully ripped and purposely distressed. Topping it off was a pair of two-inch, black pumps that made him feel like he was walking on stilts.

"They want you exposed to a bunch of different fashions," Brittany explained. "I've told you this a hundred times. They don't want you to be some feminine automaton. They want you to be your own woman."

"Well, then, I want to be a woman who identifies as a man," Jesse said.

"Nice try," Brittany said. "But that's not going to work. Just keep walking. You'll get used to the heels."

"Yeah," Jesse said. "Sure. Because that's what I want. To get used to all this."





“W-what are you doing in here?” Jesse demanded, half-hidden behind the doorframe.

“Checking up on you,” said Brittany, making a point to look him up and down. He refused to hide, despite the fact that he was incredibly ashamed of how much his body had changed. What muscle he’d once had was gone, his chest had begun to develop breasts, and, worst of all, his penis had shrunk considerably. But he kept telling himself that he had nothing to be ashamed of. He hadn’t asked for any of it. “How are your new accommodations?”

“Fine,” he said, having moved into a new domicile. It was far nicer than his old cell and was even equipped with its own bathroom.

“Good,” Brittany said, sitting on the bed. “Very good.”

“Listen,” said Jesse, wrapping a towel around his chest. Brittany had insisted that he try to mimic the habits of women whenever possible, even if it felt silly. “You can’t just barge in here.”

“You’re upset,” she said. “I understand. But you have to know that you won’t have any privacy here. They’re watching you every move.”

“Cameras,” Jesse said. “What do you want?”

“To talk,” she said. “I was mostly alone for months before you came. I just...I just want a friend.”

Jesse sighed. It wasn’t her fault he was in his current situation. “I’m sorry,” he said. “I should be such a bitch to you. You can’t help that I’m here.”

“I was angry too,” Brittany explained. “When I first got here, I mean. I acted out. I tried to attack my orderly. One of the doctors, too. I guess I thought I could get away. But when they took...m-my...balls, it all came crashing home, you know?”

“T-they castrated you?” Jesse asked. “That’s barbaric.”

Brittany shrugged. “Depends on your perspective,” she said. “I never would have accepted this so easily without that. I’d still be fighting. I’d have probably been killed by now. So, I guess it all worked out for the best.”



"They're definitely getting bigger," said Brittany. "Much bigger than mine."

"Yay," Jesse responded. "Because that's what I always wanted - bigger boobs."

"Don't act like that," Brittany said. "This is a good thing. I bet you're going to get a lot bigger, too."

Jesse looked away. He didn't know how to respond to Brittany's compliments because he wanted nothing to do with his burgeoning femininity. Already, his breasts were solid B-Cups, and they were only going to get bigger. But the transformation didn't end there. His entire body looked as feminine as any girl's. Jesse knew he could already pass as one, and he was barely six months into his transformation. He couldn't help but wonder what three more months would do to him.

"I was lying awake the other night," he said. "And I realized I was massaging my nipple. I didn't really choose to do it. It just sort of happened."

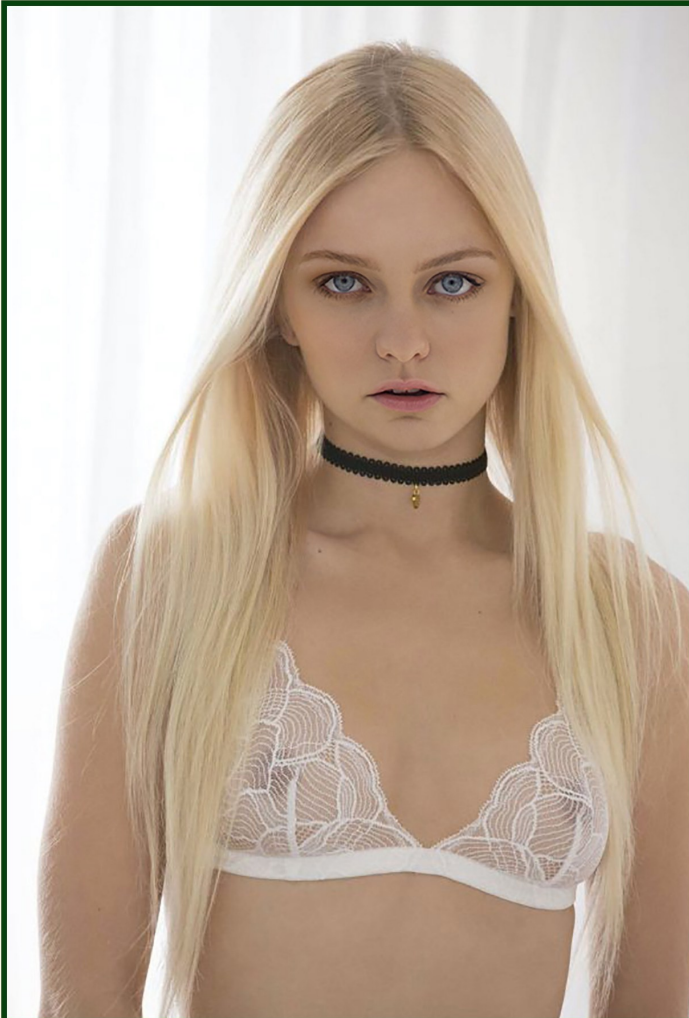
"It felt good, didn't it?" remarked his mentor.

"Yeah," Jesse admitted. "But that's not my point. I think that's when I realized this was all real. I mean, I knew it wasn't a dream or anything. But until that point, I guess I just figured I'd somehow go back to being me when I went home. Now, though...now, I realize that's never going to happen."

Suddenly, he was crying and Brittany was by his side, trying her best to comfort him. It didn't help.

"I went through the same thing," she said, her arm draped over his bare shoulders. "But I figured something out a while back. You don't have to be someone else. You just have to be a different version of you. That's all. You're going to be a girl. Accept that. It's not going to change. But it doesn't mean you have to be someone other than yourself."





"I hate this place," Jesse said. "Why can't I just go home?"

"Because you haven't passed your tests," responded Brittany. "And you're not finished developing."

Jesse groaned, toying with the lacy material of his mostly see-through bra. "This thing's ridiculous, by the way," he said. "Why do they even make this crap?"

"Men like it," Brittany answered. "I would have gone wild if my girlfriend ever wore something like that."

"I wouldn't know," Jesse said.

"Gay?" asked Brittany.

Jesse nodded. "That's why I'm here," he said. "I guess my mom thought it would be better to have a daughter than a gay son."

"That's messed up," Brittany said.

"You don't have to tell me that," was Jesse's response. He'd had a long time to think about what his mother had done to him, and he didn't think he'd ever forgive her. None of it even made sense. She didn't approve of transgender people any more than she liked homosexuals.

"You could look at all this as a good thing, you know," Brittany suggested. When Jesse gave her a look of disbelief, she said, "Really. I'm serious. I mean, you like guys, right? Well, most guys like girls. And that's what you are now. You just made it easier to find a partner. I know it's not much comfort, but you have to find the silver lining somewhere, don't you?"

"Silver lining," Jesse repeated, his mind immediately jumping to his longtime crush, Caleb. If he'd been born a girl, perhaps Caleb would have noticed him. Maybe they could have gotten together. "I guess you're right."



"I would never wear something like this," Jesse said, fingering the lapel of his coat. With the coat, white blouse, and short tennis skirt, his outfit looked like it belonged to some rich teenager on her way to the country club. "It's ridiculous."

Brittany smiled. "So, it's the same as every other outfit they've given you," she said. "According to you, they're all 'ridiculous'."

"I'm a boy dressing up like a girl," he pointed out. "I think that qualifies."

"You're not a boy anymore," she said. "You do realize that, don't you? Your body is getting more feminine by the day. You've been wearing girls' clothes for six months. You look and sound like a woman. You need to admit that you can't go back to your old life. Not now. Not ever."

"When I get home, I can -"

"No - you don't understand," she said, shaking her head. "Those shots they gave you, they've permanently rewired your system. I don't pretend to know the science behind it, but your body now produces its own estrogen.

Nothing can change that. Chemically, you're a girl now."

Jesse didn't want to believe it, but Brittany had never lied to him. Plus, it echoed the Doctor's own statements. "I don't want this," he said, sitting down. Already, he could feel the tears falling down his cheek. "I don't know why this is happening to me."

"Because life isn't fair," Brittany answered, sitting next to Jesse. "That's just how it is. You don't deserve this. Nobody does. But that doesn't change it."

Jesse wiped his eyes. "You're right," he said, sniffing loudly. "I'm being stupid. I shouldn't complain about something I can't control."

"It's going to work out," Brittany said. "You'll see. When you get out, nobody's going to know you were a boy. They'll just treat you like a girl. Think about that. No more bullying. No insults. Nobody's going to immediately judge you for who you are. That's a good thing."

"Yeah," Jesse agreed. "Sure. And all it cost was my manhood."





Jesse couldn't escape. He couldn't stop the steady descent into femininity. And he didn't see any way to change any of that. So, he simply did what was required, mechanically and soullessly. And when he was alone, he felt the full weight of his impotence bearing down on him. The resulting depression wasn't overwhelming. Rather, it was a constant pressure that felt almost comforting in its rebellious nature. They wanted him happy. They wanted him to accept his lot. That his mind wouldn't cooperate was oddly reassuring. It made his stay at the facility a little more bearable.

"It's your birthday, isn't it?" asked Brittany. They'd moved him to still another domicile, this one resembling a real apartment. It even had windows, through which Jesse could see the surrounding woods. Even if he'd managed to escape at some point, he was quite sure they were in the middle of nowhere. "I read it in your file."

"Yeah," Jesse said. "You going to throw me a party?"

Brittany laughed. "No," she said. "But I do have a gift, of sorts."

"You didn't have to -"

"I wanted to," Brittany said. "As you know, I passed my final interview last week. I could leave today, if I wanted. But I'm going to stay until you graduate. I think you need me around."

"Y-you're staying?" Jesse asked.

"I'm staying," Brittany confirmed.

Jesse was floored by her sacrifice. She could have already returned to the real world, but she'd chosen to stay, for him. It was humbling.

"But I need you to do something for me, okay?" she said. Jesse nodded, telling her that he would do whatever she needed him to do. "You need to stop thinking of yourself as a boy. I know it's hard. I went through it too. But you're not a guy anymore, and you have to stop thinking of yourself as one."

"O-okay," Jesse said. "I'll try."



"I'm a girl," Jesse thought, toying with the frayed hem of her denim shorts.  
"I'm a girl."

The constant refrain, suggested by Brittany, had done its work. Over the previous month, the boy-turned-girl had repeated the phrase in her mind so often that it no longer even felt strange. It helped that she'd been allowed to start choosing her own clothes, as opposed to being constantly clad in one ridiculous outfit or another. She felt like she was settling in, finding the girl she was going to be for the rest of her life.

At times, it was frightening, how easy it was to slip into her new role. It was even more troubling that, increasingly, she'd begun to forget what it was like to be a boy. Certainly, she remembered the events of her past. But they were muddled. Hazy. They didn't feel like they'd happened to her. Maybe, she kept thinking, it was for the best. As Brittany kept reminding her, she couldn't go back to that life – not really – and it was best to simply forget it.

"You look nice," Brittany said. "I like that sweater."

"Thanks," Jesse responded, gripping a lock of hair between her thumb and forefinger. She smiled shyly, admitting, "I kind of like pink these days."

Brittany laughed. "There's nothing to be ashamed of," she said.

"I know," Jesse answered. "I've just been thinking, you know. I'm scheduled to get out of here in a little over a month. And I have no idea how anybody's going to react when I get home."

"I know the feeling," Brittany said. "That's part of the reason I'm not sure about going home at all. I know my girlfriend is going to humiliate me somehow. That's why she did this to me in the first place. But you won't have that problem, right? Your mom just wanted you to have a normal life."

Jesse's smile faded. "That doesn't mean it won't be humiliating," she said. "But there's nothing I can do about it, right? I just have to roll with the punches."





"I've never been much for working out," Jesse admitted, gripping her elbow above her head and stretching her triceps. "But I have to say that I really like this yoga stuff. It's a lot better than trying to one-up a bunch of meatheads."

"Careful. I used to be one of those meatheads," Brittany said, laughing. It was tough to believe, given the girl's physique. She was fit enough, but there was barely a hint of muscle on her frame. It was hard to imagine that she'd once been that self-professed "meathead".

Jesse let her arms fall to her side. "What were you like, though?" she asked.

"Complete asshole, if I'm honest," she said. "I cheated on my girlfriend a couple of times. I drank too much. I took sports way too seriously. And I would get into fights at the drop of a hat."

"What'd you do for work?" Jesse asked.

"Mechanic," Brittany answered. "I was pretty good, too. Not quite a master, but I was close. Now, though...I just don't think that's for me anymore. I think something a little more feminine is what's in store for me - assuming Tori doesn't have other plans, I mean. It'll be my luck that she'll have me working at Hooters or some strip club, though. The more humiliating, the better."

"I've been thinking about changing my plans, too," Jesse said, looking around. She still hadn't quite gotten used to being outside - one of the new perks the facility had given her - and, after spending months with a roof over her head, she felt a little uneasy under the open sky. "I don't think I want to go into law. It seems silly to make decisions based on what other people want me to be."

"What's the alternative?" asked Brittany. "To law, I mean."

"I've always liked photography," Jesse replied. "Fashion photography, to be specific. I hadn't planned on pursuing it because it was kind of...gay. And I didn't need that kind of attention. But now? Now, it seems kind of pointless not to do what I want to do."

"I hope it works out for you," Brittany said. "I really do."



"You're ready," said Brittany. "I wish I could still teach you, but at this point, you're as much a woman as me."

Jesse smiled. "Does this mean that you'll recommend me for my final evaluation?" she asked.

"I already have," Brittany stated. "It's happening in two weeks."

Jesse threw her arms around her shorter friend and mentor. "Thank you!" she said. "I don't know what else to say. I wish I could..."

"It's fine," Brittany said, tears of happiness running down her cheeks. "You earned it."

Jesse didn't know why she was so happy. It hadn't been that long since she was fighting her transformation, tooth and nail. But in that span, she'd come to accept her femininity as inevitable, and she had decided to embrace it as best she could. It wasn't easy, and there were certainly still times when her masculinity reared its ugly head, but she'd succeeded. And that success spawned a healthy dose of pride.

The embrace lasted for longer than either of them intended, and when they broke apart, both were crying.

"I wish you didn't have to go back to that horrible situation with your girlfriend," Jesse said, wiping the tears from her cheeks.

"I have to face it," Brittany responded. "I've told you about all the cheating. I've told you about what kind of person I was. I deserve whatever punishment she chooses to mete out. And I'll survive just fine. You know I will."

"It can't be any harder than this place, right?" Jesse asked.

Brittany laughed again. "You've got a point," she said. "A really good point."





"I wish I knew what was going to happen when I got home," Jesse said.

"I wish I didn't," responded Brittany. "Want to switch? You take my place with my girlfriend? And I'll face off with your evil mom?"

Jesse laughed. "She's not evil," Jesse said. "Misguided. But not evil. She's just doing what she thinks is best for me, you know? That's what all this is about. She thinks being a straight girl will give me a better life than if I stayed a gay man."

"But she's wrong," Brittany said. "I'm not saying that you can't be happy like this. I hope you can. I have to believe we can both find happiness as girls. But she has to know that fewer and fewer people even care about sexual orientation anymore. Gay or straight, most people don't care."

"Maybe where you live," Jesse said. "But in the South? I live in Atlanta. It's different down there."

"Then you could have moved," Brittany suggested. "Or you could -"

"You keep telling me that that's all in the past, right?" Jesse said. Brittany nodded. "Well, that's how I'm approaching it. I'm trying to leave it there. I can't focus on that because I can't get any of it back. That's what you're always saying. I've decided to take your advice. As far as I'm concerned, when I get home, everything's a clean slate. I'm starting over."

"I wish I had that option," Brittany admitted. "Maybe after my girlfriend gets tired of me. I don't know. It's complicated, I guess."

"I can imagine," Jesse said. "But you'll get through it. Just like I will."

"I wish I had your confidence," was Brittany's response. "But that's enough of that for today. I don't need to feel sorry for myself anymore. And neither do you."

"Is this your lucky sweater, now?" asked Brittany, nodding at Jesse's choice of clothing. She hadn't even waited for Jesse to make it back inside, instead confronting her by the pool.

"I wanted to be comfortable," Jesse said. "And I do like pink."

"Not judging," Brittany answered. "So - what's the news? How did it go?"

Jesse had spent the entire morning being evaluated by a battery of judges. One was the Doctor, who'd thoroughly examined her body. Another was the first, suited man she'd met. He'd overseen the whole thing. Others, she'd seen throughout her stay at the facility. They tested her progress in other areas. And in the end, they'd given Jesse their stamp of approval.

"I'm leaving in two days," she said. "My final interview is tomorrow."

Brittany's mouth split into a wide grin. "I knew it!" she said, throwing her arms out wide. Jesse did the same, and the two embraced. "I knew you'd pass."

"I'm glad you were confident," Jesse said. "Because when I walked into that room, I was terrified. I thought they'd keep me here for another year."

Brittany shook her head. "No," she said. "You're perfect. You took to this perfectly."

"Thanks," Jesse said. "For everything, I mean. I wouldn't be getting out of this place without your help."

"You're welcome," was Brittany's answer. Her tone was laced with a hint of sadness. "I guess this is it, then. I'm leaving tomorrow."

"Promise you'll keep in touch," Jesse said. "I want to make sure you're okay."

"I'll be fine," Brittan said. "I'll land on my feet."





“So,” said the bald man. Jesse still didn’t know his name, but that didn’t seem to matter as much. “What do you make of your journey here?”

“I became a girl,” Jesse said without a hint of hesitation.

“Did you?” he asked, leaning forward. “And when you go home, what will you tell people?”

“That I was always transgender,” she answered. She had been well schooled in the proper response. “I left to transition.”

“Good,” the man said, leaning back. “I know that some of our guests don’t understand that what we’re doing is mercy. Some of have tried to bring the authorities down on us. We have been accused of kidnapping. False imprisonment. And all sorts of other crimes. However, we are still here. Do you know why?”

Jesse shook her head. “No,” she said.

“Because we are covered by a web of legal documents,” he said. “Upon your arrival, you signed a variety of legal forms. Most of them gave us permission to do what we’ve done. Some were used to establish your new gender. But together, they’ve given us the legal authority to give you your new life. So, it would be pointless to drag the authorities here. You understand this, yes?”

“I understand,” Jesse said.

“Very good,” he said. “You will be taken to the airport in the morning. As per the package purchased by your mother, your wardrobe, such as it is, will be shipped back to Atlanta within a week.”

“So...I’m done?” Jesse asked. “I’m going home?”

“Indeed,” the man stated. “I trust you appreciate all the hard work that’s gone into giving you this gift.”

“I...I do,” Jesse said.





“Hello, mother,” she said.

“Jesse?” asked Caroline, her eyes wide as she beheld her feminized son. “I got reports, but...but...”

“I know,” said Jesse. “It’s pretty dramatic.”

Jesse had picked out the perfect dress. It was short enough to be flirty, but long enough not to be immodest. And it did little to hide her full bosom. Paired with the matching high heels and a no-nonsense ponytail, it gave precisely the impression she wanted to give.

The plane ride into Atlanta was uneventful, save for the fact that Jesse felt extremely uncomfortable being around so many people. She’d spent the bulk of the past nine months either alone or with one other person, so being packed into a plane with hundreds of others wasn’t the most comfortable situation she’d ever found herself in.

However, it was more than simple proximity to other people that drove her discomfort. It was the fact that, in public, every male eye seemed to find her. She could practically feel them mentally undressing her. And it made her feel simultaneously self-conscious and excited.

Caroline threw her arms around Jesse, pulling her close. Their breasts pressed together as the older woman said, “I love you. I know you probably don’t understand why I did this, but it was necessary. I hope you know that.”

“It’s fine,” Jesse said. “I’m fine. I just want to move on.”

“Good,” Caroline said, releasing her new daughter. “Me too.”

“Can we go home?” Jesse asked. “I’m tired.”

“We can,” Caroline answered. “Just wait until your sister sees you. She’s going to be so surprised.”





"I just can't get over how good you look," Caroline said. "Like a proper lady."

Jesse was instantly reminded of her sister's near constant complaints about their mother. The woman had held Payton to extraordinarily high standards her entire life, and it seemed that those expectations had been transferred to Jesse. She'd only been home for a little more than an hour, but it had already gotten annoying.

"The people at the facility know what they're doing," she said.

"Can't argue with that!" Caroline said. "You have to agree that this is much better than what would've been in store if I hadn't done what I did."

"You can say that you sent me away," Jesse said. "Like I said, I'm over it. You did what you did, and I can't change it. I just want to move on."

"Fine," Caroline said. "I sent you away. But it all worked out, right? You're happier like that, aren't you?"

"Do you want my honest answer?" Jesse asked. "Or do you want me to tell you what the facility would want me to say?"

"The first," Caroline responded.

"Fine - I don't know, okay?" Jesse said. "Maybe you were right. Maybe you were wrong. I won't know until I've had a chance to live like this."

"Fair enough," Caroline said. "I can understand that."

"Just give me a chance to adapt to this new life," Jesse said. "I want to make the best of it. I want to be happy. I just haven't had the chance yet."



Jesse almost jumped out of her skin when the bathroom door swung open, banging against the wall.

"I want to see it," said Payton, standing on the other side of the shower curtain. "And don't give me any of that modesty stuff. I want to see what they did to you."

"That's super weird that you want to see your...sister...naked," said Jesse.

"Shut up," Payton said, jerking the curtain back. She gasped audibly when she saw what used to be her brother naked. "Oh, Jesse."

Jesse didn't speak because she'd expected the reaction. Not only were her full breasts completely natural, but her body didn't even begin to resemble its former shape. On top of that, her penis had shrunk to a shadow of its former self.

"Did they...castrate you?" Payton asked.

"All of this, and that's what you ask?" Jesse said, smiling in spite of the awkward situation. "No. Not really. I mean, my...you know...they're not really in their house anymore. They kind of went deeper."

"Are you trying to say that your balls retreated into your abdomen?" Payton asked.

Jesse shrugged. "I guess I am," she said. "Why?"

Payton didn't answer. Instead, she sat on the closed commode, burying her head in her hands. Finally, after a long moment, she said, "I don't know what I expected."

"Me neither," Jesse said. "But this is what I got."

"Yeah," Payton agreed. "I guess it is."





"Do you want to talk about it?" asked Jesse. She wore only her lingerie – a white, push-up bra that displayed her cleavage nicely and a pair of string-bikini panties that left very little to the imagination.

"I do," Maddy said, looking her friend up and down. "I really do, but I have no idea where to start."

"I know the feeling," Jesse said. "It doesn't feel real."

"What was it like?" Madelyn said. "You look so different. You act different. You sound different. But I still see you in there."

"At first, it was hell," Jesse said before describing her journey. From the small, windowless cell to the friendship she'd developed with Brittany, she told Madelyn everything. "And I'm still not sure what I'm even doing anymore. I'm supposed to just live my life now like nothing happened. I'm supposed to pretend that I didn't used to be a boy. But I was."

"Have you thought about other stuff?" Madelyn asked.

"Like what?" was Jesse's response.

"Boys," she said. "Or girls. I don't know how much you've changed. Have you thought about what it might be like to do...you know...stuff?"

"No," Jesse lied. She'd spent a good portion of her time in captivity dreaming about sex. Before she'd been put into the facility, she had developed a healthy pornography habit, and living without it had forced her to make do with her imagination. And while her penis didn't really work anymore, she'd found that rubbing it still felt good.

Still, all her fantasies had involved her doing the fucking. She'd rarely imagined being on the receiving end. Being forced to admit that she didn't really have much choice now had sent her preferences into a bit of a spin.

"You should," Madelyn said. "Because looking like you do now, you're going to get attention."

"I know," Jesse said.



“Caleb,” said Jesse. “I didn’t...I didn’t expect you to be here. I just needed to borrow something from Maddy.”

“Jesse Holt,” the young man said, making no effort to hide the fact that he was ogling her. “You look good. Maddy told me about all this.” He gestured toward Jesse’s body. “I have to say, you made the right decision.”

“It wasn’t a decision,” Jesse said. “This is who I am. Why are you here?”

“Didn’t Maddy tell you?” he asked. “I’m back in town, and I’m staying with her while I get settled in. I got a job at Harrison Financial.”

“R-right,” Jesse said, wishing she could be almost anywhere else. She’d dreamed about Caleb looking at her like that for most of her life. But facing it, she had no idea how to react. “Well, I’m just going to go...yeah...I’m going to get what I came here for.”

“You could stay,” Caleb said. “We haven’t talked in a while.”

“Because last time I saw you, you were making fun of me in front of all your friends,” Jesse said. “Or didn’t you remember?”

Caleb ran his hand through his hair. “Yeah,” Madelyn’s brother said. “About that. Look – I know it’s late, and I know it probably doesn’t mean much, but I’m sorry about that. I was an asshole back in high school.”

“And in middle school,” Jesse said. “Are you saying you’ve changed?”

“I am,” Caleb said, smiling. “Come on. Hang out with me. Let me show you, okay? I’m a nice guy now.”

Jesse shook her head. “Not today,” she said. “I’ve got to finish my registration for school. Maybe some other time, though.”

“I’ll hold you to it,” Caleb said, smiling that devilishly handsome smile.





"You can't," said Payton. "You remember what he was like, right?"

"I can do whatever I want," Jesse said. "And right now, I want to go out with Caleb."

"Then you're stupider than I thought you were," her sister responded angrily. "He humiliated you. He started all those rumors about you. And that's not even considering that time when he -"

"I know!" Jesse said. "God, I know, okay? I was there. I remember him beating me up. I remember all of it. But he's changed, and so have I. Or hadn't you noticed?"

"I noticed," Payton replied. "But just because you're a girl now doesn't meant you have to act like an idiot. Caleb is bad news. He was back in high school, and he still is. You have to see that."

Jesse did. Caleb was never just a typical bully, and she knew it. Going back as far as she could remember, he'd been almost completely devoid of empathy. Certainly, he had friends - he was handsome, good at sports, and charming; that meant he was never without companionship. But anyone who dug even a little deeper knew that he wasn't like other people. When he hurt someone - and he did, on multiple occasions - he didn't feel real remorse. Jesse had seen it numerous times over the course of his relationship with Madelyn.

But that didn't make him any less sexy. It might have even made him more desirable to someone like Jesse.

"I see everything," Jesse said. "I know what he is. But I'm a big girl, Payton. I can make my own choices."

"Can you?" her sister asked. "I know this all new to you. And I know you've always liked the idea of being with Caleb. But that's not the real him. What you've got in your mind is just a fantasy."

"Maybe," Jesse agreed. "Or maybe I think I want to make my own mistakes. Maybe I want to let it play out. Maybe I need to. And if that means going out with Caleb, so be it."



"You must be doing well at your new job," Jesse said, looking around the apartment. It was much larger than she might have expected, given Madelyn's modest upbringing. She certainly wasn't getting money from her parents. Her father was a good-for-nothing alcoholic, and her mother had been a hotel maid for as long as Jesse could remember. There was no way they could be helping her out.

"Yeah," Madelyn agreed. "I guess. I got a good deal on the apartment."

"What are you doing, again?" Jesse asked. "I know you said it was something online, but you didn't get into specifics."

"Technical writing," Madelyn said. Jesse looked at her quizzically, so she explained, "I write instructions and stuff, mostly. It's super boring, but if you've got a good reputation, it can pay really well."

"I see that," Jesse said. "How do I get in on something like that?"

"Um...yeah," Madelyn said. "You've got to spend a lot of time working for basically nothing before you build up a decent clientele, and -"

"Say no more," Jesse interrupted. "That sounds like way more work than I'm prepared to do. I'm glad you're on your feet."

Madelyn grinned. "Me too," she said. "It's a lot better than waiting tables, I can tell you that. And it leaves plenty of time for school."

"That's right - you started over the summer, didn't you?" Jesse asked. "How is it going?"

Madelyn shrugged. "It's school, I guess," she answered. "It's not exactly fun, but it's a means to an end. I don't want to be doing...um...technical writing for the rest of my life, you know?" She paused, then changed the subject.

"So - what's this about you going out with my brother?"

"I was going to tell you about that," Jesse said. "I just -"

"It's fine," Madelyn said. "I don't care. But be careful, okay? He can be kind of a dick about girls."





"How do you deal with her?" asked Jesse, shaking her head.

"With mom?" Payton asked. "I don't. I mostly just ignore her. Why? And you didn't answer me about the new bikini. Do you like it?"

"Yeah, sorry," Jesse said. "It looks good. I'm just a little distracted. Do you know she still expects me to show up at church? I mean, seriously? I feel like I'm going to catch fire if I cross the threshold. The last sermon was specifically about the evils of the LGBTQ community. Everybody there just stared at me like I was the embodiment of all their fears. To them, I'm the freaking devil in the flesh."

"They're stupid," Payton said. "Not all churches are like that, by the way. You can still be a Christian and not follow all that fire-and-brimstone, I-hate-everything-that-isn't-like-me bullshit."

"I know," Jesse said, sitting down. "But none of it ever seemed to bother you."

"Because they don't know that I'm a dirty sinner," Payton said, laughing. "Seriously, though - none of them can live up to their own standards. I mean, you heard about Devin, right? The old youth pastor? He ran away with some teenaged girl."

"I wish I didn't have to go," Jesse said. "But the moment I quit showing up, mom's going to have a fit."

"Mom's not perfect either," Payton said. "You get that, don't you? She's a hypocrite."

"I know that better than most," was Jesse's answer. Having your son kidnapped and forcibly feminized didn't seem like a very Christian thing to do, no matter what you felt about homosexuality. "I just wish I knew how to act."

"Don't," Payton said. "Seriously, just don't. I know you think you need to act a certain way, but that's not true. You can still be you. And if mom doesn't like it, my couch is always open. You don't have to deal with her."

Jesse shook her head. "No, I know," Jesse said. "It's not that bad. Really, it isn't. And she is paying for my school. And my car. And all my clothes. I can deal with a little discomfort, so long as she doesn't get any worse."

But in the back of her mind, a seed of doubt had begun to blossom.



"I'm not going," Jesse said.

"I didn't recall asking," said Caroline. "I remember telling you that you're going to church."

"Why?" asked Jesse. "Seriously, mom - why? Why should I go? They all hate me."

"It's not about what they think of you," her mother said. "It's about -"

"How can you say that?" Jesse asked. "Everything that's happened to me has been because you're worried about what all your little church friends think of me. You couldn't stomach the thought of them thinking you had a gay son, right? So, you had me feminized, hoping that maybe, just maybe, they'd forget that I used to be a boy. But they haven't. And they won't let me forget, either."

"I did it so you could be happy," Caroline insisted. "I thought you understood that."

"You did it so you could be happy," Jesse corrected. "Not me. I was okay. I was moving on with my life. I felt free when I came out. But you had to just...you just had to fuck it all up."

Ever since Jesse had left the facility, she'd been descending further and further into a depressed state. Whatever acceptance or contentment she'd felt there, it had quickly faded in the couple of months since she'd been home. And with that, she had begun to see things as they were, as opposed to how the facility wanted her to see them.

"That's not true," Caroline said, seeming genuinely hurt. Maybe, in her twisted mind, she truly thought she'd been looking out for Jesse's best interests. But Jesse refused to care.

"Look - I'm moving tomorrow," Jesse said. "I'm tired of this. All of it. Your rules. Your expectations. You ruined my life. And I'm not going to stick around for you to make me thank you for it."





“Can you please put on some clothes?” asked Jesse, looking up from her book. “It’s hard to concentrate with you walking around naked all the time.”

“It’s just nudity,” said Madelyn. “And it’s my house. If I want to prance around naked, I’m going to do so.”

Jesse groaned. Madelyn, as it turned out, was not the best roommate in the world. She was messy, constantly naked, and she stayed up to all hours of the night. In addition, Jesse had heard, on more than one occasion, some unmistakable sounds coming from her bedroom. She knew her friend spent the bulk of her free time masturbating, and she’d begun to wonder if it would be appropriate to step in.

“At least wear some panties or something,” Jesse suggested. “The next time I see you spread-eagle on the couch watching T.V., I’m going to throw up.”

“Jesus, Jess – are you really that sexually repressed?” she asked. “It’s just a pussy. There’s nothing gross about it.”

“Says you,” Jesse stated.

Madelyn, almost as if to prove a point, plopped down on the couch, spreading her legs. “Have you thought about your date with my brother?” she asked.

“What? Not really,” Jesse said. “Why? Did he say something?”

“No,” Madelyn said. “We don’t really talk that much since he got his own place. When’s it happening?”

Jesse shrugged. “I don’t know,” she said. “When he has time, I guess. He’s working a lot lately, trying to get ahead. And I’ve been busy with school. But we text a lot.”

“The seeds of romance,” said Madelyn, flipping channels. “It’s practically a romantic comedy.”

"So," said Madelyn. "You're just going to let those puppies hang free, huh?"

"It's just nudity, right?" asked Jesse, cupping her breast. "It doesn't make you uncomfortable, does it?"

Madelyn laughed. "I guess not," she said, sitting on the bed.

"You're not making turning the tables on you much fun," Jesse said. "You know that, right?"

She and Madelyn had been roommates for a little over a month, and they'd settled into an easy rhythm. It had taken quite a bit of adjustment, but the two women had always been great friends. They were always bound to make it work.

"You remember when we first met?" Madelyn asked.

"The date," Jesse said. "Yeah. I remember. I still don't know why I came out to you that night."

"I do," Madelyn said. "I was, like, all over you. If you hadn't, I think I'd have dry-humped you to death."

Jesse laughed. "Still - it worked out, right?" she said. "We were better friends than we ever would have been as a couple - even if I had been straight, you know?"

"I think we were too alike," Madelyn said. "More now than ever. I think I was just surprised to find someone else who'd ever even heard of 'The Brothers Johnson'. At least anybody our age."

"Ah, the basis of our entire relationship," Jesse said, lying back. "Seventies funk."

"It's a better foundation than most, I think," Madelyn said. "At least you weren't into Justin Bieber or something, even if he is cute."

"Back then, I was more into the Jonas brothers," Jesse admitted. "But don't you dare tell anybody. I have a reputation to uphold."

"I think your secret's safe with me," Madelyn said, laughing.







"I'm surprised they'd let you have visible ink," Jesse said, nodding to her mother's tattoos. "Isn't that against company policy?"

"I'm the best realtor in the county," Caroline replied. "They don't care about my tattoos."

"Why do you keep them?" was her daughter's next question. In truth, she was killing time so she didn't have to find out why her mother had asked to see her. It was a silly tactic, but she couldn't help herself.

"A reminder of who - and what - I once was," Caroline said. "Sort of like that thing between your legs. I know they gave you the option of having it removed. I wouldn't have. If I was in charge, you would be completely anatomically -"

"Glad it wasn't your choice to make," Jesse said. "What do you want? Why am I here?"

"Can't a mother want to see her daughter?" Caroline asked.

"No," Jesse answered. "You have a reason, and I want to know what it is."

"Fine," Caroline said. "I wanted to tell you in person that I won't be paying your tuition next semester. You're on your own unless you want to move back in."

"Fuck you," Jesse said. "Is that clear enough?"

"Crystal," Caroline stated. "I hope you're happy with your choices."

"See, that's the thing, mom - I never had a choice," Jesse said. "You took that from me. You forced me into this. And now, I'm just reacting to what you've done. So, I'll say the same thing you just said to me - I hope you're happy with your choices. Because they cost you any hope of a relationship with your child."



"Can I ask you something without you getting angry?" asked Madelyn.

Jesse smiled. "Of course you can," she answered. "Unless it's something...you know...weird."

"Right," Madelyn said. "I was just wondering if you're a virgin. It's totally cool if you are, and you definitely don't have to answer if you don't want to. But I think that if you don't answer, it kind of is an answer."

Jesse blushed. "That...um...that depends on what you consider being a virgin," she said.

"Have you had sex before?" Madelyn asked. "That's kind of the agreed-upon definition, right?"

"Oral sex," Jesse said. "And only once."

Madelyn grinned. "Giving or receiving?" she asked.

"God - seriously?" Jesse asked. "Why in the world do you want to know that?"

"Because that's what girls talk about," Madelyn said. "Or I think it is. I mean, I've only really ever had one really good friend, and that's you. So, I might be way off. But I still want to know details."

Jesse rolled her eyes. "Fine," she said. "Whatever. It doesn't matter if you know. I kind of sucked off this guy at church camp when I was sixteen. He was there from another church, and we were both counselors. We got this really horrible rum from this package store nearby, and we got kind of drunk. And...you know...things just sort of happened."

"What was his name?" asked Madelyn, leaning forward.

"Trent," Jesse said. "He had red hair. And was super cute. Played baseball, like your brother. But the next day, he wouldn't even talk to me. I tried to tell him that it was a mistake and that we'd just pretend like it didn't happen, but he didn't want to hear any of it. He pushed me against one of the cabin's walls, and he told me that if I told anybody about it, he'd kick my ass. He insisted he wasn't gay and that I'd seduced him or something. So, that was my first and only real sexual experience. Happy?"

"Fuck," Madelyn said. "I didn't know. I'm sorry."

"It's nothing," Jesse said. "It was almost four years ago. I'm over it."





“Are you going to have sex with him?” asked Madelyn.

“What?” Jesse asked, standing in the seldom used kitchen. “I don’t know. How in the world is that any of your business?”

“Um – he’s my brother,” she answered. “And you’re my best friend. I think I deserve to know.”

“Not going to happen,” Jesse said.

“The sex?” Madelyn offered. “Or telling me? Because if it’s the sex, I can see –”

“I’m not talking about this!” Jesse said with mock anger. She wasn’t really annoyed. Madelyn’s lack of boundaries was one of the reasons Jesse liked her so much. “Just drop it.”

“I think you are,” Madelyn said, ignoring her friend’s request. “I get it. Lots of girls like him. But I’ve told you a hundred times, he’s not really the type to –”

“You want me to be careful,” Jesse said. “I know. I get it. It’s not a real date, anyway. We’re just going to a Braves game. It’s not like we’re going to –”

“You don’t even like baseball,” Madelyn said. “Okay – well maybe you have a thing for baseball players, I guess. But that doesn’t mean you have to go to a four-hour game. You should’ve made him take you to dinner, at least. Somewhere expensive. He’s starting to make really good money at that new job, you know.”

Jesse sighed as her friend went on and on about what she should and shouldn’t do in her dating life.



"Couldn't even wear the right colors, huh?" asked Caleb.

Jesse looked down at her outfit. After spending hours in her closet, she'd chosen a simple yellow top, matching sandals, and a pair of dark jeans. But she hadn't even thought about the fact that they were going to a sporting event. Nor did she even know what colors the Braves wore.

"Sorry," she said. "I guess I just didn't think about it."

He smiled. "I think it's kind of cute," he said. "Listen - how about this? We blow off the game and hang out here. Watch a movie or something. What do you say?"

"You've already bought tickets, though," Jesse said.

"I got them from work," he said. "Really - it's okay. I know you're not really into baseball. It was kind of a dumb date idea in the first place."

"O-okay," Jesse said. "What kind of movie do you want to watch?"

"You pick," he said. "Anything's on the table. Whatever you want to watch."

"What about 'Anna Karenina'?" she suggested. "I've read the book, like, a half dozen times, but I haven't seen the latest movie. The one with Kiera Knightley in it."

"Anna Karenina it is, then," he said, grinning. "I'm usually more of a superhero movie kind of guy, but whatever - trying new things is good, right?"

"Right," Jesse said, sitting on the couch. When Caleb sat next to her, putting his arm around her shoulders, she said, "Trying new things is awesome."



Jesse heard the moans before she even came through the door. And though she knew good and well that she had no right to spy on her friend, she was curious – mostly because she seemed to be talking to someone. Jesse couldn't help but wonder if Madelyn had finally found a boyfriend.

So, she crept around the corner and peeked through the blinds to see Madelyn, her legs spread, and with a dildo buried deep in her pussy. More, though, she had a laptop nearby, and periodically, she'd say something before typing into the computer. Over and over, she kept repeating the process, and finally, Jesse figured out what she was doing.

Madelyn was a cam girl! It all made perfect sense. Her job was just vague and boring enough that it wouldn't arouse suspicion, but she was surprisingly well-paid. She'd never even insisted upon Jesse paying rent – which, Jesse had never really explored because the fact of the matter was that she simply couldn't.

She turned away, sliding her back down the wooden façade of the apartment building. Stunned, she had no idea what to do with the information she had just discovered. Should she confront her? Pretend it never happened? Try to talk her out of doing what she was doing? Jesse was at a loss.

It all seemed so sleazy. Playing with yourself on camera while horny mouth-breathers watched in their dark basements? It was so degrading.

But it was also undeniably arousing. Idly, she wondered if men might pay to see her do the same. The thought that they might sent a chill up her spine, and a deep sense of shame bloomed in her belly. Madelyn had practically turned herself into a porn star, and it was undeniably wrong. That sort of thing was supposed to happen in the privacy of your home, not broadcast across the internet. Right?

But it didn't hurt anyone. And it certainly gave Madelyn the financial freedom to escape the poverty in which she'd grown up. So, it couldn't be all bad, could it?

Before she even knew what she was doing, Jesse rose and returned to her spot to watch Madelyn at work. It wasn't really wrong, given that she'd seen her friend naked more times than she could count. And she was just curious. That was it. Just curious.





Jesse idly massaged her limp penis as she watched her friend masturbate on the other side of the window. It wasn't so much that Madelyn turned her on. It was the situation. She couldn't help but imagine herself in her friend's shoes. Jesse had never had more than a finger in her ass - the idea never really struck her as appealing - but suddenly, she wanted to know what it felt like to have Madelyn's vibrator thrusting in and out of her. Or better yet, Caleb's cock.

She was so entranced that she didn't even notice when Madelyn saw her.

"What the fuck?" came her friend's muffled scream. "Jesse?"

"Shit," Jesse said, ducking away. It was a useless gesture; Madelyn had seen her. But it was instinctive. "Fuck. God. What am I going to do?"

She sat outside for almost an hour, each minute worsening her growing anxiety concerning Madelyn's reaction. She'd been spying on her best friend. How was that okay? It wasn't, and she knew it - just like she knew that, eventually, she'd have to face the music. But Jesse simply couldn't bring herself to go into the apartment.

"Are you going to sit out here all day?" came Madelyn's voice. Jesse turned to see her friend standing at the building's corner, looking down on her. "Or are we going to have to talk about this outside?"

"I...I'll come in," Jesse said, rising on unsteady legs. She followed Madelyn inside, feeling for all the world like her legs would give out at any moment. However, she held firm, carrying her into the apartment where she sat on the couch. Unprompted, she said, "I'm so sorry, Maddy. I didn't mean to...you know...I just saw you, and I was...I don't know...I was just entranced."

"Leave it to you to use a big word right now," Madelyn said. "And I'm not mad, okay? Let's get that out of the way. I like being watched."

"Y-you do?" Jesse asked. "You're a cam girl, right?"

She nodded. "That's why I started doing what I'm doing," Madelyn explained. "It wasn't about the money, then. It was just a kinky way for me to get off. But then the money started coming in, and...well...I guess you saw what I do. It's only for while I'm in college, though. As soon as I get a job as a nurse, I'm out."

"Yeah," Jesse said, still in a bit of a shock. "I sort of figured. But I really am sorry. I didn't mean to spy on you."

"It's okay," Madelyn said. "Maybe next time, you can join me." Jesse gasped, horrified. "Kidding, Jess. Geez - lighten up."



“So,” said Payton. “You’re officially changing your major?”

“Yeah,” Jesse answered. “Mom’s not paying for it, so I don’t have any reason to pretend that I want to be a lawyer.”

“Speaking of that – how are you paying for it?” Payton asked.

Jesse shrugged. “Loans,” she said. “Financial aid. That kind of thing.”

That wasn’t strictly true. While she had gotten both loans and financial aid, she’d also gotten a little money from Madelyn to fill in the gaps. Jesse wasn’t proud of taking handouts from her friend, but it was necessary if she wanted to continue to attend college. And she did.

“But photography?” Payton asked. “Seriously? What kind of job can you get with that?”

“I thought you liked the idea,” Jesse said.

“I liked the idea of you minoring in it,” she corrected. “But having that as your actual major? I mean, it’s like every ‘deep’ teenage girl thinks she’s a photographer, right? But that doesn’t mean you structure your whole future around what’s probably little more than a hobby.”

“Wow,” Jesse said, shaking her head. “Really – wow. A hobby. I’ll have you know that there are tons of jobs out there for good photographers. I can work for a newspaper. Or a magazine. Or I can sell stock photos online.”

“Or you can starve to death,” Payton said. “You know – either way. Look, Jess. I know you think this is a good idea. But you need to think about it like an adult. I think it’s great that you want to chase your dreams. It really is. But you need a safety net because not everybody gets to have their dream job.”

“Yeah,” Jesse said, more to get her sister off her back than because she agreed. “You’re probably right.”





“What in the world are you wearing?” asked Jesse, looking at her friend. She may as well have been naked for all the dress she wore covered.

“I have a big performance tonight,” Madelyn said. She pinched a strand of the mesh dress, pulling it away from her stomach. Then, she let it go, and it popped against her skin. “This is this month’s rent right here.”

Jesse shook her head. She still didn’t understand how Madelyn could debase herself so thoroughly. Certainly, the money was good. And the thought of so many men getting off while watching her gave Jesse a funny feeling in the pit of her stomach. But she likened it to selling her soul to the devil. In the short term, she’d reap the benefits, but someday, she’d feel the consequences. Or perhaps that was Jesse’s strict, Southern Baptist upbringing talking.

“How does it even work?” Jesse asked.

“You can watch if you want,” Madelyn said. “I don’t mind. One more pair of eyes isn’t going to make a big difference to me. And who knows? It might be kind of hot.”

“No, thanks,” Jesse said, forcing a nervous smile. She didn’t know if Madelyn was serious or not. “I was just wondering how you get paid. And how did you get a following?”

Madelyn shrugged. “It wasn’t that hard,” she said. “I just started posting on Reddit, you know? Once I’d built up a little following there, I started advertising my cam show. And when I started getting popular, that brought more people.”

“Do you have, like, a website or something?” Jesse asked.

“I use a third-party site,” she answered. “Like I said, it was easier to set up than you would ever believe. And the money’s amazing. I’ve thought about just dropping all pretense and doing real porn, you know? But that kind of thing sticks around. I don’t know if I’m prepared to have that affect the rest of my life.”

“R-right,” Jesse said. “Smart.”





"Are you serious?" demanded Payton. Jesse had just confided in her about Madelyn's profession, and she'd reacted predictably - with shock.

"You can't tell anybody, okay?" Jesse said. "I only told you because I had to talk about it with someone. But you have to keep this a secret."

Payton, who'd been getting dressed for a date, sat on the bed. She shook her head. "I can't say it doesn't make sense," she said. "Maddy has always been a little...promiscuous."

"You don't have any room to talk about that," Jesse pointed out. Her sister had slept with more men than Jesse could count, and that was just the ones she knew about.

"Not judging," Payton said. "But when I do it, it's different. I go out with guys. Sometimes, it ends in sex. I'm not ashamed of that. But with Maddy, she doesn't even bother with the whole 'dating' part. I remember in high school, she was maybe a sophomore, and she got caught like four times blowing guys in the bathroom."

"Really?" Jesse asked. "I didn't know."

"You didn't need to," Payton said. "Plus, this was before you came out to me, and I assumed you two were dating. I didn't want to hurt you."

Jesse didn't know whether to be angry or grateful. "Whatever," she said. "I'm not trying to figure out why she is the way she is. I don't care. But this whole cam girl thing, it makes sense, right? She's making a lot of money."

Payton shrugged. "I guess," she said. "Maybe it's the way we were raised, but it just feels wrong, though. I know people have the right to do whatever they want with their bodies. And it's a lot less sleazy than stripping at some club. But...I don't know, Jess. I just don't know. If you're looking to me for some kind of confirmation that your friend is in the right, I don't think I can give it. I can't say she's wrong, either. I just don't know."

"Me neither," Jesse said.



"Why are you pretending to be happy?" asked Madelyn.

"What?" Jesse responded, leaning against the counter. She smiled. "I'm not pretending to be anything. If I look happy, I am happy."

"Please," Madelyn stated, rolling her eyes. "I know you, Jess. I know when you're genuinely happy, and I know when you're faking it. And over the past couple of weeks, you've had that same expression you used to have when you went to Sunday school. You want everyone else to think you're okay, but you're not."

"You don't know what you're talking about," Jesse said.

"I do," Madelyn said. "And it's okay to be said. Or depressed. I get it. If anybody has a right to feel a little fucked up, it's you. I mean, everything you've been through in the past couple of years? You were basically held captive and turned into a girl against your will, Jess. You're practically estranged from your mother. And you have no idea how to deal with any of it. So, please, just quit pretending. At least when it's just you and me, okay? I can see through it."

Jesse's smile faded. "What do you want from me?" she demanded. "Do you want me to mope around the apartment all day? Do you want me to whine and complain? I look in the freaking mirror every day, and I'm still sometimes surprised at what's looking back at me. I wear these clothes, I put on this makeup, I do my hair, and why? Because I don't know what else to do. I don't even know if I can stop, much less if I want to. And on top of that, on top of all that, Maddy, I can't get Caleb to respond to a single one of my texts. So, yeah - I'm angry. I'm depressed. And I'm sad. But that's not what I choose to show the world, okay? That's not who I want to be."

"Jesus," Madelyn said, practically cowering in the face of Jesse's eruption of emotion. "I didn't know it was that bad."

"Sometimes, it's not," Jesse said. "But some days, it's worse. It doesn't matter, though, because I can't change any of it. So, I just have to put on this smile, and I have to try to fake it until it's real. So, please, Maddy - just let me do what I have to do."

"O-okay," Madelyn responded. "But if you need anything, I'm here, okay? I'll do whatever you need me to do."



“This is me, Caleb,” Jesse said, spreading her legs. “I wish I was what you wanted me to be, but maybe I’m not. If that’s not enough for you, then I don’t know what to say.”

She’d finally had enough. He’d ignored her for weeks, and Jesse had, at last, decided to do something about it. So, she had demanded that he come over, saying that if he didn’t, whatever they had was completely, irrevocably over. And to her surprised, he’d come running. When Caleb had arrived, she was completely naked.

“I know,” he said. “I never thought you were anything but what you are. And I don’t care. You’re a girl. I’m a guy. That’s all I need.”

Confused, Jesse said, “But you won’t return my calls. You haven’t answered a text in weeks. I thought you were trying to send me a message.”

Caleb knelt in front of her. He didn’t seem the least bit bothered by the tiny, flaccid penis between her legs. “If I wanted to send you a message,” he said. “I would just tell you. I’m not the kind of guy to beat around the bush. I thought you knew that about me.”

“I didn’t – wait, what are you – oh...”

He hadn’t hesitated to lean forward, taking her penis into his mouth. It was the first time Jesse had felt anyone’s mouth on her genitals, and she couldn’t deny that it felt amazing. He sucked it a few times before saying, “This is part of you. I’m cool with that.”

“But y-you were always so...s-so...”

“Homophobic?” he asked. “Yeah. Maybe. But like I told you when this all started, I’m a different man now. I’ve changed. And I like you. I’ve been really busy at work. I should’ve told you I wouldn’t be around much. But that’s all changing. I just picked up some new clients, and I’m going to have a lot more free time now. And I want to spend it all with you.”





“What are you doing here?” asked Caroline, wrapping a towel around her chest. Jesse got a brief glimpse of her mother’s naked body and was surprised to see that she was still quite fit. However, she shouldn’t have been; her mother had always been an attractive woman, and she’d employed a plastic surgeon to preserve that beauty. Still, it couldn’t completely mask the monster lurking beneath her skin – not to anyone who knew here, at least.

“I needed to pick up some of my old stuff,” Jesse said. “My photography equipment’s still in the attic, right?”

“I sold it,” Caroline said. “Along with most of your other stuff.”

“W-what?” Jesse asked. “You sold my stuff?”

“Yes,” Caroline stated. “With the way you left, and the fact that you didn’t immediately come to pick it up, I assumed you didn’t want any of it.”

“Y-you sold everything?” Jesse asked, surprised. Her mother was a horrible person, it was true. Jesse knew that better than anyone else. But she hadn’t expected such a petty act. “My first editions? ‘Anna Karenina’? My Hemingway collection?”

“Everything,” Caroline said. “Even those horrible records and that ridiculous record player. All those old movies, too. It barely made a dent in what you owe me for your treatment, but some of it sold pretty well. I was a little surprised, too. I had no idea so many other people shared your eclectic tastes.”

“I...I don’t...y-you sold it all,” Jesse said, still in shock. “I can’t believe you. You’re a fucking monster.”

“I’m just a mother who gave her child everything and was betrayed,” Caroline said. “There are consequences to your actions, Jesse. That’s the lesson here.”

“F-fuck your lessons, mom,” Jesse spat. “And fuck you.”





"What do you think?" asked Jesse, posing against the wall. She wore a new, lacy, red lingerie set, complete with a garter belt and stockings. "Do you think he'll like it?"

"You're asking me to judge whether or not my brother will like your lingerie when you have sex with him," Madelyn said. "Gross."

"Says the girl who does a sex show for a bunch of strange men every night," Jesse pointed out. "So, clearly, you have no room to talk."

"Whatever," Madelyn said. "You look great, like always. But I really don't want to talk about your and my brother's sex life, okay? You do whatever you want, but I just don't want to hear about it."

"Fine," Jesse pouted. "I doubt it happens anytime soon, anyway. He's been busy with these new clients at work. Apparently, they're really demanding. But he keeps saying that once he gets it all rolling, he'll have a lot more spare time."

"He says the same thing to me," Madelyn said, sitting on the couch. She lay back. "It's so weird, talking about this stuff with you. Not bad weird. Just weird."

Jesse sat beside her. "I know," she answered. "I never thought I'd be talking about boys with you. I mean, for the longest time, I tried to force myself to like girls. I wanted to so bad. That's why I went out with you in the first place, you know?"

"Seriously?" Madelyn asked. "You were really trying? You came out to me after, like, an hour."

Jesse shrugged. "I know," she admitted. "But that was never the plan. I really wanted to try to make it work. I just couldn't. I knew you were hot. You still are. But you weren't my kind of hot, if you know what I mean."

"I do," Madelyn said. "But it all worked out, right? Sort of."

"Sort of," Jesse agreed.

“Put some clothes on,” said Madelyn. “Somebody is going to see you.”

“Please,” Jesse said. “It’s all closed off. That’s one of the perks of your brother having that huge-paying job, right? Just relax. It’s fine.”

Madelyn rolled her eyes. “Seriously? When did you become such an exhibitionist?” she asked. “I remember a time when you were complaining about me being naked in my own apartment. And now, here you are sunbathing naked beside my brother’s pool.”

Jesse shrugged. “People change,” she said, as if that would satisfy Madelyn. It didn’t, but the other girl didn’t address the subject further.

“When’s he going to be back, anyway?” Madelyn asked, settling into the pool chair next to Jesse’s. “And what country did he go to?”

“One of those Eastern European ones,” Jesse said. “One of the -stans. I can’t remember which one. And he’s supposed to be back next month.”

“So – what’s the deal with you two?” Madelyn asked, lying back and closing her eyes. “Are you together? Or is it, like, casual?”

“Honestly? I have no idea,” Jesse answered. “And I’m a little worried about that. We still haven’t even had sex.”

“Maybe he’s taking it slow,” Madelyn suggested. “Some guys do that.”

“Not Caleb,” Jesse said. “I know his history as well as you do. He screwed, like, half the cheerleading squad in high school. I just worry that he’s hesitating because I’m not...you know...like other girls.”

“Don’t be silly,” Madelyn said. “Why would he go out with you if that was a problem? He knows exactly who you are. No – he’s just taking it slow. You’ll see.”







"Look," said Caleb. "I know this isn't what you want to hear, but I'm only in town for a day."

"W-what?" asked Jesse. "I thought you were going to have more time."

"I did too," he answered. "But this new client, they don't mess around. I have to be back by tomorrow. I just wanted to tell you in person so you wouldn't worry."

Jesse shook her head. She'd been so excited about finally spending some time with Caleb, and in the space of thirty seconds, those hopes had been dashed. "Why can't someone else do it?" she asked.

"They don't trust anybody else," Caleb answered.

"It's just accounting," Jesse said. "How much trust do they have to have?"

"This client, they're...well...they're kind of straddling the line of legal and illegal," he explained. "My job is to make sure they stay on the right side of that line. And it's not as easy as it might sound. But listen, it's really good for my career. And I'm good at what I do."

"You're working for criminals, aren't you?" was Jesse's next question.

"Criminal is a matter of perspective," Caleb answered. He leaned in, kissing her deeply. It was so intoxicating that she almost forgot to be disappointed that he couldn't stay. When he broke away, he said, "Listen - it'll be fine, sweetie. This will be good for us. And when I get back, we'll celebrate properly."

"Y-yeah," Jesse said. "I...I understand."



"You can always just work with me a little," Madelyn said. "I don't mind."

Jesse, who knelt on the bed, said, "Oh - thank you so much. I'll keep that in mind."

"Don't get sassy with me," Madelyn countered. "I let you live here for free, remember? I'm paying, like, half your tuition. I don't think I deserve your sarcasm. Or your judgment."

"I'm not judging you, Maddy," Jesse said. "I'm just...I just don't think I would be comfortable doing what you do, okay? That's nothing against you or anything. I still respect what -"

"Then how are you going to pay for your new equipment?" Madelyn asked. "Are you going to get a real job? You going to wait tables or something?"

"I...if I have to," Jesse said.

"You don't!" Madelyn responded. "That's what I'm telling you. Just do it once a week. Spread your legs for some perverts. Play with a dildo a little. And you'll have enough to buy whatever kind of camera you want. It's easy. It's harmless."

"Except that it's basically porn," Jesse muttered.

"So?" asked her friend. "Seriously - who cares? We've all got to make money somehow, right? What difference does it make if we do it like this?"

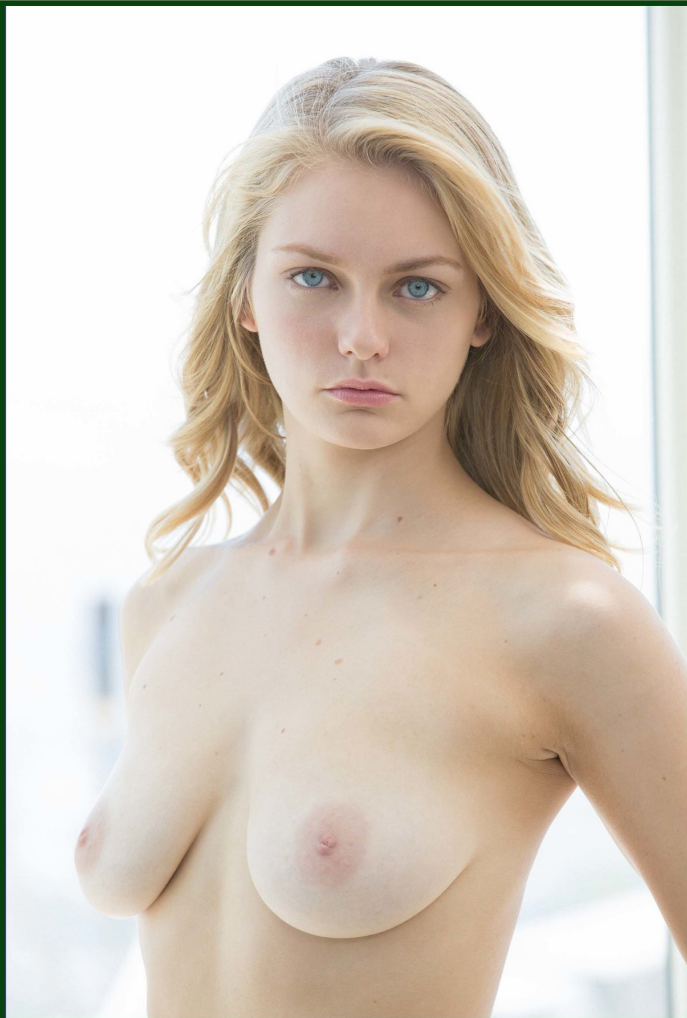
"Most of society says there's a big difference," Jesse said, though she'd already made up her mind. Part of it was that she really did need the money. She didn't want to spend the rest of her college years mooching off of her friend. But another part of it was that the arousal she felt when she thought about all those men watching her.

"Society's stupid," Madelyn said. "Come on. It'll be fun. Just do it once, and if you don't like it, I'll never ask you again. What do you say?"

"Fine," Jesse said. "I'll do it. But if I'm not comfortable, I'm -"

"Yeah, yeah - let's get you ready!" Madelyn said.





"I don't know what to do," Jesse admitted. She'd never really tried to "act" sexy before, and she had no idea how to do so. On top of that, she didn't even have the advantage of having spent the better part of her adolescence watching female-driven porn, so she didn't have anyone to even copy. Her ignorance was frustrating.

"Just be yourself," said Madelyn. "And follow my lead."

"I've never even had sex before, Maddy," she said, feeling exposed.

Every time she looked at the camera beside Madelyn's bed, she imagined dozens of horny men staring at her on the screen. "You know I'm out of my element here."

"Like I said, just follow my lead," Madelyn responded, putting her hand on her friend's naked shoulder. "When I turn the camera on, I'm going to introduce you. And then we're going to play with each other's boobs a little. And then, I'm going to play with my vibrator."

"What am I supposed to do?" Jesse asked. "When we get to that part, I mean."

"You masturbate, right?" Madelyn asked. Jesse nodded. Once, she'd done so just like any other guy. But since her transformation – and the impotence that came with it – she'd had to adapt. Most of the time, she simply massaged her groin. There was never any real climax, but it did feel good. "Just do that."

"O-okay," Jesse said. "I'll just do that."

And she did. It was awkward, at first. She had little interest in her friend's chest. But after a few minutes, Jesse started to get into it.

And in the end, they put on quite the show for Madelyn's fans. When it was all over, Jesse felt mentally exhausted but physically aroused. And she knew she wanted to do it again.



"I wanted to wear this for Caleb," Jesse said, toying with her garter belt.

"You still can," Madelyn said. "It's not like you're going to throw it away or anything."

"Yeah," Jesse said, though she knew she could never wear something she'd worn for "work" when she finally did it with Caleb. He deserved something special. "Maybe."

"Look - I was thinking of something this time," Madelyn said. "Have you ever, you know...done anything with a dildo?"

"W-what? No," Jesse said. "Why?"

"I think it would be sexy if you used one," Madelyn said. "We could bill it as your first time. And I bet we'd double our customer list."

Jesse had been doing cam shows with her best friend for only a couple of weeks, but already, the numbers had seen a huge uptick. Her addition had increased the popularity of Madelyn's show by quite a bit, and it seemed to be trending even higher.

"I...I don't...b-but would anybody really want to see that?" she asked. "Me sticking stuff up my...you know..."

She had definitely thought about having sex with Caleb. She wasn't so naïve as to think she was a top or anything, and she certainly expected to one day lose her anal virginity. But she'd never had more than a finger up there.

"It'll be fun," Madelyn said. "I even bought you a starter dildo. It's really small and super cute. We'll use plenty of lube, and -"

"Okay," Jesse said. "You're the boss. I'll do it."





"I didn't hate it," Jesse admitted.

"You didn't, huh?" Madelyn asked. "I couldn't tell."

As it turned out, Jesse had been missing out when it came to anal play.

In fact, it was her new favorite thing in the entire world. There was something so deliciously taboo and undeniably pleasurable about the act of being penetrated that made her feel sexier than she'd ever felt in her life. Imagining the real thing, as opposed to the slim dildo

Madelyn had given her, sent a shiver up her spine.

"I just wish they weren't so nasty about it," Jesse said. "I mean, they're paying to watch us, right? You'd think they wouldn't be so insulting."

"What?" Madelyn asked, a note of sarcasm in her voice. "You don't like being called a faggot? Or a sissy? Or whatever else they come up with?"

"Imagine that," Jesse said. She'd experienced more transphobia since she'd started performing with Madelyn than she ever could have expected. The men didn't look at her as a person – no, to them, she was an object, an "other". She was barely human. What made it all worse that they never missed an opportunity to degrade her over the size of her diminished manhood.

But the weirdest part of it all was that she sort of liked the humiliation of it. And more than once, she wished someone was there in person to hurl those insults at her. Each time those thoughts crossed her mind, she felt a deep sense of shame blooming in her belly. However, that didn't keep them from dominating her mind. On the contrary, the shame made it worse.

"At least the money's good," Madelyn said. "At this rate, you'll be able to afford whatever camera equipment you want."

"Yeah," Jesse said. "Right. Camera equipment."



"She's been a nightmare, lately," said Payton, looking out the window at Caleb's pool. In his absence, he'd given Jesse and Madelyn leave to use it as they liked, and Jesse had invited his sister over. "Like, worse than usual since you quit talking to her."

Jesse shrugged. "I don't know what you want me to say," she said to her sister, who wore a new, blue bikini. "I'm not forgiving her. Not now. Not ever."

"I don't expect you to," Payton stated. "Mom's a bitch. I get that. She always has been. You didn't see it nearly as much as I did, growing up, but she expects perfection. That's why I was a cheerleader in the first place. She insisted. I think she was living vicariously through me."

"I know," Jesse said. Throughout their childhood, Caroline had expected a lot of her children, specifically from Payton. And Payton had responded, at least as far as their mother was concerned. Secretly, though, she'd spent the entirety of her teenage years quietly rebelling against that expectation of perfection. If Caroline didn't approve of something - be it interracial dating, promiscuity, or rap music - Payton was more than willing to give it a shot. If her mother knew half the things she'd done, or the people she'd done it with, Payton would be little better off than Jesse. But she'd successfully hidden her rebellion from Caroline, preserving that illusion of purity. With the benefit of distance, Jesse couldn't help but think that it was a sad way to live.

Payton laughed. "For a while there, you were a good distraction," she said. "But with you gone...well, I'm the only one left to boss around."

"You could always tell her what you really think," Jesse suggested. "Just bring one of those guys you like so much home for dinner. She'll blow a gasket, and you can move in with me and Maddy."

"I like my apartment, thank you very much," Payton said. "And I've only got a semester left of school. I think I can tough it out until then."

"Yeah," Jesse said. "If it makes a difference, I think you deserve better than that."

"I know," Payton responded. "But it is what it is, right? I don't have much of a choice. She pays my bills. She pays my tuition. If I want that to continue, I have to live by her rules."





"I don't know about this," Jesse said, eyeing the two men. She was already naked and exposed. "I've still got Caleb to -"

"You and Caleb aren't a couple," said Madelyn. "And you don't owe him monogamy. Besides, this is work. It's not personal."

Jesse looked away. She wanted to do it. God, she did. But she didn't know if she could. "This is porn, Maddy," she said. "Like, real porn."

"And real money," Madelyn stated. "Don't you want that?"

Jesse did. It all made sense. Except for the part that she was about to have sex with two men on camera. It wasn't a simple cam show. It wasn't live. It would be out there, for all the world to see. And she'd forever be labeled a porn star because of it. However, that wasn't what she was worried about. She didn't really care about other people's opinions. Jesse was well past that - or at least, she thought she was. But despite her insistence otherwise, she still wasn't quite past caring about what her mother might think. She hated it about herself, but she couldn't deny it - not to herself.

And then it hit her. Take a page out of her sister's book. Do the exact opposite of what Caroline would want. That would show her.

That would help Jesse take control of her own life. And in that instance, that meant going ahead with Maddy's idea.

"I'll do it," she said suddenly. "Let's do it."

Madelyn smiled, stepping behind the camera. "I knew you'd see it my way," she said. To the men, she said, "Put your game faces on, boys. We're going through with it."

Jesse was pleased to see them grin. They were looking forward to it at least as much as she was. And thought it scared her, she was too.

“Okay, now,” Madelyn said. “Get on all fours.”

Jesse reluctantly let the man’s cock slip from between her lips. She couldn’t say how often she’d dreamed of such a scenario, but she knew it was a lot. Ever since she had seen her first erect cock on the internet, she had known she wanted to suck one. And now she had two. It was almost heavenly, especially with the added excitement of the camera being involved.

Obediently following Madelyn’s direction, Jesse climbed onto her hands and knees, spreading her legs slightly. She knew what was coming; they’d already discussed it. She was ready. Or so she thought. However, when her scene partner shoved his dick deep into her ass, she couldn’t help but gasp, a note of pain in her high-pitched voice. It was one thing to shove a slim dildo inside of her. It was quite another to have a fully-erect man’s cock going balls-deep in her ass.

However, Jesse wasn’t allowed to dwell on that odd mixture of pleasure and pain for long, because before she knew it, her other scene partner’s cock was hovering in front of her face. Without a moment’s hesitation, she opened her mouth, inviting it in. And so it went, one cock in her mouth while another pounded her virgin ass from behind. Eventually, the pain subsided, replaced by a deep sense of pleasure mixed with contentment. The shame was there, too.

Jesse could only imagine what other people might think of her. Would they call her a slut? A sissy? A whore? She didn’t want to care, but she definitely did. And she got off on the embarrassment of it.

At some point, the men switched places, but it didn’t matter. Jesse didn’t even know their names, much less care which one was fucking which hole. She was too focused on herself, on her own pleasure and shame.

All the while, Madelyn barked orders. Move this way. Tilt your head. Let’s see that tiny cock. Beg for it. On and on it went until Jesse didn’t even hesitate before obeying her direction.

And then, the two men came almost in unison. One filled her mouth with his salty seed, and she savored the taste. The other pulled out, sending a jet of sticky semen all over her plump ass. Almost as soon as they came, she practically collapsed in exhaustion. There, she lay, her ass coated in cum and sweat, the taste of a man tickling her tongue.

“You’re a natural,” said Madelyn. “Good job, babe.”

Jesse could only smile.





Jesse hated being behind the camera, which, with her experience in photography, was more than a little surprising. However, the alternative was just so much more enticing. Being bent over a bed while some muscular stud fucked her silly was the sort of thing that made everything else pale by comparison. But it was Madelyn's turn, and she wanted to be a good business partner.

The first video was a huge success and had predicated the launch of a new website. Almost overnight, she'd become a viable porn star. The traffic was off the charts. People were buying the video left and right, and there was a huge demand for more content. So, Jesse had gone back in, making six more videos. So had Madelyn. But their fans seemed insatiable. There was never enough content.

When Madelyn's video was finished, she grinned at her friend. "That was good, wasn't it?" she said.

"You're always good," Jesse replied. "We need more videos, though."

"Didn't you say you had a friend from that facility?" Madelyn suggested. "Brenda or something? Do you still keep in touch with her?"

"Her name is Brittany. I've emailed her a couple of times," Jesse said. "But I don't know if she'd be interested in something like this. She was never into guys."

"Call her," Madelyn said. "All she can say is no. And we can give her an opportunity to make some money. Fly her out. You know, we can make it worth her while."

"I guess," Jesse said. "But I'm not promising she'll do it."

Madelyn sat up. "I know," she said. "I'm just thinking about building this thing, you know? We've got an opportunity to make a lot of money here, and I don't want to blow it."

"Me neither, Maddy," Jesse said. "I want to make it work too."





“You...want me to do...porn?” asked Brittany, sitting on Jesse’s bed. She shook her head, then looked up at Madelyn and Jesse. “Like, seriously?”

“It’s not like that,” Jesse said. “It’s tasteful. And you don’t have to do anything you’re not comfortable doing. I mean, you be with girls if you want. We just need more than just Maddy and me.”

“But you’re asking me to do porn,” she repeated. “God. If you would’ve told me five years ago that I’d be sitting here thinking about whether or not I want to be a shemale pornstar, I’d have probably hit you in the face.”

“So, you are thinking about it, huh?” Madelyn said. “It’s really good money.”

“I could use that,” Brittany admitted. “After my girlfriend got tired of humiliating me in front of my old friends, she kicked me out. Do you have any idea what the job market’s like out there right now?”

“Just try it,” Madelyn said. “You’ll see it’s not sleazy or anything. We’re trying to build something here.”

“Yeah,” Brittany said. “I saw your site. Classy. Especially the one where Jess gets double-teamed. Was that really you losing your virginity?”

Jesse nodded. “That was my first time,” she said.

“I don’t know why I’m hesitating,” Brittany said. “It’s not like anybody I know doesn’t already think I’m a freak. Or a monster, I guess. Some of them think I’m a joke. But whatever the case, it’s not like this is going to make my reputation worse.”

“Then you’ll do it?” asked Madelyn.

“You know what?” Brittany said. “Yeah. I will. I’ll do it.”

“Then, let’s go celebrate!” Madelyn said. “You two need to get out and live a little.”



As it turned out, Madelyn's version of "living a little" meant going to a sex party in a club downtown. At first, Jesse was content to simply dance around topless like most of the other girls, but as soon as the men's pants started coming off, so did her panties. And from there, it was only a matter of time before she was bent over on all fours, begging for some hung stud to fuck her. And they were more than happy to oblige.

It's a bit of a strange thing, realizing that you have a fetish. It's so indescribable. You don't know why you like it. You just do. So it was with Jesse and being fucked in public. She imagined that every eye was on her, and most were judging her for what she was. Some, she was sure, would later joke about her tiny, useless cock. Others would talk about "that slutty shemale". And still others would marvel at how "passable" she was. But she couldn't help but imagine that they were all just as judgmental as her mother.

It wasn't healthy, but it was just the way she was.

Madelyn wasn't much better, though she and Brittany were modest enough to confine their amorous activities to a booth in the corner. It seemed they had taken a liking to one another, and neither was shy about showing it.

All in all, it was a good night befitting burgeoning pornstars, and it was a fitting way to start their partnership. As the night wound down, the three met back up and exchanged knowing expressions.

"I see you two became friends," Jesse said. The last she'd seen Madelyn, Brittany's face was buried between her legs. "Good."

"And I saw that you sampled - what was it? Five guys out there?" Madelyn countered. "Such an insatiable slut."

The phrase ignited a tumble of butterflies in Jesse's belly. She shrugged. "I guess I am," she said. "So sue me."



“Jesus,” said Payton. “What are you even wearing? Just because you’re a freaking pornstar doesn’t mean you have to dress like one.”

“Seriously?” Jesse said, feeling a deep sense of panic. “That’s what you’re focusing on? The way I’m dressed? You just told me mom knows about my site. Are you seriously going to talk about how I’m dressed right now?”

Payton shrugged. “I thought you didn’t care what she thought,” she said, a smug expression of superiority on her face. “That’s what you kept saying, right?”

“That’s not...I mean...I don’t,” Jesse lied. “It’s just that...I mean...how the hell did she even find out?”

“I don’t know,” Payton said. “But she asked me about it after church yesterday. I told her I didn’t know anything about it. Which, you know, I didn’t because you never told me.”

“I was going to,” Jesse said. “I promise. I just...it’s all still new, and I didn’t think...I didn’t want to tell you until I was sure what it was.”

“Yeah,” Payton said, her voice emotionless. Clearly, Jesse had hurt her feelings. “Sure. I understand.”

“Don’t be like that,” Jesse said. “I’m sorry, okay? I should have told you.”

“Yeah, no - it’s fine,” Payton answered. “But you’ve got other stuff to worry about, right? I mean, mom’s not the type to just let something like this go, is she? She already half-hates you. This might have pushed her over the edge into full-on loathing.”

“There’s nothing she can do to me,” Jesse said. “I’m not under her thumb anymore.”







"You don't understand," Jesse said, trying to ignore the scene they'd set.

Brittany was riding another actor, bucking her hips as they kissed sensually. Their crew had grown considerably, and it included a sound man, a camera operator, and a couple of assistants, which made the whole thing feel a lot more like work. "She's not going to let this go."

"What can she do?" asked Madelyn. "I know you think she can move mountains, but she's just a middle-aged realtor. She can't stop us from doing what we want to do."

"You don't know my mother," Jesse responded, turning away. The revelation that Caroline knew about Jesse's new line of work had been eating at her for the past week, and she expected that, at any moment, her mother would do something to ruin their business. "She can -"

Just then, the door burst open, and a trio of suit-clad men poured through the doorway. Everyone in the room reacted accordingly. The talent - Brittany and her stud - sprang apart, covering themselves. The sound man dropped his boom microphone, and the camera operator froze. One of the assistants - a girl named Zoe - took off running.

"Are you Jesse Holt?" asked the man in the lead. Jesse nodded. "Then you're under arrest."

"Arrest? For what?" Jesse asked.

"Prostitution," he answered. "We've also got warrants for Madelyn Alexander and Brittany Adams."

"What the hell? We're not prostitutes!" Madelyn said. "We're shooting a film!"

"Without proper licensing," the police detective said. "Which means you're under arrest."

As the men handcuffed the three women, Jesse shot a look at Madelyn that said quite plainly, "I told you so."



"I don't care if the charges were dropped, Maddy!" Jesse said. "This is a big deal. I don't know why you can't wrap your brain around the fact that my mom's going to do everything she can to screw us over."

"I'm not worried about it because she's already played her card," Madelyn said. "She did what she could, and she lost. That's it. There's nothing else she can do about it. We had everything we were supposed to have, and we'll continue to do things right. So, there's nothing she can do to us."

"You just don't know her like I do," Jesse said. "She's going to ruin everything. I know she is."

"Just relax," Madelyn said. "We're good. We only lost a day of filming."

Jesse lay back on the bed. As much as she loved her friend, Madelyn had a habit of underestimating problems.

"I remember when I was little," she said. "Maybe five or six, you know. I used to look up to my big sister so much. Payton was everything to me. I used to love watching her do ballet. I knew all her routines, too. And one day, I started dancing - you know, mimicking her."

"And your point?" asked Madelyn.

"My point is that my mom found me a few days later, and she beat the hell out of me," Jesse said. "She cut a switch from the tree in our backyard, and she just went to town, screaming about if the neighbors had seen me."

And she never let me forget about that, either. Any time I would do something even remotely feminine, she would remind me to watch myself or we'd 'have a repeat of the ballet incident'. I was terrified of her."

"Your mom's a horrible person," Madelyn said. "I know that. But that doesn't mean she can keep us from doing what we're doing. She's not all-powerful."

"I'm just saying that she doesn't forgive, and she doesn't forget," Jesse said. "She might not make us pay right now, but she will. That's who she is."





"I want you to set it up," Payton said. "Cameras or no cameras - I don't care."

"It's not so easy," Jesse stated. "I can't just make them -"

"You wouldn't be making anybody do anything," Payton said. "You'd be paying them. And in return, I'll get mom off your back."

"I don't know," Jesse said. The last thing she wanted was to set her sister up with a pair of male porn stars. There was so much that could go wrong, not least of which that their mother could find out. And unlike Jesse, Payton depended on Caroline for her very way of life. It was, she knew, a bad idea.

"I want this," Payton said. "I don't ask you for anything, Jess. I don't. But I'm asking for this."

"Maddy won't agree to it," Jesse said. "Not unless we can put it on the site. I'll bury it, though. And we'll use a different name or something. But you have to understand that it's going to be out there. There's no taking it back once it is."

"So, you'll do it?" she asked. "You'll set me up with those two studs from your last video?"

Jesse sighed. "You're going to hassle me until I do, aren't you?" she asked. Payton assured her that she would. "Fine, then. You win. You can get the porn star experience."

"I knew you'd see it my way eventually," Payton said. "I'm glad you came around, little sister."



“So,” said Caleb. “You’re doing porn now.”

Jesse didn’t know whether or not Caleb was angry. In fact, his tone and expression gave little indication what he felt. Not for the first time, she wondered if she’d made a mistake by telling him what she’d been doing.

“Yes,” she said. “I have. But it’s only temporary.”

“Nothing on the internet is temporary,” he said. “You’ll be a forty-year-old, and this will still be out there.”

“And? I’m not ashamed of it,” Jesse stated, feeling a blast of courage from out of nowhere. “I’m doing what I want to do, and how I want to do it. There’s no shame in that.”

Caleb stared at her for a long moment before saying, “I suppose there’s not.”

“W-what? You’re not mad?” Jesse asked.

“No,” he said. “A bit disappointed you didn’t tell me, I guess, but I’m not angry. I think you know I’ve always been sort of...morally flexible.”

Sociopathic, Jesse thought. That was the word Madelyn had used to describe her brother. At the time, she thought it was an exaggeration, but looking at Caleb’s distinct lack of emotion, she couldn’t deny that it seemed accurate.

“Listen,” he said. “I haven’t been completely honest with you, either.

You remember when I described my clients as straddling the line between legal and criminal? Well, I lied. They are firmly on the criminal side of that line. I’ve watched them kill people, Jess. They steal, and they murder. They kidnap and sell human beings. And I make sure their books look good. So I guess we both have our secrets, don’t we?”

“Y-yeah,” Jesse said. “I...I guess we do.”



Jesse bent down, sucking Caleb's dick like the professional she was, but she was absolutely terrified. Or she knew she should be. He'd just told her that he was a criminal – one of the worst of the worst, in fact. He was an accessory to basically every crime imaginable, and he'd said with such nonchalance that he didn't seem to care even a little bit about the human cost of his employers' business. To make it worse, he hadn't apologized for helping criminals who literally kidnapped and sold slaves. He hadn't apologized for not going to the authorities when he witnessed murders. Or thefts. No – the only thing he thought he did wrong was not telling Jesse. And that sent a chill up her spine.

But she also found it attractive, in an odd way. He didn't care about any of that other stuff, but he cared about telling her the truth. That meant that, to him, she was more important than any number of crimes. And for someone who'd spent her entire life feeling like a second-class citizen, who had always been ashamed of who and what she was, that felt empowering.

That blend of empowerment and fear was a powerful aphrodisiac that made their lovemaking more ardent, more urgent, and far more real than anything she'd ever experienced. When the deed was done, and they lay in each other's arms, tired and satisfied, she snuggled close to him. Jesse felt safer in his arms than she'd ever felt before.

"I think I love you," she said.

Caleb didn't immediately answer, and for the longest moment, Jesse thought she had made a mistake. And then, finally, Caleb said, "Me too."

"Really?" Jesse asked.

He propped himself on an elbow. "I don't say it lightly," he said. "I admire you, the way you've taken control of your life. I want to protect you. And I want to fuck you ever single night for the rest of your life. So yes, really. I love you."

In that moment, Jesse realized that Caleb had absolutely no idea what love really was. It wasn't admiration or a desire to protect someone. It wasn't desire. It was so much more. But he simply wasn't built in such a way as to understand that. Still, she would take what she could get. If that was all he could give, it would be enough.





“I really shouldn’t be here,” Jesse said, feeling incredibly uncomfortable as she watched her sister being double-teamed by a pair of the biggest-dicked black men she could find. For her part, Payton seemed to truly be enjoying herself; there was little acting on her part. Her moans, her screams for more, and her eager exclamations of “Daddy!” were all completely genuine. “I don’t need to be watching this.”

Madelyn stood nearby, her hands on her hips. “She’s a natural, though,” she said. “You’ve got to give her that.”

“Fantastic,” Jesse responded, crossing her arms under her breasts. “That’s what I really want for my sister – to be a natural sex performer. Seriously – I just love the fact that I facilitated this.”

“Don’t be so bitchy,” Madelyn said. “She’s enjoying herself.”

“I don’t care,” Jesse stated. “She should be focused on graduation. Not this. She’s better than this.”

“That’s some serious self-loathing right there,” Madelyn pointed out. “You do this too, unless you forget. This is your life.”

“It’s temporary,” Jesse said. “I’m getting out as soon as I graduate.”

“Sure you are,” Madelyn said, the sarcasm evident in her voice. She’d already put her studies on hold so she could focus more on the burgeoning business. “And I’m still planning on being a nurse.”

“I am,” Jesse said. “I don’t want to be doing this for the rest of my life. I’ve got plans.”

“Yeah, we’ve all got plans,” Madelyn said. “But sometimes, we do what we’re good at. And this is what I’m good at.”





“It’s not a big deal,” said Madelyn. “I don’t know why you’re pushing back on this.”

“Because I’m not a lesbian,” Jesse said. “I don’t like girls. I don’t know why you can’t get that through your head.”

What Jesse wanted to say was that Madelyn had been trying to “turn” her from the moment she found out that Jesse wasn’t into women. In the back of her mind, she suspected that their friendship had been predicated on that desire. It wasn’t that uncommon, either. Women had been chasing gay men for forever. And Jesse’s transformation hadn’t seemed to faze Madelyn’s ultimate goal.

“You think there’s a market for it?” she asked.

“Lesbian porn is extremely popular,” Madelyn answered. “And people like seeing shemales with girls.”

“I hate that word,” Jesse said. “It’s demeaning.”

“Fine,” Madelyn answered, rolling her eyes. “Transgender women. Is that better? I’m just saying that we’re both really popular. And people have been asking for us to play with one another since that first cam show. It just makes sense.”

“To you, maybe,” Jesse said. “But seriously – what are we supposed to do? I’m not taking a bunch of Viagra so I can get hard. I’m just not.”

“That’s not what I had in mind,” Madelyn said. “Listen – just trust me. It’ll be tasteful. And you won’t have to do anything you don’t really want to do.”

Jesse sighed. “Fine,” she said. “I’ll do it. But just this once. I’m not getting into the habit of doing scenes with other girls.”





Jesse stared at her naked friend, who lay on the mattress, her legs spread. For the first time ever, she didn't avert her eyes from the other girl's vagina. In fact, she forced herself to focus on it, to study its folds. It looked so alien, so unappealing, and Jesse couldn't understand why most men found it so irresistible.

"Is there something wrong?" asked Madelyn, her fingers creeping down to her groin. She spread her lips, slipping a single digit inside. "You know what you're supposed to do, right?"

Jesse nodded, swallowing hard. "I'm just trying to work myself up to it," she said. "Just give me a second, okay?"

Madelyn told her to take her time, but she knew that it didn't matter how much time passed. She'd never be ready – not really. And having an entire crew there certainly didn't help. No doubt, they were all judging her. People couldn't help it.

Finally, after a few deep breaths, she said, "Let's do this."

And she did, practically diving face-first into her best friend's pussy. And to her surprise, it wasn't as revolting as she expected. Certainly, it didn't excite her. In fact, she might as well have been licking her friend's elbow for how erotic it was. But it wasn't nearly as bad as she thought it would be.

After a while, the two switched places, and Madelyn's tongue found Jesse's asshole. That, at least, was pleasurable enough, especially if she imagined it was someone else – like Caleb – who was back there. That made it slightly better. Still, as she posed on all fours, Madelyn's face buried between her cheeks, the act was little more than bearable.

At some point, Madelyn pulled out a pink, double-ended dildo, which she shoved deep in Jesse's ass. The blonde girl moaned, enjoying every inch of the plastic phallus as she pretended it was the real thing. After a few minutes, Madelyn positioned herself with her own rear facing Jesse's, and she impaled herself on the same dildo. That, Jesse knew, was supposed to be the climax of the video, and she took that as her cue to redouble her acting efforts.

She screamed and moaned, begged for more and slapped her ass against Madelyn's as the cameraman circled and zoomed, trying to get a variety of angles. In the end, it wasn't quite the worst experience of her life, but Jesse had no desire to ever do it again.







"I don't know why you're still doing that," Caleb said. "You don't have to. You can move in with me, and I'll support you."

Jesse looked back at Caleb. "Did you seriously just ask me to move in with you?" she asked.

He shrugged. "It makes sense, doesn't it?" he asked. "You could start going to school full-time."

"Is that what you want me to do?" Jesse asked. "Because if you've got a problem with me doing porn, you need to let me know."

"I don't care about that," he said. "I know it's just sex."

For a lot of men, that would have been a lie. Most people had difficulty separating sex and relationships, which meant that a lot of women in Jesse's line of work had problems with relationships. But Caleb was built differently. He could be possessive at times. And he certainly didn't want her dating other people. He was, however, surprisingly open-minded about her work.

"I don't know," Jesse said. "I like doing what I do. I wish I could tell you that this was all about the money, but it just isn't. Ever since I became...since I transitioned...I've had this thing about being watched. I like turning people on, you know? It's silly."

"Why do you always hesitate when you talk about your transition?" Caleb asked.

Jesse looked away. "It's complicated," she said. "But I didn't...I didn't choose this. It was chosen for me."

"What does that mean?" he asked.

"It means that when my mom found I liked boys, she sent me to this place," she explained. "Kind of like a hospital or something. And they turned me into a girl. I know it sounds crazy, but I'm not really transgender. Or I wasn't. I don't know what I am, now. Not that I have any choice in the matter."

"I see," was all Caleb said. For a moment, it looked like he was processing the information, and then, suddenly, he said, "So - do you want to move in or not?"



“Seriously?” asked Madelyn. “How did she pull that off?”

“I don’t know!” Jesse screamed, pacing back and forth, clutching a crumpled letter in her hands. “I don’t freaking know, okay? But I know it was her. She told them I’m working in porn or something. Maybe she said I was cheating. I don’t know. But as far as this is concerned, I’m no longer a college student.”

“They can’t just kick you out,” Madelyn said, trying to remain calm in the face of her best friend’s anger. “There are rules. Procedures. You get to appeal and –”

“Well, you should probably tell them that,” Jesse said, sitting on the bed, tears in her eyes. “Because there’s no appeal process. I called. And they’re rescinding all my credits, so I can’t just transfer somewhere else. I get no credit for what I’ve been doing the last two years. None. It’s like I was just going to class for nothing. Or worse, it’s like I never even went to school.”

“And you know it was her?” Madelyn asked.

“Who else would it be?” Jesse asked. “My mom’s behind this. I know she is. She’s friends with people in the administration. She sold a house to the freaking dean of admissions, for God’s sake. I know it was her.”

“What are you going to do?” was Madelyn’s next question.

Jesse shook her head, reiterating that she didn’t know. Truer words had never been spoken. Certainly, she’d been drifting away from the idea of living a normal life. Porn was simply too lucrative, especially given that she and Madelyn weren’t just performing. They’d been producing. Directing. They’d distributed the content themselves. That meant that they didn’t have to split their profits with anyone else, save the performers and crew.

But even so, college had always been important to her. And now it seemed like an impossibility.

“I’m going to get back at her,” Jesse said. “Somehow. Some way. I don’t know what I’m going to do, but I’m going to make her pay.”





Jesse knelt on the bed, wearing a pair of shorts and a midriff-baring, sleeveless top. She still seethed about the derailment of her academic career, but she'd spent almost a week trying to pretend it didn't bother her. Caleb was a blessing in that regard. Either he was simply incapable of reading human emotions, or he had chosen to willfully ignore the reality of Jesse's attitude, it didn't matter.

She needed someone to treat her normally, and Caleb provided that.

"How was lunch with your dad?" she asked.

Caleb shook his head. "Same as every month," he said, untying his blue tie. He pulled it off, then unbuttoned his white shirt. "He acts like he cares about me. He tells me he's given up the booze. I pretend I can't smell it on him.

And then he asks for money."

"Was your mom there this time?" Jesse asked. Caleb's one soft spot seemed to be his parents. If they asked him for help, he would give it unconditionally.

If it weren't so sad, given that they often took advantage of his goodwill, it might have been cute.

Again, Caleb shook his head, then sat on the bed next to his girlfriend. "No," he said. "She's working. She's always working."

Jesse rocked back on her heels. "Sometimes, I wish I knew my dad," she admitted. "I met him once, you know. Back when I was thirteen or fourteen. I was so excited. But the whole thing was such a disappointment. I wanted to hate him. But as soon as I saw him, as soon as I saw that way-too-big suit with the worn elbows, the shoes that looked like they were one inch from falling apart, the eyes that, even if he smiled, looked haunted, I just felt sorry for him."

"I don't feel sorry for my father," Caleb stated. "I feel an obligation to my mother. If I help him, I help her. That's it. If I could get her to leave him, I wouldn't hesitate to cut him out of my life completely."

"Oh," Jesse said, feeling a bit of a chill running up her spine. She knew Caleb was amoral. He didn't feel things the way other people felt them. But she'd latched onto his monthly lunches with his father as evidence that he was just as human as anyone else. He wasn't, though. No doubt, his obligation to his mother held little emotional weight. It was a simple equation, nothing more. She'd raised him, spent countless hours toiling as a motel maid to support him, and he felt obligated to return that favor. That wasn't love.



"Sometimes, I wish this never happened," Brittany said. "But other times, it feels right in a way I can't really explain."

"I know the feeling," Jesse replied, sitting on the couch, editing the latest addition to the site on her laptop. It was a gangbang scene featuring Brittany as the centerpiece. "I didn't ask for it, but I'm okay with it. Maybe we're just more adaptable than we thought."

"Or maybe those subliminal recordings made it easier," Brittany suggested.

"W-what? What are you talking about?" asked Jesse, looking up from her laptop.

"The music," Brittany said. "The stuff they played while we slept. They embedded subliminal messages in there. I'm not sure exactly what they were, but they were definitely there to help us adjust. That's why we accepted it so easily."

"T-they brainwashed us?" Jesse asked.

"I guess you could call it that," Brittany said. "My own mentor explained it to me. If they just turned us into girls, it wouldn't take. People can't just switch gender like that. But with the right subliminal triggers, repeated every single day for months and months, they can make us accept it. I thought you knew."

"I...I didn't," Jesse said, though it made sense. "I don't really know how to feel about it, though."

"Just try to ignore it," said Brittany. "That's what I do. You can't go back, right? So just look at it as keeping you sane."

"Sane," Jesse said. "Right."

"But what I was trying to say is thank you," Brittany said. "Back home, it was one humiliation after another. She put me in this room with all of my ex-girlfriends, my mistress, everybody. And I had to have sex with this huge, hung black guy right in front of them while they screamed encouragement. It was horrible. But you - you gave me some measure of freedom. The sex part hasn't changed that much, but at least I can choose my own path. You gave me that. So, thank you, Jess. Really. Thank you."

"Y-you're welcome," said Jesse.





"You need to get it together," said Madelyn, peeking out from behind the camera. "Nobody wants to see you pouting on camera."

"Just give me a minute," Jesse said, standing naked in the center of the room. She paced back and forth, trying to corral her emotions. It wasn't easy because, earlier that morning, she'd gotten a visit from a few of her old church's members. They'd treated her like she was possessed. Or a demon. Or a whore. Clearly, they knew all about her profession, and just as clearly, they didn't approve. It was demeaning and degrading, but she'd endured it with as much grace as she could muster. And when they finally departed, it left her feeling angry, embarrassed, and objectified. Those emotions had barely even begun to fade by the time it came to do her first scene of the day.

Madelyn gripped her friend's arm, pulling her aside. "Everybody's waiting on you," she said. "You need to -"

"I need to get it together," Jesse said. "I know. God, I know. I'm just so worked up right now."

Madelyn rolled her eyes. "Wait here," she said, before hustling off to another room. When she returned a moment later, she upended a prescription bottle into Jesse's hand. "Take two of those. It'll calm you down."

"What are they?" Jesse asked.

"Xanax," was Madelyn's reply. "I take them for anxiety. They're perfectly safe."

"Are you sure?" was Jesse's next question. Drug and alcohol addiction ran in her family, and she'd vowed never to put herself in a position to follow that trend.

"I'm sure," Madelyn said. "Just take them. You can go to a doctor and get your own prescription tomorrow. If anybody needs something like that, you do."

Jesse hesitated a long moment before tossing the pills into her mouth, then washing it down with a bottle of water Madelyn gave her. Forcing a smile onto her face, she said, "Okay. Let's do this."



“Do you think I need bigger tits?” Jesse asked, pulling down her dress to expose her chest. She knew the answer Caleb would give, but she still wanted to hear him say it.

“No,” Caleb said. “Your breasts are perfect.”

“Aww, thanks,” Jesse answered. Then, pulled down the rest of the garment, exposing her panty-less groin. “What about this thing? Should I get a real pussy?”

“You know that doesn’t matter to me,” Caleb said. “What’s gotten into you lately? Your moods have been all over the place. One second, you’re crying in the bathroom about not wanting to be a girl, and the next, you’re asking if you should get bottom surgery. What’s going on?”

Jesse knew that her mood swings had to be pretty severe for Caleb to pick up on it. He wasn’t exactly an empathetic person, after all. But that only highlighted the fact that she didn’t really know what was going on. It seemed that, with each passing day, she felt less and less like herself and far more prone to whining about things that couldn’t change. It was infuriating because she wanted to be happy. The pills helped a little, but no matter how many she took, they weren’t problem solvers.

“Nothing,” she said. “I’m just...I just wonder sometimes if having a vagina would make this all seem more real.”

“It won’t,” Caleb said. “You were forced into this. I know you want to make the best of it, but the bottom line is that you’re never going to completely feel like a woman because you were never meant to be one. Sure, you can adapt. You can still be happy. But you’ll always wonder what might have been. Your mother robbed you of a normal life.”

“I...I know,” Jesse agreed. “But at least we have each other, right? At least that came out of all this.”

“Right,” Caleb said.





“You’re kidding,” said Jesse. “Right?”

“I’m not,” said Madelyn. “We’re being audited.”

“But we pay or taxes!” Jesse said. “We haven’t even tried to find any loopholes. Why are they auditing us?”

“That’s not it,” Madelyn said. “I don’t know where it started, but apparently, there’s a new law being considered in the State House of Representatives. They’re trying to outlaw the filming of porn here.”

“Can they do that?” Jesse asked.

“According to our lawyers, yes,” Madelyn answered. “But the vote won’t come for another couple of -”

“This is her,” Jesse said, shaking her head and smiling. “I know it’s her. She’s doing this to ruin us.”

“You don’t know that,” Madelyn said.

“I do know,” Jesse said. “We were fine until she found out about all this, but as soon as she knew, everything started going wrong. I got kicked out of school. We were raided by the cops. We’re being audited. And now she’s trying to make what we do illegal.”

“Even if it is her, there’s nothing we can do about it,” Madelyn responded.

“Fuck!” Jesse screamed. “Just...fuck. Fuck. Fuck. Fuck!”

“We’ll figure it out, Jess,” said Madelyn. “I promise we will.”

"I bought this for you," Jesse said, posing for her boyfriend. She wore the red lingerie set she'd bought so long ago, and it made her feel incredibly sexy. But she was also conflicted. Her depression had started to take over her life, and even with various pills masking her problems, it didn't seem to be slowing down. In fact, the feeling of wrongness had begun to completely dominate her every thought.

"You look amazing," Caleb responded.

Part of her wanted to be grateful for the transformation which had been forced upon her. After all, without it, Caleb never would have given her the time of day. She would be stuck with another gay man when that wasn't what she really wanted. Jesse loved the idea of turning on straight men, of being fucked by them. And that feeling only got more intense with Caleb, who'd always been her dream man.

But she also knew that she wasn't a woman – not really. Not deep down where it mattered. Certainly, that was how she identified. And legally speaking, she was female. But it wasn't real. It was an act. A role. She'd been trained to act and feel a certain way, and even if she tried, she knew she couldn't even begin to stop. And that made her feel trapped.

Slowly, Jesse slipped the red panties down her smooth thighs, over the black stockings. Finally, she kicked them off. A grinning Caleb caught them. Porn had taught her how to play the role at least as well as the facility had.

Climbing onto the bed, posing on all fours, she said, "I want you to fuck me. No foreplay. No gentleness. I just want you to grab my hips, and I want you to give it to me, hard and fast."

"Are you sure?" Caleb asked, unzipping his slacks. His hesitation was well-founded because, normally, Jesse liked to take things slowly. She relished the foreplay, the teasing.

Jesse nodded. On that day, she wanted him inside her as quickly as possible. She didn't want to think about whether or not she was a girl. She just wanted him to confirm it with his cock. And Caleb, like so many men, was perfectly willing to do just that.

He thrust himself deep inside Jesse's ass, and she moaned. For the barest instant, she forgot about all her problems, which was the point of it all.





It wasn't a one-time thing because it was far too popular to leave behind. Besides, working a scene with Madelyn wasn't as bad as Jesse expected it to be. In any case, she was past caring so much. She didn't have an identity - straight, gay, or otherwise - so it wasn't like she was betraying anything.

Even so, as she stared at her friend's barely-covered pussy, she couldn't help but feel a subtle sense of revulsion.

She ignored it, spreading Madelyn's cheeks so she could get at her ass, and then plunging between them, face-first. As her tongue darted in, out, and around Madelyn's asshole, she wondered if she could really keep going like that.

The sex itself wasn't the problem. Rather, it was the public perception of her job. Everyone she'd ever known knew exactly what she was, and she couldn't so much as go to the grocery store without feeling judgmental eyes following her through the produce section. And then there were the daily visits from the church - middle-aged men and women who wanted to save her kept stopping by her apartment. Even though she rarely answered the door, it was still more than just an annoyance.

Jesse couldn't help but wonder if what she was doing was right or wrong, moral or immoral. Based on her upbringing, it was unequivocally wrong. But then again, so was dancing. Smoking. Drinking. Having perfectly normal, sexual thoughts. Being who she was. All of that was immoral. They were all sins. So, what did it matter if she simply leaned into the sin? According to her upbringing, she was going to hell for simply being attracted to the people she found attractive. It was maddening.

Of course, she didn't believe all that. Or maybe she didn't want to. But nearly two decades of conditioning is difficult to overcome, and no matter the logic of it all, she found herself dwelling on how her life affected her salvation.

In any case, Jesse wasn't in the best frame of mind, and being basically forced to lick Madelyn's ass didn't make it any better. But she did it because it was her job.





"I love your cock," Jesse said, gripping the thing at its base as she knelt at her costar's feet. "It's so big! It's so much bigger than my little clitty."

She knew she was a horrible actress, but the words echoed in her mind. Before her transformation, her penis had been, at worst, average-sized. But after whatever they did at the facility, it had shrunk considerably. It was barely bigger than her pinky finger. And that wasn't even considering the state of her testicles, which had been a no-show for almost two years.

Was it possible that they'd taken them out without her knowledge? Could they have simply castrated her, then brainwashed her to forget it? Or was it like they'd claimed, that her testicles had simply retreated into her abdomen? It seemed inconsequential because the result was the same, but to Jesse, it suddenly seemed to matter.

Leaning forward, she took the tip of the man's cock in her mouth, savoring the taste of him. No matter what else happened, at least her transformation was good for that much. It allowed her to have sex with quite a few men who never would have considered her otherwise.

So, why did it feel so wrong? She liked sucking dick. She loved being fucked. She liked being treated like a cheap whore. That was who she was. Or was it? She didn't know. Her identity felt like it was in a constant flux. She didn't know what she liked. Or who she liked. Or why.

"I...I can't do this," she said, letting his cock pop from her mouth. "I'm sorry. I just...I just don't feel well."

"What?" asked Madelyn, who stood in the corner of the set they'd built in the small warehouse. "What are you talking about?"

I'm sorry," Jesse repeated, standing. "I...I'm not...I feel like I'm going to throw up."

"You can't - wait, where are you going?" Madelyn demanded as Jesse bolted past her. Jesse, for her part, barely heard her friend's protests as she quickly found a bucket. Kneeling, she vomited - again and again until she was dry heaving, tears in her eyes as her stomach contracted of its own volition. She sat there, naked and clutching the bucket while she wondered why her life had gone so wrong, so fast.





"How?" asked Jesse, looking up at her boyfriend. "She doesn't do anything wrong, so I can't -"

"She does plenty wrong," Caleb said, interrupting her. "And that's not even considering her past. She was a drug addicted stripper. That's who your mother was when she was your age."

"W-what?" asked Jesse. "Really?"

She knew that Caroline had a shady past, but she'd never expected that her mother had been a real stripper. And she certainly never knew that she was addicted to drugs. Not for the first time, she felt a sense of indignant rage. What right did Caroline have to judge her, then?

"Really," said Caleb. "But I don't care about that. I'm talking about getting rid of her. Permanently."

"Y-you want to kill her?" asked Jesse. "Like, kill-kill?"

"I do," answered Caleb. He knelt before her, gripping her hands. "Listen - it makes sense. She's not going to stop. She's threatened your business multiple times. That's how you pay your bills. And she's responsible for making your life hell. All those church people, the school thing - she's actively trying to ruin your life. She's practically begging you to retaliate."

"But killing her?" Jesse said, looking away. Before she knew it, a bemused smile erupted on her face. It didn't last long, but it was enough to scare her. "No. No. I'm not going to do that."

"You have to do something," Caleb said. "Or it's never going to end. Today, it's a tax audit. Tomorrow, it's getting laws written specifically to put your business under the ground. And the next day, she'll do something else. Eventually, you won't be able to dodge it."

"I'm not saying I don't want to stop her," Jesse said. "But I don't think killing her is the answer. She's my mother."

"I think she forfeited the right to call herself that the moment she started trying to turn you into something you're not," he stated. "And she definitely lost it when she started trying to ruin your life. She deserves what's coming to her. You know she does."

"I'll figure something out," Jesse said. "I'm not going to let it just happen."

“Now look into the camera,” said Madelyn. “Really eye-fuck it.”

Jesse did as she was told, the cum of her latest costar coating her face. If she hadn't been so distracted by Caleb's suggestion, she might have noticed that, outside of her scene with Madelyn, her friend hadn't been in front of the camera in months. In fact, since their production company's inception, Madelyn's screen time had lagged far behind any other performer.

But she was far too distracted to pay any attention to the details of her work. She simply showed up, did her job, and went home. It was easier that way.

However, she had given quite a bit of thought to her boyfriend's insistence on getting back at her mother. There was little doubt that Caroline deserved whatever came her way. She was evil. She was judgmental. And worst, she thought she was better than everyone else. All of that had coalesced into her trying to force Jesse to live the sort of life she wanted her daughter to lead. And Jesse didn't want anything to do with it.

“Okay, good,” Madelyn said. “That's it. Alright - that's it. You can clean up now.”

Jesse nodded, then took the wet towel offered by one of the production assistants. After she wiped the semen from her skin, she shrugged on a fluffy white robe. “Did we get it all?” she asked, approaching Madelyn.

“Yeah - you were great,” Madelyn answered. “This is going to be a really popular video. Everyone loves the schoolgirl thing.”

“Yeah,” Jesse said. “Do you need me tomorrow?”

“No, why?” asked Madelyn. “Plans with Caleb?”

Jesse shook her head. “I've got a meeting with a lawyer,” she said. “He might take my lawsuit against he university.”

“Oh, definitely do that, then,” Madelyn said. “I hope it goes well for you.”

“Me, too,” Jesse said.







"I'm sorry, ah...Miss Holt," said the attorney, Greg Givens. He was a tall man who looked like he might have once been an athlete. "I can't take your case."

"W-what?" asked Jesse. "Why?"

"I was unaware of your occupation," Givens said, clenching his jaw. "My firm can't afford to be associated with pornography."

"But you knew what I was!" Jesse insisted. "I told you the details of my case. And you said we had a chance of winning, right? That's what you said."

"And I meant it, at the time," the man said. "Look - this isn't from me. It's from my partners. They don't think it's best for our image."

"Your image?" Jesse said, looking around the almost-barren room. It looked more like a warehouse breakroom than a law office's conference room. "Your office is in a strip mall. You're an ambulance chaser. What image?"

"Our offices are irrelevant," Givens stated bluntly. "The bottom line is that I can't take your case. Talking about it further is pointless."

"Tell me why," Jesse said. "Not the bullshit you've rehearsed. The real reason."

"I don't know what you're talking about," he said. "We don't let outside factors influence our -"

Jesse sprang from the couch. "Fine," she said. "Whatever. I don't even care anymore. I know it was her. She got to you, just like she got to them. And I'm tired of it. I'm not going to stand for this shit anymore."

"I'm sure I have no idea what you mean," the man said. He leaned forward. "But if you look into your mother's church, you'll probably find a connection."



Once, Jesse might have been uncomfortable with the situation. After all, she naked, holding her similarly nude sister's hand as they acted out the introduction of the coming scene. Two hung men stood near the bed, similarly naked. But with the cameras rolling, she didn't think of Payton as her sister. No – she was just another performer.

Payton hadn't acted in a scene since her debut, but it wasn't for lack of asking. Every week, she bugged both Jesse and Madelyn about getting another crack at porn. Jesse understood it, even if she didn't like the idea of her sister doing porn. Payton had always walked the edge of rebellion, and acting in her sister's movies was the ultimate "Fuck You" to their mother's expectations.

However, even if she'd been prone to embarrassment at such a situation, she was far too distracted. Jesse hadn't ignored the lawyer's hint, and she had soon found out that one of the key members of the state bar association was a deacon at Caroline's church. It didn't take a leap of logic to assume that Jesse's mother had gotten him to apply pressure to Givens' firm. Taking the case would have been career suicide for him.

It was just one more way Caroline had fucked her daughter's life, and more and more, Jesse had begun to wonder if Caleb hadn't been right. Would it be so bad if the woman ended up dead? Certainly, the world would be a better place without one more holier-than-though, bible-thumping hypocrite.

Jesse and Payton knelt before their respective partners and began their dual blowjobs. Professionally speaking, Jesse couldn't but judge her sister's technique. The girl didn't lack of enthusiasm, but she clearly had room to grow as a cocksucker. At least Jesse had superior blowjob skills going for her.

The scene progressed, and the two were fucked in various positions. Face-to-face. Side-by-side. Doggystyle. Missionary. Throughout, the two sisters put on a good show of satisfaction. Payton's was genuine. Jesse's wasn't. As much as she wanted to enjoy it, she simply couldn't think of anything but how much she'd come to hate her mother.

In the end, it was just another day at work.



"I hate her," Jesse said, lying on her stomach wearing nothing but her panties. "I do. More than I ever thought I could hate somebody."

"I know," Caleb said, sitting next to her. His hand found the small of her back, and as his fingers caressed her spine, he said, "I've been thinking about this. I think I have a solution."

"I'm not signing off on her death," Jesse stated.

"I know," he responded. "That's off the table. But what if we could make her pay? What if we could ruin her life without taking it? Would you be okay with that?"

"Why?" Jesse asked. "Seriously - why do you care? I know you don't really love me. You like me well enough, which, for you, might as well be love. But you don't just do things for other people. That's not in your nature."

Caleb stood. "You don't understand me at all," he said. "You think that just because you read some Psychology 101 definition of sociopathy that you know what I am. Maybe I am a sociopath. I don't know. But it's a lot more complicated than that. I don't care about right and wrong. Most of the time, I can't quite grasp what other people are thinking, what they're feeling. But I do love you, Jess. In my way, I love you. And I want to help you."

"I...I love you too," Jesse admitted. "Sociopath or not, I do. What do you have in mind?"

"I have some connections," he said. "They're not good people. But they can help us get rid of her. Not kill her. Just get rid of her."

"You mean they'd kidnap her," Jesse said.

"And sell her into slavery," Caleb said. "She'd spend the rest of her life stuck in another country, probably as a whore. She'd never be able to hurt you again."





"Can you please put a shirt on?" Jesse asked, averting her eyes from her mother's bare chest.

"I thought you'd be used to nudity by now," said Caroline, her hands on her hips. She smiled that fake smile she'd all but perfected. "In your line of work, I mean."

Jesse sighed. "Fine," she said. "Prance around naked for all I care. I'm here to ask you to stop coming after me."

"Coming after you?" asked Caroline with feigned innocence. "What does that mean?"

"You know exactly what it means," Jesse said. "You've tried everything you can to derail my life. And I want you to stop before someone gets hurt."

"If I'd done what you say I've done," said Caroline. "I would point out that I was doing it for your own good. You're better than working in porn. You're better than lashing out at the one person who's always looked out for you."

"Is that what you tell yourself?" asked Jesse. "That you're helping me? You just want me to come back to you with my tail between my legs, begging you for support. I'm not going to do that. You can push me down. You can kick me. You can keep throwing problems at me. But I'm going to keep getting back up, and I'm going to live my life how I want to."

"Is that what you think you're doing?" asked Caroline.

"I know that's what I'm doing," Jesse said.

"Then I can't give you what you want," Caroline said. "I wish I could, but sometimes things have to get a lot worse before they can get better. It hurts me far more than it hurts you. I promise."

"Sure," Jesse said. "But if you keep going, I'm going to make you regret it. I sweat to God, you're going to regret it."

"I already do," Caroline said. "But that doesn't mean I'm going to stop."





“Do you still talk to mom?” asked Jesse, pushing close to her lingerie-clad sister as the photographer readied his shot. If there was one thing Jesse hated about porn, it was the necessity of promotional photo shoots. She didn’t have the patience for them.

“Not really,” said Payton. “Maybe once every couple of weeks.”

“I thought you were close,” Jesse said.

“We used to be,” Payton said. “But she’s so focused on you that she’s kind of gone off the deep end. That’s all she ever wants to talk about when I go to see her. I had to finally tell her I just didn’t want to get in the middle of it. She stopped, but she barely invites me over anymore.”

“I tried to get her to stop,” Jesse said. “The whole vendetta against me, I mean. She flat-out refused.”

“She thinks you’re going down the same road she went down,” Payton explained. “You should’ve seen her face when I told her you were taking Xanax. She freaked out like it was heroin or something.”

“You told her that?” Jesse asked.

Payton shrugged. “I didn’t know it was a secret,” she said. “Besides, it’s not like it’s illegal or anything. You’ve got a prescription.”

Jesse didn’t immediately answer because Payton was right. However, she hated to think of what her mother might do with the information that she needed the mood-altering drug.

“Does she know about you?” Jesse asked.

“About this? No,” Payton said. “And as far as I’m concerned, she never needs to find out. Besides, this is my last shoot. I graduate next month, so I’m done with this kind of stuff. It’s off to work in the real world.”

“I don’t know that an art gallery is the real world,” Jesse said, grinning.

Payton shrugged. “Maybe not,” she said. “But that’s all I can get with an art history degree.”



"I'm not saying that we do this," Jesse said. "But if we did, how would it work?"

"I tell my associates I need a favor," Caleb said. "I give them the time and place. And then she disappears. That's it. You don't have to even think about it."

"W-what if I want to be involved?" Jesse asked.

"Do you?" was Caleb's responding question.

Jesse nodded. "I think I do," she said. "I want to see her on the ground. I want her to know I did this to her. And I want her to know that she could have prevented it if she'd just been reasonable."

"It's an unnecessary risk," Caleb said.

"Is it possible for me to be involved?" Jesse persisted. She had thought a lot about it, and if she was going to sign off on her mother's kidnapping, she wanted to see the look in the older woman's eyes when she found out that she'd spend the rest of her life as some foreigner's sexual plaything.

"I suppose it wouldn't change much," Caleb stated. "But you have to understand something about these people: they are not gentle. They won't go easy on her. She will spend weeks, maybe months in pain while they break her. Are you prepared to see that?"

Jesse didn't immediately answer, though she knew she was. She wanted the woman to suffer, and if she had the means, she would have already done it herself. Finally, she said, "I am. I want to watch."

"Then I'll set it up," said Caleb. "But once I make that call, there's no backing out. One way or another, they're going to get a slave."

"I won't back out," assured Jesse. "I promise."



"I told you it'd be popular," said Jesse, looking at her sister's bank statement on her phone. "And those are just the first month's residuals. It really is a shame you're calling it quits."

"I don't think the gallery would be too happy about employing a porn star," said Payton. "Not that I'm ashamed of it or anything. I'm not. I just don't want it to affect the rest of my life."

"Right," Jesse said. "Perfectly understandable."

It made logical sense, but Jesse had seen Payton in action. She knew perfectly well that her sister was well-suited to the industry and that she loved it in a way Jesse never could. However, Payton had never been the type to truly commit to anything less-than-reputable. She liked having the good-girl façade to hide behind too much for that.

"Do you remember your senior prom?" asked Jesse suddenly.

"Yeah," Payton said. "Why?"

Jesse shook her head. "I was just thinking about it for some reason," Jesse answered. "Mom never knew you didn't go with that...what was his name?"

"Kurt," Payton said. "He was such a sweetie."

"What do you think mom would say if she knew you spent half the prom getting double-teamed in the bathroom?" Jesse asked. "She probably wouldn't believe it."

"Where's this coming from?" Payton asked.

"Nowhere," Jesse responded. "I've just been thinking about her a lot lately. I've been wondering what my life would be like if I'd just followed all her stupid rules. She'd probably think I was the perfect daughter, just like you."

"She doesn't think I'm perfect," Payton said. "Far from it. She's constantly criticizing me. As far as I'm concerned, I can't do anything right. If it's not perfect, it's not good enough. That's why I lie so much to her."

Jesse nodded. "Yeah," Jesse said. "Right."



"If you're going to stay with us, you need to wear clothes," said Jesse.

"I am wearing clothes," was Payton's response. She adjusted her denim jacket. "See? I'm perfectly decent."

Jesse groaned. Her sister was only staying with them for a couple of days, but she'd already made herself something of a nuisance. She thought of their apartment as the "porn house", which meant that she expected to be a naked orgy, twenty-four-seven. However, neither Madelyn nor Jesse wanted that sort of thing to invade their home life.

"I'll be out of your hair by the end of the week," Payton said.

"It's fine," Jesse responded. "It is. I just wish you'd put on some clothes."

Payton rolled her eyes. "Fine," she said, rising from the couch. She quickly found her overnight bag and grabbed a pair of skimpy panties. Pulling them up and settling them into place, she said, "But you're being a real buzzkill. Where are all the hot guys? You know - the ones with huge porn dicks. I'd even settle for that cute shemale friend of yours. What was her name? Brittany or something?"

"She went back home for a little while," Jesse said, ignoring her sister's use of the slur. It was okay within porn circles, but in the real world, the word "shemale" wasn't acceptable. "She wants to straighten some things out with her family."

"I guess that makes sense," Payton said.

For the past week, Jesse had considered telling her sister about her plans for their mother. But something told her that Payton simply wouldn't understand. For all her complaints, she hadn't been hurt by Caroline nearly as much as Jesse. And she couldn't understand the need for revenge. Once she had committed herself to the path, it was all-consuming. Jesse could think of little else.

"But yeah - you can stay here for as long as you want," Jesse said. "A week. A month. There's plenty of room."

"Thanks," Payton said. "You're a good sister."







"I'm going to give you once last chance," Jesse said. "Apologize. Tell me you won't mess with me or my business anymore. And I'll walk away. You won't ever hear from me again."

"Not happening," said Caroline, sitting in her favorite chair. "I care too much about you to give up."

"You don't care about me," Jesse stated. "You care about you and your reputation."

"That's not true," Caroline responded. "Everything I've done has been for your benefit. I want you to live a happy, healthy life. And I want salvation for you. You can't get that if you continue to put yourself in a position to -"

"I don't need you to analyze my life," Jesse said. "I just need to hear the follow words: I'll stop. That's it. That's all I want to hear from you."

"No," Caroline said, rising to her full height. She was a tall woman, but her height was accentuated by the ridiculously tall heels she wore. She towered over Jesse. "Because I know you're not happy. I've seen all those videos. I've watched every single one. I can see it in your eyes - you hate what you're doing. But okay - I might have let you make your own mistakes. Everyone has that right. But then you dragged Payton into your little world."

"W-what?" Jesse asked.

"I saw her videos too," she said. "Buried at the bottom of the archives. You knew you should be ashamed of them. So, for your good and for hers, no - I won't back off. I'll keep coming after that disgusting business until I bring it tumbling down. And you can take that to the bank."

Jesse was stunned, but she managed to say, "That's what I need to hear. Thank you for making my decision easier."



“When is it happening?” Jesse asked.

“Today,” said Caleb. “Or tonight, rather.”

“Oh,” Jesse said. “So soon.”

“You knew they were going to go as soon as possible,” Caleb said.

“They’ve already delayed twice so you can give her a chance to apologize. They weren’t going to wait any longer.”

“I...I know,” Jesse said. She was of two minds about the whole thing. On one hand, she hated the idea of the woman who’d raised her spending the rest of her life as a sex slave. However, on the other hand, she was completely committed to punishing the woman who’d tried to ruin her life. She wanted to see her suffer. She wanted her identity stripped away, leaving nothing but a sex toy.

“It’s going to be okay,” Caleb said. “They’re good at what they do.

It’ll look like she left town on her own. They’ll empty her bank accounts. They’ll pack her clothes. As far as anyone’s concerned, she’s just had a relapse. She was once an addict, so it’s believable enough.”

“Just like that, they can make someone disappear,” Jesse said, feeling a chill that had nothing to do with the air temperature.

“Like I said, that’s what these men do,” Caleb said. “They’re ruthless.”

“I understand,” Jesse said. “But I do get to watch, right? They’ll make a video, won’t they?”

“Against their better judgment, yes,” Caleb said. “I’ll destroy it myself once you’ve seen it, but yes. You can watch.”



Jesse watched the video on her laptop with grim fascination. On the screen, a bald, dangerous-looking man stalked through her mother's house. Until that moment, it hadn't seemed real. The idea of her kidnapping had been just that – an idea. But with him there, with his workman's coveralls, heavy silver chain, and evil expression, it became more real than Jesse could have imagined. If it hadn't already happened, she might have tried to call it off.

He pushed through the kitchen doorway, surprising Caroline.

"What the hell are you doing here?" she demanded, backing against the counter, her free hand searching for some kind of a weapon. Finally, she found a butcher knife. Brandishing it in front of her, she said, "Who are you? What do you want?"

"Put that away," the kidnapper said. "Now. Or things are going to get rough for you."

"Stay away!" Caroline said.

He shrugged. "Your choice," he said. Lightning quick, he stepped forward, batting the blade away. It clattered to the floor, and he gripped her throat. "I said to put it down."

From a pocket, he produced a syringe, which he immediately thrust into her neck. Almost as soon as he depressed the plunger, Caroline relaxed. "W-what did...what...w-what..." Her words were slurred. Incoherent. And then she collapsed to the floor.

Minutes later, the man had her legs and arms duct taped into immobility. As she awoke, he grabbed her throat again, his other hand yanking her skirt up to her hips. Jerking her panties aside, he thrust his thumb inside her.

"A little older than we usually take," he growled. "But you'll do nicely. Oh yes, you'll do nicely."

And then the video ended. A second later, Caleb had deleted it from Jesse's hard drive. "You'll get more updates as her conditioning progresses," he said. "But it's done. She's gone."

"G-gone," Jesse muttered, trying to wrap her brain around the implications.





"Jesse!" croaked Caroline. "Jesse! Untie me! Before they get back!"

Jesse didn't say anything. Instead, she circled her mother, running her fingers over the ropes that held the naked, older woman in place. Caroline was stuck. She could do little more than wiggle her ass, and even that was probably a little painful.

Finally, Jesse said, "You deserve this, you know."

"W-what?" Caroline asked. "You don't understand. These people kidnapped me! They're going to -"

"I know," Jesse said. "And like I said, you deserve it."

"I...I don't...I don't understand," Caroline stated.

"I did this to you," Jesse said. "I had you kidnapped. You'll be trained. You'll be broken. And then, you're going to be sold. I just wanted you to know that it was me that did it to you."

"W-what? Why?" Caroline asked.

"You've ruined my life," Jesse explained. "I never asked to be a girl, but you took it upon yourself to turn me into one. I was willing to forgive that. Sure, I'm all fucked up because of it, but that's life, right? Then, you got me kicked out of school. You went after my business. And why? Why did you do all of that? Because I wasn't what you wanted me to be. That's it."

"I just wanted you to be happy!" Caroline said.

"I was happy!" Jesse growled. "Before all this, before you sent me to that awful place, I was happy. I was okay with being gay. I was living my life. But you couldn't accept that, could you? You had to change me. Well, there are consequences to your choices, mom. I hate that it came to this, but you left me no choice. I hope you enjoy being a sex slave."

Jesse turned, and as she walked away, she had to force herself to ignore her mother's pitiful pleas for help.







Jesse hated herself, but she didn't see how it could have gone any other way. As much as she disliked the need for violence, her mother had backed her into a corner, and it was either kidnapping or death. She chose the lesser of two evils.

"Are you okay?" asked Caleb, approaching from the house. "How was your run?"

"Fine," Jesse said. "Those guys were gawking at me again."

"Do you want me to take care of it?" her boyfriend asked.

"No," she said quickly. His version of "taking care of it" might include more than just a talking-to. And she certainly didn't want to hear about a trio of douchebag frat boys coming up missing. "They're harmless."

In truth, she'd enjoyed the catcalls and stares. It felt innocent in a way that she hadn't experienced since she had started doing porn. And after doing what she'd done to her mother, it felt almost normal. She needed that.

"Have you given any thought to what we were talking about last night?" Caleb asked.

"I don't know," Jesse said. "Moving in together is a big step."

"Is it?" asked Caleb. "You spend most nights here anyway."

"I'll think about it," Jesse stated. "I'm still a little distracted by...you know...mom's disappearance."

He leaned in, kissing her on the cheek. "Take your time," he said. "I've got all the time in the world."



It was easier to just ignore the fate of her mother. Even as Caroline received her “training”, Jesse tried to go about living her life. It wasn’t easy, but she’d become very well-versed at hiding behind a thin façade of happiness. And she applied that skill well in the weeks after he mother’s abduction.

“You’re going to end up marrying him, aren’t you?” asked Madelyn.

“I don’t know,” Jesse said. “He hasn’t asked me, so I haven’t really thought about it much.”

“Don’t be stupid,” Madelyn said. “Of course you’ve thought about it. You’ve been obsessed with Caleb since the first time you saw him. And now he’s yours. There’s no way you’re going to let him get away.”

Jesse shook her head. “He’s different than I imagined, Maddy,” she said. “More complicated.”

“Aren’t we all?” asked Madelyn. “Look – I know he’s weird. I know he’s got his issues. But he’s loyal and he loves you. That’s all you really need to know, right?”

“I guess so,” Jesse said. “But he’s got this...this darkness in him. It scares me sometimes.”

“It’s not darkness,” Madelyn said. “He’s just stuck in this gray area, you know? He doesn’t see dark and light. Good or bad. It’s all the same to him. But as long as he’s got a moral compass, he’ll be okay. That’s where you come in. You need to be his ‘true north’. That’s what his therapist used to call it. For a while, it was me. Now, it’s you.”

“Sounds like a lot of responsibility,” Jesse said.

“It is,” Madelyn responded. “But all you need to do is be yourself. That’s it. He’ll fall into line.”

“Yeah,” Jesse said. “That’s easy enough.”





“You seem happy,” said Caleb, grinning. “Is it something I did?”

“Shut up,” Jesse said, returning the smile. She’d just decided to move in with him, and at first glance, it seemed like the best decision she’d ever made. Not only did it make financial sense, but it was also a way she could move on with her life. Even though she got almost daily updates as to her mother’s training, she had resolved to try to put it out of her mind. So far, it was working – most of the time.

“You know what comes next, right?” he asked.

“If you ask me to marry you while I’m standing her naked, I’m going to slap you,” she said.

“What? Marriage?” he asked. “No – I was talking about getting a joint bank account.”

“Oh,” Jesse said, a little disappointed. She didn’t know if she really wanted to marry Caleb, but she knew she wanted him to ask.

“Wait – do you want to get married?” he asked. “Because if you do –”

“No,” Jesse said. “It’s silly. We don’t need to get married.”

“Right,” Caleb said, blissfully ignorant as to the meaning of her tone. He took almost everything at face value, which made him seem almost innocent. Jesse knew better.

“Listen – your sister told me about your ‘north star’,” she said.

“She did, huh?” asked Caleb, his smile fading.

“Yeah,” Jesse said. “But it’s fine. It’s okay. I want to be that for you. I want to help you be the person you want to be.”

Caleb’s smile returned, but there was little joy in the expression.

“Good,” he said. “That’s very good.”



"She's not coming back," said Jesse.

"You don't know that," Payton responded, looking out at the lake. She wore a revealing bikini she never would've dreamed of wearing if their mother was still around. "She could come back any day."

"She emptied her bank account," Jesse said. "They found drugs under her bed. She packed everything up. Her car was found in Texas. What more do you want?"

"You just want her to have relapsed," Payton said, removing her sunglasses. "You've always wanted that."

"W-what? No," Jesse said. "I didn't -"

"Fine!" Payton said. "It's fine. Whatever. I'm not mad at you. I'm just upset, okay? She just left." Payton snapped her fingers. "Just like that. Gone. Like she didn't give a shit about us. And now, what am I going to do? I can't afford my freaking apartment without her help."

"I thought you had a job," Jesse said.

"I do," Payton said. "I did. I don't know. I think I've been fired. But that's not your problem. I just have to figure some things out."

"Wait, fired? How?" Jesse asked. "I thought you liked working at the museum."

"I did," Payton answered. "I do. I don't know. It's just...I've been thinking lately...maybe I can go back to acting. Like, for real. Full-time. Like you and Maddy."

"You don't want that," Jesse said.

"I think I kind of do," was Payton's response. "I've got offers, you know. There are other ways I can go. I've been in touch with this producer, and he says he can make me a star. He says I have this screen presence. So, I'm not even going to ask you to help me. I'm just going to go with him."

"Are you sure?" Jesse asked. Payton assured her that she was. "Then I can't stop you. Do what you have to do."



Jesse wanted to be happy. She needed it. But as easily as pretending to be happy was, the real thing remained stubbornly out of reach.

“How do you do it?” she asked.

“Do what?” was Caleb’s responding question.

“How do you just ignore the wrongness of it all?” she said, shaking her head. “I can’t get it out of my head. Every time I close my eyes, I’m thinking of her, of what they’re doing to her. And it’s wrong, Caleb. So, so wrong. I just wish I could take it back.”

“Take it back?” Caleb asked. “Are you serious? You can’t take this kind of thing back. These are dangerous people, and to them, Caroline represents a significant payday. Sure, she’s old. But she’s got a few good years left in her. To them, that’s worth a lot of money.”

“I know,” Jesse said. “I get it. I really do. I just –”

“Just forget about her,” Caleb said. “She’s gone.”

“Not yet,” Jesse said. “I’ve still got to see her before they sell her.”

“No,” Caleb said. “You don’t.”

“I do,” was Jesse’s response. “I need that closure. I want to see her broken.”

“But you wish you hadn’t been the one to –”

“I know it doesn’t make sense,” Jesse said. “I can’t think straight. I hate her. But she’s my mother. I...I don’t...God, it’s just so wrong. But I’ll get over it. I promise, I’ll be fine.”



“Jesus,” said Jesse, staring through the two-way mirror. On the other side, her mother was tied, spread-eagle, to a rickety, old, metal bed. The dirty mattress was uncovered, and the ropes holding her in place looked rough and unyielding. “How long has she been like this?”

“Two days,” said the bald man who Jesse had seen capture her mother. “Before that, we had her in a different position for a little less than a week. And before that –”

“Why do you tie her up?” Jesse asked, interrupting the big man.

“Incentive,” he said. “She’s in control of when she’s released.”

“What? How?” asked Jesse.

“She has to beg for someone to fuck her,” the kidnapper said, one corner of his mouth turning up in a half-smile. “We let it go for a few hours before I go in and give her what she wants. After that, we send in the boys.”

“Y-you rape her,” Jesse said.

“She asks for it,” the man stated. “Over and over again. And then she thanks each and every one of us for it.”

“I see,” Jesse stated. “It’s conditioning, then.”

“Training,” said the man. “And when she finally gets to the point where she begs for it before we even tie her up, she’ll be finished. That’s when she gets sold.”

“Right,” Jesse said, turning away. “I’ve seen enough.”







"I...I had to tell someone," Jesse said, looking away from her friend, ashamed at her actions. She had just told Madelyn about her mother's kidnapping and enslavement. "I just couldn't keep it inside any longer."

Madelyn didn't immediately respond. Instead, she just stared at Jesse, a judgmental look in her eye. The worst part about it was that Jesse knew she deserved it. She'd crossed a line, and it seemed like there was no going back.

"He did this, didn't he?" Madelyn asked.

"W-what?" Jesse said.

"My brother," Madelyn said. "He pushed you into this. I can tell. I can see the signs. It's his way. He probably wanted to kill her at first, didn't he? But you couldn't do that, could you? So, he suggested kidnapping. If that wouldn't have worked, he would have gone with simply having her beaten up. That's how his mind works."

Jesse shouldn't have been surprised. Madelyn knew her brother well. "No," Jesse said. "I mean, yeah - that's how it went. But I made the decisions. I made the choices."

"He manipulated you," Madelyn stated. "That's what he does. He's always been like that."

"I...I didn't...I don't...I don't understand," Jesse said. "Why would he do that? I told him my problem, and he offered a solution. That's not...that's not manipulation."

"It is when he does it," the other girl said. "He's been manipulating people since he was old enough to talk. I don't know why he does it. Maybe he's just that fucked up in the head. Maybe he gets a kick out of it. But he drove you to this. It's not your fault."

"It is my fault," Jesse said. "A-and...and I can't...I just can't let it happen."

"Then, don't," said Madelyn. "Seems simple to me."

"The BBC Queen," muttered Jesse, looking at the promotional photo on her laptop. In it, Payton sat on a bed, clutching a pair of enormous, black cocks. "At least she found her niche."

"I can't believe she decided to do it," Madelyn said, looking over Jesse's shoulder. "Of all the girls I've ever known, I never would have expected Payton Holt to end up with a porn career."

"Then you don't know her very well," Jesse said, closing the computer. She leaned back in her chair. "Payton's always been a low-key slut. It just wasn't common knowledge."

"You've told me the stories," Madelyn said. "I guess I just couldn't believe it, you know? I mean, she was Payton Holt. Most parents dreamed of having a daughter like her."

"Did you know she had sex with three of her teachers in high school?" Jesse said. "It wasn't for, like, grades or anything. She never needed that. It was just because she could."

"And I thought I was a slut," Madelyn said, shaking her head. "I guess it just goes to show you that you don't ever really know anybody."

"It all comes out eventually," Jesse said.

"It does," agreed Madelyn. "So - what are you going to do about your mom?"

"I don't know yet," Jesse said. She had been thinking about it for days, but she had yet to come to a decision. More than just about anything, she wanted her mother out of the way. But she didn't want her to suffer anymore. Nobody deserved that. "But I've got to figure it out soon. They're selling her next week."





"She knows her place now," said the bald kidnapper. "She doesn't resist. She begs perfectly. And she understands that there's no escape."

"I see," muttered Jesse, again looking through the two-way mirror. Her mother didn't move. She didn't seem fully aware of her surroundings.

"Watch," the man said before exiting the room. He appeared in Caroline's room a moment later. His voice, muffled by the glass separating the two rooms, was clear enough when he said, "What do you want, slut?"

"I want your cock inside me, sir," said Caroline without hesitation. "Please! Fuck me!"

Before Jesse could fully comprehend what was happening, the kidnapper's pants were around his ankles, and he'd plunged his hard cock deep inside of Caroline's well-used pussy. Then, he fucked her. Hard. Fast. Brutal. And she took it without so much as a whimper. Clearly, Jesse thought, she had been broken - completely and without doubt.

Minutes later, well after he'd cum inside her, the man returned. "You see? She's finished," the kidnapper said, buttoning his pants. Jesse could see the man's semen leaking out of her mother's pussy, and it disgusted her.

"How much?" Jesse asked.

"What?" said the kidnapper. "You want to buy her?"

"I do," Jesse said. "How much?"

"Two-hundred thousand," he said without so much as a moment's hesitation.

"I'll give you ten," Jesse countered. And so, the negotiations began, and they settled on twenty-two thousand dollars. When they shook hands, Jesse said, "This is contingent on me talking to her. If she says something I don't like, the deal's off."

The man quickly agreed, and Jesse went into her mother's cell. Caroline's face remained placid as Jesse said, "I've just bought you. You're mine to do with as I please. Do you understand that?" Caroline nodded, and Jesse continued. "But I have no need for a slave. So, I will free you on one condition."

Caroline's ears perked up at the mention of freedom. "What?" she croaked. "Is this a test?"

"No," Jesse said. "It's an ultimatum. If I release you, you're going to leave town. I'll make sure you have enough money to set yourself up. But if you fuck with me, if you go to the cops, if you mess with my business ever again, I'll have baldy back there pick you up again. And this time, I won't save you. Do you understand?"

Jesse didn't need to see the nod to know that her mother would agree to whatever terms resulted in her freedom.





"I...I can't do this, Caleb," Jesse said. "I wish I could, but I just...I just can't."

"I understand," said the handsome man, his tone emotionless.

"No," Jesse responded, shaking her head. "I don't think you do. I wish you did, but I don't think you're capable of understanding why I can't be with you anymore."

"Explain it," he suggested, his face as expressionless as his voice.

"I can't be your 'North Star'," Jesse said. "I'm not strong enough to be your good example."

"Is this about your mother?" he asked. "Because they were okay with how that worked out. Sure, she wasn't as profitable as they expected, but twenty -"

"It's not about that," Jesse answered. "God - you don't get it. You really don't. You infect my every thought, just by being there, Caleb. I don't even think you mean to do it, but when you're around, good and bad, wrong and right, they just seem less solid. It seemed reasonable to do what we did. But looking back, it was a monstrous thing to do. I can't...I can't do that. I can't let that happen to me. I can't let that happen to you."

"Why?" was his inevitable question. "Those things, they're just man-made concepts, right? Good and evil. All relative."

"No," Jesse argued. "It's not relative. It's clear. There's right. There's wrong. And most of us know the difference. I know the difference. I just wish you did too."

Caleb looked away. "Me too," he said, and for the first time, his voice carried with it genuine emotion. "But I just can't."





"She just called and said that she'd be going away for a while," said Payton. "No location. No way to contact her. Just poof - gone."

"I told you she was okay," Jesse stated.

"She sounded so different," Payton stated. "Like she'd been through it, you know? I tried to tell her about what I'd been doing, but she didn't even care. It wasn't the reaction I expected."

"At least she called," Jesse said, knowing that that had been a condition of her release. Payton deserved closure.

"Yeah," Payton said, sitting down. "Still, it wasn't like her."

"Just drop it," Jesse said. "Maybe she wasn't the person you thought she was, okay? Maybe she finally realized how horrible she's been. She tried to ruin my life. And she would've done the same to you if she'd had any clue what you've been doing. Just count yourself lucky that she decided she was better off somewhere else."

"I know you didn't see eye-to-eye with her, but -"

"But nothing," Jesse said. "I'm done. Finished. I don't want to even think about her anymore. I've got my own life to focus on."

"Geez," said Payton, holding her hands up. "Sorry. But speaking of your own life - I'm sorry that you and Caleb broke up. I thought you two were in it for the long haul."

Jesse shook her head. "I guess neither of us were built for that relationship," she said. "But I'm okay with it. I'll be okay. I just have to keep moving forward. That's the key, right? Just put one foot in front of the other, and eventually, you're moving in the right direction."

"I hope you're right," Payton said.

"Yeah," was Jesse's response. She forced another fake smile. "Me too."