Chapter 1

“Alright, five card stud, queens wild…” Cass looked up with a smirk. She sucked on a large peppermint stick like it was a cigar and chased the minty flavor down with hot chocolate. “I think you all get what I’m sayin’. Minimum bet is five pieces of candy.”

“You’re not exactly being subtle, Cass. By the way, whose idea was the candy?” Eve asked as she unwrapped a bite-sized Snickers.

“Uh, I don’t think you’re supposed to eat the ante.” Mo shrank back when Eve narrowed her eyes at her and surreptitiously pushed one of her pieces of candy to Eve’s pile.

“It, um, was my idea,” Dani shyly raised their hand. “Sorry, but I didn’t have the cash, and Cass said this would be okay.”

“Oh, I’m not complaining,” Eve said with a sweet smile. “I just hope I don’t have to eat all of my winnings.”

Hunter laughed. “You have kids!”

“Exactly. I will have to scarf this down before I go home to them, or they’ll be bouncing off the walls like a bunch of monkeys.”

“What about your sugar rush?” Cass asked as she dealt the cards.

“I have very specific ways of handling my… rushes.”

Every person sitting at the table with Eve blushed. Eve merely smiled innocently as she peeked at the faced-down card she was dealt.

“Speaking of rushes,” Hunter began. She eyed Dani, wondering how much she could say in front of them. Obviously, Dani was of age, but Hunter was a parent figure to Dani. And their boss. Would it be inappropriate to talk about her and Ellie’s… romantic life? She decided Dani was mature enough to handle it. After all, if Mo was mature enough, anyone was. “I need some advice.”

“Trouble in pie paradise, Doc?” Mo snickered. “Ellie not making enough apple pies for

you to stick her fingers in?”

Hunter was rethinking Mo being mature. “Don’t be a cuntasaurus, Mo.”

Dani snorted, blowing whipped cream over all her cards and the ante pile. “Oops. Sorry.”

“Kids, that’s enough.” Eve put on her best ‘mom’ voice. “What advice do you need, Hunter?” She tossed a Twix into the pot and waited for the others to follow suit.

Hunter sighed. “I want to do something special for Ellie. She’s done so much for me, you know. Hell, she’s learned how to pole dance for me! She’s done everything to make me feel loved and keep everything new and exciting. And I…”

Hunter hesitated, stirring her hot chocolate with her peppermint cigar. She was almost embarrassed to be admitting any of this, but the need for advice outweighed her discomfort. As did her love for Ellie. Of course, Ellie had never once complained about their love life. Honestly, there was nothing to complain about. It was beautiful and fulfilling. Ellie lacked nothing in the romance department. Hunter, though…

“Here’s the thing,” Hunter glanced at her friends, then returned her gaze to the card in her hand. “I never really learned how to treat a woman romantically. I had one purpose in my past… relationships. That isn’t how I want to ever treat Ellie. But I feel like I am treating her that way by not giving back everything she gives me.”

Cass dealt the next card. “You know Ellie had even less experience than you,” she pointed out. “That being said, I think your experience skewed your ideas while she had nothing to rely on but her imagination.”

Eve rested her elbow on the table, appreciating Cass’s outlook on the situation. Hunter and Ellie had a few similarities to Eve and Lainey. Eve’s past had definitely distorted Eve’s perception of what love and sex were. Lainey was the ‘innocent’ one in the equation.

“Cass has a point. A past like yours has the power to give you pause when you’re trying to find… you.”

Hunter stabbed her peppermint stick in the air, pointing at Eve. “That’s it! I don’t know who I am romantically, and I think that’s fucking with learning who Ellie and I are together.” She glanced at Cass. “We’re not really into what you and Rebecca do. At least not to your extent. Not that there’s anything wrong with it!” she amended quickly, letting out a relieved breath when Cass nodded in understanding. Hunter looked at Eve then. “You just ooze sex appeal. I’m sure you could wrap gifts naked, and that would be all Lainey needed.”

“I only do that when the kids are asleep,” Eve teased. “You don’t think you have sex appeal?” she asked, genuinely surprised that as beautiful as Hunter was, she was more insecure than anyone would imagine being on the outside looking in.

“Ellie thinks I do,” Hunter smiled shyly. “Look, I don’t want anyone to think we’re not happy and satisfied. Very satisfied. That’s not even close to what I’m saying. I… I just want to give her more. She deserves more.”

“Have you talked to her about this?” Eve asked.

Hunter shook her head. “I don’t know what to say without her thinking I’m unhappy. I swear I’m not.”

“Dude, Ellie would be, like, the first to tell you that communication is the key to any successful relationship. Sexual and otherwise.”

Four heads turned to look in Dani’s direction.

“What?” Dani rolled their eyes. “She would totally say that, and all of you know it. I don’t know why you’re all looking at me like I said something profound,” Dani mumbled.

“The kid is right.” Cass punched Dani lightly on the shoulder. “Becca is the same way. She says she wants to hear the good, the bad, and the ugly because if she knows something is up, her imagination is probably worse than the real problem.”

Eve nodded. “Lainey is the same. I was never much of a talker…” Eve raised a brow in Hunter’s direction when Hunter muttered ‘shocker.’ “Anyway, I’ve learned to be much more open with my feelings because that’s what Lainey needs. And it makes me feel better. Enough so that I’m not even that annoyed by your little dig.”

Hunter bit her lip. Eve was warming up to her humor, Hunter just knew it. It was inevitable.

“How do I figure out who I am…” Again Hunter eyed Dani. “Romantically,” she finished softly.

“I think you’re overthinking this, Hunt. You don’t have to be anything or anyone else than who you are.” Cass understood now why Hunter hadn’t wanted Greyson and Cade to join them tonight. She topped up Hunter’s hot chocolate with the thermos Ellie had sent with Hunter. Poker night was at Cass and Rebecca’s house, while their significant others enjoyed their night together at Eve and Lainey’s. Thankfully, Ellie still made sure Cass and the gang had awesome snacks. “Ellie fell in love with you

exactly how you are."

Hunter sat back in her chair, running a hand through her hair. "I know, but…" She sighed wearily. "Things have been a little different since the accident, and that's on me. I'm afraid of hurting her or pushing her too much."

"Is Ellie still in pain?" Eve asked, concerned.

"She says she's not, but…"

"But nothing, Hunt," Mo interrupted. "I know you were effed up seeing Ellie like that in the hospital, but you gotta let it go before she lets you go. She's your wife, man. You can't keep treating her like a patient."

"I can't believe I'm saying this, but I agree with Mo."

Mo nearly fell out of her chair at Eve's admission. "What?"

"I know it surprised me, too." Eve turned her attention away from a red-faced Mo to an amused Hunter. "If I've learned anything about the past, it's that it should stay there." She hesitated only slightly before asking a question that had the potential to upset Hunter. "Do you resent Ellie for how she treated you after the accident?"

"No." Hunter's answer was swift and absolute. "She was in pain and scared. I can't blame her for that. Maybe I do need to stop thinking she's fragile," Hunter exhaled sharply. "El has been gaining more strength and stamina every day. In fact, I think the only reason she cuts her days short at the diner or asks me for my help is for my benefit. Shit," she shook her head. "I've been turning my issues into hers."

"I think you just had your ah-ha moment," Cass lifted her hot chocolate in a salute before taking a drink.

"That's only half of the issue," Hunter muttered. "And you have whipped cream on your nose."

"I was saving that for later," Cass grumbled, using the back of her hand to wipe it off. Her mind then drifted off to using whipped cream while getting whipped by Mistress.

"Your other issue is the romance thing?" Dani asked, suddenly unfazed by the entire conversation. "I was like that, too, after losing my legs. I didn't know why someone like Claire would be attracted to someone like me. I mean, in the beginning, it was freakin' hard because she had to, like, help me go to the bathroom and take a shower. I felt like a freakin' invalid. And, yeah, like it was mostly my issues, ya know. How could she love me? How could I possibly turn her on? How the hell do you have sex

when you don’t have legs?”

“H-how do you?”

“Mo!” Eve scolded.

Dani snickered. “Nah, it’s okay. I actually talked to a few people in my therapy group about it. Turns out it’s common to feel everything I felt. The answer is, very carefully. And to talk to my partner about it. Do we keep the prosthetics on? Take them off? What positions work? What doesn’t? I thought it’d be embarrassing to talk to Claire about that shit, ya know. But you can make it sexy. And, like, you can totally remember that the person you’re with is in this with you, loves you, and wants to make you as happy as you want to make them. I know Ellie, Hunt. Communication is, like, her love language or something. Talk to her. Figure shit out.”

“I do believe Dani has figured shit out much faster than the rest of us,” Eve stated with a short burst of laughter. “And I do believe they’re right. Talk to Ellie. She is probably one of the most understanding people I know.”

Hunter nodded. Her stomach did little twists and turns at the thought of Ellie thinking she was anything but happy in their relationship. But they had been in this situation before. Hunter should know from experience that all Ellie ever wants is the truth. To lay it all out and work through it together.

“Y-yeah. I can do that. Open and honest, right?”

“That’s the key to a happy and healthy relationship,” Eve agreed. “At least that’s what Lainey tells me.”

“Same with Rebecca,” Cass said around her peppermint cigar.

“Same, same with Claire,” Dani concurred as she contemplated whether they should eat a piece of candy or go all in with the hand they had.

“Patty will kick my ass if I keep anything from her again. Or divorce me.” Mo frowned. “I will bend the fuck over and take the ass kicking, cuz I don’t want to lose her.”

“Isn’t it easier to just not keep anything from her?” Dani asked as they popped a Snickers in their mouth. Their hand wasn’t that great.

“I don’t know, bending over for your dominant wife is quite fun,” Cass smirked.

Eve cleared her throat. “Have we all established that talking is good, keeping things from your wives is bad, and bending over is fun?” Yeses sounded off around the table.

“Good.” Eve laid down her cards. “Four jacks and a wild.”

“Son of a b…!”

Chapter 2

“Okay, Jessie. Are you sure you don’t want to come home? It’s Christmas Eve Eve… Yes, I know you’re an adult now.” Ellie rolled her eyes, thankful she wasn’t on FaceTime with her daughter. “Adult or not, I want you here in the morning for Christmas Eve breakfast. It’s tradition. And don’t forget we’re going to the Sumptors’ tomorrow night.”

Ellie unlocked the front door, pushing it open with her foot as she stooped to pick up the bag of ingredients she had “borrowed” from the diner. She sure as hell didn’t want to do a grocery store run this close to Christmas.

“Alright, well, have fun, but be safe… you know, the five of you could’ve come here if all you wanted to do was have a pajama party… Are you calling us old?… Right. See if you get french toast in the morning… don’t mommy me now, you’ve already messed up,” Ellie smiled, hanging her keys on the hook by the door. “I love you, too. See you tomorrow morning. Bright and early, Jessica Anne.”

Ellie laughed as she hung up while Jessie was whining about Ellie using her full name.

“Hunter?” Ellie called out. “Honey, are you home?” She walked through to the kitchen, setting the bag on the counter. She listened for a minute but didn’t hear a TV or anything to indicate Hunter was home. That was weird. Ellie checked her text. Hunter said they were wrapping up the poker game, and she’d be on her way. With Ellie’s stop at the diner, Hunter should have beaten her home.

Just as she was about to panic, Ellie heard a noise coming from the living room. She took a moment to compose herself, then plastered a smile on her face.

“You must’ve been outside,” Ellie began, walking toward the soft music she now heard. Had that been on before? “Jessie is staying over at Dani and Claire’s, so is there… oh! My.”

There, in front of the lights of the Christmas tree, stood Hunter, wrapped in a red blanket and wearing a Santa hat. And as far as Ellie could see, absolutely nothing else.

“Hey, baby,” Hunter grinned that lop-sided grin Ellie loved so much. She took in Ellie’s slack-jawed, wide-eyed look and hoped it all meant good things. Hunter had left the poker game early so that she could prepare a special night for Ellie. Thank goodness Dani had convinced Jessie to stay over, or this would have been another obscenely

embarrassing moment for all of them. Jessie had already caught them in a compromising position, something Hunter hadn't quite recovered from yet.

"H-hi. You…" Ellie licked her lips, taking her bottom lip in her teeth as she let her eyes roam over the tall, dark, and oh-so-gorgeous wife of hers. "You're breathtaking."

Ellie had called her many things and tried out many pet names, but breathtaking was new. Hunter had to admit it worked wonders on her ego. She had felt almost ridiculous wrapping a red blanket around her naked body. Don't even get her started on the Santa hat. But this was all about being more open within herself in order to give Ellie all of her. The look in Ellie's eyes quickly squelched the fear and embarrassment, turning them into courage and confidence.

"Come here." Hunter held out her hand, beckoning Ellie to her while keeping a tight grip on the blanket. Obviously, she wasn't shy in front of Ellie, but she had things to say before the intimacy took over.

Ellie immediately took Hunter's hand, needing to be close, wanting even more. "Is this why Jessie is making herself scarce?"

Hunter smiled. "Well, I didn't give anyone the exact blueprint of what I had planned, but they know I wanted to do something special for you." She pushed the light jacket Ellie was wearing off her shoulders and tossed it aside. "The first thing I need to do is apologize to you."

Ellie's eyebrows shot up. Their relationship had been nothing but stellar lately. Hunter was coming home from the clinic at a decent time these days. They had dinner together, watched TV, and even played games. This was all in addition to the beautiful love life they shared. Ellie couldn't fathom what Hunter had to be sorry about. "Apologize? For what?"

"For not giving you half of what you've given me, El. Baby, you've carried this relationship. You've kept it strong and exciting and, god, more than I could ever wish for or dream about. I never imagined I would be so incredibly happy in my life, and you are constantly making it better. You're trying new things, getting out of your comfort zone to surprise me. I've wanted to do the same for you, but I couldn't get past my own crippling issues. Then I couldn't get past your injuries."

Hunter shook her head, but her gaze into Ellie's eyes never faltered. Even when Ellie teared up, Hunter didn't look away.

"I don't understand. You give me so much, Hunter. Why do you think you haven't? You make me feel loved, cherished, wanted, sexy… what more could I ask for?"

“You shouldn’t have to ask for anything. I should just give as you do. I think maybe I’ve taken for granted what you’re willing to give me. How open you’re willing to be with me. Not to mention how overprotective and selfish I’ve been since the accident. Instead of listening to you about how you’re feeling, I’ve been too busy thinking I knew better because I’m a doctor.”

“Well,” Ellie smirked. “I will accept the apology for that part. But for everything else you said, an apology is unneeded.”

Hunter tsked. “Don’t give me an out, baby. I need to take responsibility for my shortcomings. I should be searching for who I am, uh, romantically…”

“Wait. Is that what you think I’m doing when I come to you with new… ideas?”

Hunter shrugged a shoulder. Obviously, that’s what she thought, but Ellie’s confusion was telling her something entirely different.

“Isn’t it? I know we’re both still pretty new to this, but at least you’re putting the effort in. I want to do that, too, but I have no idea where to start.”

“Honey, I’m not trying to find who I am romantically.” Ellie guided Hunter to the chair closest to the Christmas tree. She loved how the twinkling lights illuminated Hunter’s brilliant blue eyes and didn’t want to lose that precious sight. Once Hunter was seated, Ellie positioned herself on Hunter’s lap. “You and I missed a lot of experiences growing up the way we did. Part of me regrets that, but the bigger part is thrilled that I get to have those experiences with someone I’m truly in love with. But I’m not looking for our ‘niche,’ love.”

Hunter’s eyebrows twitched as she thought about what Ellie was saying. “I’ve been looking at this the wrong way, haven’t I? I thought we had to find that one thing that was uniquely us. You know, like Cass and Rebecca.”

“Honey, I can assure you that Cass and Rebecca have an abundance of… things that they utilize when they’re together. Rebecca isn’t a one-trick pony. Nor is Cass, from what I understand. They have a… preference, perhaps. But not at the exclusion of everything else.”

Ellie shifted in Hunter’s lap, causing the blanket to shift as well. The movement gave Ellie an enticing peek at the swell of Hunter’s breast.

“Ahem,” she closed the blanket back over said breast enough to keep her brain functioning. “My point is, I’m able to come to you with all these different experiences and ideas because I know you won’t ridicule me. You’re always so open and willing — very willing — to try these things with me, and it makes them so much more exciting.”

“You’re allowing us both to learn and experiment together,” Hunter concluded. “I should have talked to you much sooner instead of getting into my head. Dani was right.”

Ellie’s smile faltered. “Dani? Y-you talked to Dani about… this?”

Hunter chuckled at Ellie’s pink cheeks. “To be fair, they were the one who helped me the most by reminding me that talking things out was your love language.”

“But… that’s like asking Jessie… never mind. I remember having a similarly weird conversation with Jessie when you and I first started dating.”

“Oh, yeah. The overnight bag,” Hunter chuckled. “Okay.” Hunter situated Ellie until Ellie was straddling Hunter’s lap. Hunter forced herself not to worry about how the position affected Ellie’s hip and trusted that Ellie would let her know if it became too uncomfortable for her. That was a big step for her.

“A new year is right around the corner, and it’s time for me to stop looking back,” Hunter said, her hands resting on Ellie’s thighs. “I’m done letting my past control me. And I know that’s easier said than done, but it’s time to stop holding a piece of myself back from you. From us. I never did it intentionally, but…”

Ellie cupped Hunter’s cheek. “I know, love. And I’ve never felt as though you’ve neglected me or us.”

“That makes me feel a little better,” Hunter smiled. “Still, I want to be more… involved in everything we can explore together. I did a little, um, research while I was waiting for you to come home.”

“Oh?”

“Yeah, I found a few different sex challenges, but none of them really appealed to me. They all seemed a bit too…” Hunter paused, trying to find the right words. So far, she wasn’t doing the greatest at explaining what she wanted. “I don’t want us to feel obligated to have sex every single minute of every single day. I don’t want our lovemaking to be a chore. Does that make sense?”

Ellie nodded. “That seems a bit tiring,” she teased.

“For real!” Hunter chuckled. “That’s why I came up with the Panty Clause.”

Ellie bit her top lip. She could tell Hunter was serious, but the Panty Clause was… well, funny. “The… Panty Clause?” She glanced up at the Santa hat on Hunter’s head.

“Is that who you are? Panty Claus?”

Hunter’s eyebrows twitched with confusion until she remembered she was, indeed, wearing a Santa hat. “Yup.”

“You forgot you were wearing it, didn’t you?” Ellie laughed.

“Kinda,” Hunter confessed, joining Ellie in laughter.

“Okay,” Ellie cleared her throat and regained her composure. “Tell me more about this, um, Panty Clause.”

“Right. Well, the clause states that at least once a month — or more often,” Hunter wiggled her eyebrows, “we explore a new experience together. No inhibitions, no fear. And that goes for saying no, as well, baby. If either of us isn’t feeling something, we don’t do it. No regrets, no resentment. What do you say?”

“I say, I would only make one amendment to the clause.”

“Of course, baby,” Hunter said readily. That was part of the clause. If Ellie wasn’t comfortable with something, Hunter certainly wanted to remedy that in any way she could. “Anything you want.”

“I would definitely change the once a month to maybe once or twice a week.”

Hunter’s eyes widened in surprise. A very nice surprise.

“Uh, y-yeah! Yes! I didn’t want to push you, but I’m so down with twice a week!”

Ellie snickered at how her wife went directly to the twice-a-week. “In that case, where — and how — do I sign?”

Hunter sat up, holding Ellie close to her. “This particular clause has to be signed and sealed with a kiss.”

“Oh, well, that’s easy.” Ellie lowered her lips to Hunter’s, kissing her softly. Hunter’s lips were always velvety soft and had a faint taste of cherry-flavored chapstick during the winter months. Ellie loved it. “Now what?” she whispered. “Do I need to get a doctor’s note saying I’m up for the challenge of this clause?”

“It is advised,” Hunter grinned. “It just so happens I’m a doctor.”

“That’s right.” Ellie tapped Hunter’s chin with her fingertip. “How convenient.”

Hunter patted Ellie's behind with a quiet 'up, up.' "House visits are convenient. For the patient," she finished with a wink. "Now, in order for me to do your physical and make sure you're healthy enough to take on this endeavor…"

"Endeavor?" Ellie interrupted with a light laugh. "Do we have a goal?"

"Eternal happiness," Hunter answered immediately. "Where were we? Oh, right. In order for me to ensure you're physically up for this, you'll need to disrobe."

Ellie's lips twitched. "Right, of course." She began unbuttoning her shirt. "Everything off?"

Hunter peeled her eyes away from Ellie's suddenly exposed cleavage. "Ahem, yes. This exam will need to be thorough."

"Mmhmm." Ellie slipped her shirt off, letting it fall to the floor. She was glad she'd chosen one of Hunter's favorite lingerie sets while getting ready for girls' night. Both women often felt more… amorous after being forced to socialize without each other.

"The, uh, lingerie can come off a little later into the exam," Hunter said, licking her lips. The red lace had a way of getting her heart racing. "Do you need any help? I am a full-service kind of doctor." Ellie raised a brow. "For my home visits, which I only do for you," Hunter amended quickly with a cheeky smile.

"Nice save," Ellie muttered as she shimmied out of her jeans. She stood there in front of Hunter without an ounce of shame. A gnarly scar ran down Ellie's hip, and there was a time when she didn't want Hunter to look at it or touch it. The scar had made her feel unattractive and weak. It was ridiculous when she thought about it now. But her state of mind after the accident wasn't the best. Instead of being grateful she was alive, she was devastated that she was broken. Looking at her life now, Ellie tended to side with gratitude these days.

Chapter 3

Hunter traced a fingertip down the length of the scar on Ellie's hip. "You've taught me something tonight," she said quietly.

"I haven't even begun," Ellie answered cheekily. She got her desired reaction when Hunter inhaled sharply.

"Minx," Hunter teased. She stood, not even bothering to hold onto the blanket any longer. If Ellie wanted to tease her, well, two could play that game. "What you taught me," Hunter continued, knowing full well Ellie was having a hard time concentrating on anything but her naked body. "Was that I need to look at things with gratitude."

Ellie looked up sharply. That word had literally been floating around in her head just now. Hearing Hunter say it out loud only solidified that the two of them belonged together. “What do you mean?”

Again, Hunter touched Ellie’s scar. “This used to make me angry. Angry at your parents for hurting you. Angry at the world that someone as pure and sweet as you had to go through this. Angry at myself that I wasn’t the one in the truck.”

“Hunter…”

“I know we’ve talked about this before, baby, but here’s the thing. I’m looking at this with new eyes tonight. And I’m not naive enough to think every day after this epiphany of mine will be perfect. But I’m actively trying to redirect the way I think. To be on your level of… let’s call it enlightenment.”

“What does my scar make you feel now?”

“Thankful that you’re still here, scar and all. It could have been worse. I could have lost you forever. But they didn’t break us, baby. Susan. Your parents. They gave us their worst, El. And we’re standing — standing — here. Naked and ready to rock each other’s world for the rest of our lives.”

Ellie’s eyes shimmered with love. “I don’t know how you continuously make me fall in love with you more and more each day.”

“My plan is working,” Hunter grinned. “I vowed to be the kind of person you’d want to love, the person you needed, and the person who made you happy.”

Ellie stood on her tip-toes and kissed Hunter thoroughly. “You are that person. My person.”

Hunter stroked Ellie’s cheek. “And you’re mine, Ellie Vale.” Reluctantly, Hunter turned away only long enough to grab the blanket she had discarded earlier. Walking to the middle of the room, Hunter flipped the blanket out, laying it on the floor in front of the low fire that crackled in the fireplace. When she’d bought the house, Hunter had considered ripping the fireplace out. It wasn’t needed much in LA. She was glad she didn’t, as it offered a romantic backdrop for her night with Ellie.

Ellie came up behind Hunter, running her hands up Hunter’s smooth back, enjoying the ripple she felt beneath her fingertips. “I’d like to add something else to the clause,” she said softly.

“Oh?” Hunter turned and wrapped her arms around Ellie. “Do we need to get the

name of Rebecca and Cass's contractor?"

Ellie laughed. "If you want a… playroom, I'm all for it," she winked. "But my addendum is this. I promise to tell you if I have limitations, okay? And I'm only saying this because I don't want you to worry that I'm doing something just to make you happy. You promise that the only time you're examining me is when we're playing doctor. Deal?"

"That's a promise I can make. Deal." Hunter undid the clasp of Ellie's bra, sliding the straps down her shoulders. "And we're going to revisit that playroom idea a little later. However, we were in the middle of a full exam." She tossed the bra to the side and hooked her thumbs in the waistband of Ellie's bottoms. "You still need to be cleared for all this… activity."

Hunter kneeled, bringing those bottoms with her. God, Ellie's scent was intoxicating. If Hunter could only choose one scent to smell for the rest of her life, Ellie's would be it. She leaned in, kissing Ellie's mound softly as she breathed in.

"Hunter." Ellie's one hand fisted in Hunter's hair, and the other found its way to Hunter's shoulder, hanging on tightly as Hunter teased her. With Jessie living at home again, moments like this — naked in the living room doing beautiful things to each other — happened less often. So, being this free with Hunter felt incredible.

Hunter felt Ellie's knees buckle when she slid the flat of her tongue across Ellie's clit. "You know," Hunter licked her lips, savoring the taste of Ellie on them. "Exams are much more thorough when the patient is lying down." She took Ellie's hand, guiding her to the middle of the blanket.

Ellie promptly complied, wanting Hunter's mouth back on her. She smiled when Hunter grabbed pillows off the couch so Ellie would be more comfortable.

"I, uh, thought we could open a gift tonight," Hunter said, reaching under the tree and picking a gift that was wrapped differently than the others.

"Something I wouldn't want to open in front of my daughter?" Ellie guessed.

"Exactly." Hunter handed it to Ellie. She wondered briefly if she should've done this at a better time, but seeing Ellie spread out before her… Hunter decided her timing was perfect.

Ellie sat up slightly and ripped through the wrapping paper. She opened the small box and looked at Hunter questioningly.

Hunter took the small device. "I opened it to clean and charge it," she explained as she

nudged Ellie back, positioning herself between Ellie's legs. They were both already wet and ready, but Hunter wasn't done tasting her wife. "It slides over this area right here." She ran a finger over Ellie's clit. "Then these wings tuck in right here to keep it in place."

Ellie's breath caught when Hunter made a V with her fingers and stroked inside Ellie's folds. She gritted her teeth when Hunter bent her head and replaced her fingers with her tongue. And when Hunter sucked Ellie's clit into her mouth, Ellie nearly came right then and there.

Hunter backed off, not wanting Ellie to come just yet, smiling when Ellie protested with a quiet groan.

"Patience, baby. I got this little toy for us because it's hands-free." Hunter slipped the toy into place and turned it on.

Ellie jumped slightly. "Oh!"

"Nice?" Hunter smiled when Ellie merely nodded. "How about this?" She pushed the button again, increasing the intensity. Ellie's eyes fluttered closed, and her hips began to move slightly. She likes it. "There's one more speed, but…"

Hunter moved until their bodies were touching, legs wrapped around one another, and both of their clits rested against the vibrator. They could feel each other's wetness and the vibration between them. It was… exhilarating. Hunter cupped Ellie's breast, rolling the pad of her thumb over the stiffened nipple. Their hips moved in unison as they kissed, allowing their passion to take over.

With her other hand, Hunter reached between them and put the vibrator on the highest setting. As the power increased, so did Hunter's pressure on the nipple she was currently pinching. The erotic pleasure and pain of the dueling sensations caused Ellie to cry out. Their hips moved frantically against each other, and both women pulled and clawed at the other, desperate to get closer as they sped toward orgasm.

"Hunter!"

"Right there with you, baby!"

The new toy had both of them reaching that euphoric release in record time, clinging to each other as the climax rippled through them.

"Holy mother of…" Hunter panted, moving slightly so the vibrator wasn't hitting her overly-sensitive clit any longer.

“Hunter, turn it off! Please!” Ellie squirmed. The vibrator against her already throbbing clit was more than she could handle, and Ellie didn’t know whether she wanted to come again or yank the damn thing off and throw it across the room.

Hunter tried to get to the power button on the vibrator, but with Ellie wiggling around so much, it was almost impossible. “Baby, you have to stop moving.”

“I can’t! Oh my god.” Ellie squeezed her eyes shut. “Just take it out, Hunter.”

“It’s slippery. I can’t… I’m trying… Baby, just…” Hunter fumbled with the toy, trying desperately not to laugh.

“Don’t you dare laugh!” Ellie tried slapping Hunter’s hands out of the way so she could turn the thing off herself, but each time she moved, another jolt traveled through her clit into the rest of her body.

“I’m not laughing!” Hunter bit her lip.

“You’re laughing! I swear, Hunter Vale, this is going in you the next time!”

Next time?! Hunter had the audacity to smile. “Whatever you want, baby.”

“I want you to turn this thing… Ahh!” Another orgasm tore through Ellie. “You have got… to turn… it off!” she panted.

“On it!” Hunter threw her leg over Ellie and straddled her belly like a hysterical reverse cowgirl bucking bronco. Mindful of Ellie’s left hip, Hunter grabbed Ellie’s right leg, ducking and weaving so she wouldn’t get kicked in the face. This wasn’t what she had in mind when she came up with the panty clause. Then again, maybe it was. They were naked, wet, and having fun. “Hang on, I got it! Stop wiggling.”

“You try having this thing on full blast against your clit after you’ve come twice!”

Hunter faltered. It wasn’t often she heard Ellie speak like that. It was fucking hot!

“Hunter!”

“Got it!” Hunter managed to get to the power button and shut the vibrator off.

They were both panting heavily by the time it was over. Then Hunter felt shaking beneath her. Shit. Is Ellie crying? Hunter didn’t know how she’d make up for this one. Or if she could. Slowly, she lifted herself from Ellie and turned around just as Ellie snorted with laughter. Hunter couldn’t help but join in now that she knew everything was okay.

“You okay?”

Ellie held up her finger, practically hiccuping from laughing so hard. Once she finally got her breath back, she nodded. “I’m great. That was great.” She leaned over and kissed Hunter. “You’re still wearing it the next time.”

“Aye, aye, Captain!” Hunter grinned.

Ellie shook her head at her silly wife. “You know, if we’re going to keep doing things like this outside of the bedroom, we’re going to have to help Jessie find a place of her own.”

“Maybe we could get that contractor to build a guest house. That way, she won’t be too far, but she won’t be right here in this living room, either.”

Ellie loved how much Hunter loved Jessie. For someone who never dreamed of becoming a mother, Hunter was surprisingly great at it.

“Sounds like a plan.”

“Good. Playroom and guest house.Noted.” Hunter tapped her temple. Then she traced a finger between Ellie’s damp cleavage. “So… wanna do it again?”

Ellie flipped their positions. “Yes. I wanna do it again.”

“Are you sure Ellie won’t mind us being here for breakfast?” Claire asked while Jessie unlocked the front door.

“You know my mom, she loves to cook. She’ll be thrilled to have you all here.”

“Her French toast is bomb.” Dani rubbed their hands together, excited to have been invited to join Ellie’s family tradition.

“I don’t think I’ve ever had French toast,” Piper said, scrunching her nose in thought as she tried to remember if her mom had ever made it for her.

“I’m here for the biscuits and gravy,” Jules announced. When Jessie invited her, Jules almost declined because she wasn’t a fan of French toast. She preferred a more savory breakfast. Then Jessie mentioned Ellie made more than one thing, and one of those other things was biscuits and gravy. A gaggle of geese couldn’t stop Jules from being here.

“Now that we got that covered,” Jessie laughed. She opened the door, sniffing the air.

Odd. There should be an aroma of bacon and sausage filling the air. “Huh. I wonder if they’re sleeping in. That’d be a first for mom. She’s usually… oh… my… god.”

Ellie burrowed closer to Hunter, a faint frown forming even in sleep. Why was it so chilly? And what was that incessant noise?

“Mom! Wake up! Hunter!”

“What is going on?” Hunter groaned. She stretched, grimacing at the soreness between her legs.

“Mom!”

“Wha…?” Ellie stirred awake when Hunter moved. She blinked, squinting at the sun coming in through the… sliding glass doors? And the Christmas tree? They don’t have a Christmas tree in their bedroom. And why the hell was their bed so hard?

“Mom!”

Jessie’s voice finally penetrated through Ellie’s foggy brain. Ellie’s eyes focused, and, oh god, she wished they didn’t. Claire, Dani, Piper, and Jules stood there in her living room, hands over their eyes. And her daughter was staring at her with wide-eyed shock. Everything came flooding back to Ellie then. She and Hunter never made it to their bedroom. Instead, they spent the entire night making great use of their new toy. And then some. Oh no. The toy… the mess…

Ellie sat straight up, grabbing a pillow and clutching it to her naked chest. “Oh, fu…”