

**Twisted Love**  
**(Twisted Series Book 1)**  
**By JB Duvane**

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Please note that this work is intended only for adults over the age of 18.  
All characters are 18 or over.

**THIS IS A SAMPLE AND IS NOT FOR SALE**

## About Twisted Love:

**Sometimes a second chance at love isn't like anything you could have imagined, even in your wildest dreams.**

### **Damon:**

The only reason I'm back in this hell hole is because of her.  
I had to see Amber again, and I figured this reunion was my only chance.

I know she's the one.

The one I want with me forever.

I felt it back then, and I can feel it now.

But if she finds out too much too soon,  
about my lifestyle and who I am,  
she's going to run from me.

And if that happens ... I know I'll never see her again.

### **Amber:**

The entire room and everything in it fell away when I looked into his eyes.

He still has that effect on me, even after all these years.

I'll gladly do anything he wants.

Even though what he wants terrifies me.

But I can't say no to Damon.

Every fiber of my being wants to obey him.

And now I'm giving myself to a group of men while a room full of strangers  
watch.

How much more twisted can love get?

*Twisted Love includes scorching hot MMFM scenes involving one woman and multiple men, but in the end is a HEA romance between one woman and one man. It is a standalone novel of 43k words with no cliffhanger.*

*Reader discretion is definitely advised.*

## Chapter 1

### Damon

I never thought I'd be back here. Ever.

Everything looked exactly the same as when I left ten years ago. Well, *almost everything*. The same brick hallway, the same foyer where I'd wait for the bell to ring, the long hallway that led into the gym. That prison where I'd spent so much time running penalty laps for lack of participation and teamwork. Lots of great memories.

The people, on the other hand, were different now. I didn't recognize any of them and they certainly wouldn't recognize me. Not much new there.

In high school I wasn't one of the popular crowd but that never bothered me. I had a very small, tight-knit group of friends, and that was it. I'd always preferred to be a loner and never did well around crowds, so as far as I was concerned, the fewer people around me the better.

That part of me changed a bit once I got older. Being the head of a multi-billion-dollar company tends to bring people out of their shells, for better or worse. Although I don't know if anyone would consider making a speech in front of an elite crowd at a gala fundraiser as being the life of the party. Especially since, in the end, when the speeches were made and the tasks were delegated, I always found myself in the same place. Alone. Not that it bothered me in the least. I always preferred my own company over others who had nothing to say but said plenty anyway.

I made my way through the loud crowd of chattering voices and forced laughs. Most appeared to be couples; graduates of the class of '07' who had dragged their spouses along in order to have some company, and to show their former classmates that they had actually made something of themselves over the last ten years. There were also some outliers on the edge of the chatty groups; solo people who simply stood in place and used the glass in their hand to keep them company.

My eyes scanned the room, trying to place a face or even a laugh. There were some incredibly hot women scattered around and I wondered if they were some of my classmates that had bloomed into curvy babes, or if they were trophy wives here with their husbands. I didn't want any of them to think I was staring, though. None of them were really my type. I was really just trying to see if I could put a name to any of their faces.

No use.

Perhaps that was for the best. I wanted to keep a low profile while I was here. No one knew a thing about my financial situation or the tech start up that had made me my billions, and I planned to keep it that way. When I'd moved out of town after high school, I didn't tell a single one of my old friends where I was going or what my plans were. I'd wanted a fresh slate and that's what I got. I made absolutely sure my two worlds were kept as separate as was humanly possible.

"Damon."

A hand flashed above the crowd. I squeezed through, already knowing whose voice it was.

Kent had been one of my closest friends throughout my junior and senior year. One of my only friends, really. I'd been hoping he would show up and I gave him a big bear hug with a slap on the back. "It's good to see you, man. How long have you been here?"

"We just walked in. We're waiting at that table over there until they open up the gym."

"We?" I asked. "You're not still with—"

"Yep. Jessica and I have been married since the summer after we all graduated. Two kids and a house with a pool and everything."

"Wow, sounds sickeningly domestic," I said with a laugh. I was only partly joking, though. I had to admit it did sound nice in a way. I'd been wanting to settle down a bit for a while. I'd grown tired of the faceless stream of women parading through my bedroom night after night. I didn't necessarily want a house and kids, but something a little more stable. Something real.

Kent swung his arm over my shoulder and led me to their group. Jessica, a gorgeous blonde with a small ass and big tits, smiled at both of us when we reached the table. As much as I tried not to be too obvious, a hot body was always one of the first things I noticed in a woman.

There was another couple at the table too. I figured they must have been in their circle of friends from back in the day because they didn't look even remotely familiar to me. Like in high school, the cliques were always impossible to get away from.

"It's really good to see you, Damon. Surprised you showed up," Kent said as he gave me a slap on the back. He introduced me to the rest of the group, but before long, my eyes were darting around the room again.

"You look lost, Damon," Jessica said.

"I am lost. Who *are* all these people? You're the first ones here that I've recognized, or that seem to have recognized me."

"I have no idea," Kent said.

"Lots of faces. I feel like I should know the names of some," I said. "But then again . . ."

"But then again, you never said a goddamned word to ninety-nine percent of our graduating class. I was a hell of a lot more outgoing than you were and *I* barely know any of these people." Kent scanned the room again while pushing his hand through his hair. "They better have beer here. That's all I'm worried about."

"They *have* to have a bar in there," Jessica said.

Kent grinned at me and gave me an elbow in the side. "Might have to go back and steal some from my parents' house if they don't. Like in the good old days, huh? Getting our hands on some alcohol was always an adventure. Now it's just a walk to the bar. I have to admit it's lost a little of its charm."

"I don't know about that," I laughed. I still had my sights on the crowd, searching the faces and trying to find the one person that might make coming to this reunion the right decision. I'd gone back and forth over whether or not I'd attend the thing since the invitation came in the mail to my parents' house over a month ago. When I made it out, part of me wanted to never set foot back in this town or see any of these people again, but another part of me was curious. I wanted to know if *she* would be here.

Kent told me about his job and their kids and the life he'd made for himself since graduating. But luckily he didn't go on and on about himself. He seemed to want to know more about me too. We used to be good friends. If I had time, I'd really like to meet up with Kent and Jessica after all of this was over. It would be nice to catch up and spend time with someone other than yes men and investors. I'd have to avoid certain questions but it would be worth it.

Jessica gave me a knowing smile. "Hey, see anyone you remember yet? Now's your chance to go for what you missed out on in high school."

"Right," I said begrudgingly. I hated that she or anyone knew about my childhood crush. Although calling it a childhood crush wasn't even true. I was a man now and there were times when I still couldn't get those beautiful eyes of hers out of my mind.

"Don't tell me you're single, Damon," she said, knowing I was uncomfortable but seeming to enjoy tormenting me. "It doesn't look like you brought anyone with you."

I shifted from one foot to the other, the old feelings of wanting to duck out of the room just to get away from any kind of questions flooding over me. "No, there's no one special. What about that drink?" I asked, looking around the room again. "Think they have anything set up out here?"

"Look at him," Jessica joked with an elbow to Kent's side. "He's trying to change the subject."

I laughed and looked around the room some more, hoping they would get off the subject. But it didn't look like they were going to give up that easy.

"See her out there?" Kent asked. "Your old crush, what was her name again?" He and Jessica were clearly enjoying torturing me.

"Oh come on you guys, you know I was too cool for crushes," I said.

"Yeah, you were a real rebel, Damon ... a loner." Kent joked. "I'll tell ya, though. I don't think you'll have any problems picking someone up now, even an old crush. You really cleaned yourself up."

I gave Kent an exaggerated glare. I wasn't thrilled with the direction this conversation had taken, or the fact that I had become the butt of their jokes, but what could I expect? I'd been in love with Amber since the third grade and they both knew it. The day she hung upside down on the jungle gym and I saw her panties in all their glory was the day she won my pervy little heart. And she never had a clue.

Every day during recess I would hang around in the general vicinity of her and her friends just to catch another glimpse. Even at that age I knew what I was doing was a little messed up. But seeing something I wasn't supposed to, there was no bigger thrill.

That's definitely something that hasn't changed.

That early experience turned into a longing that filled me and had me completely obsessed by the time I was twelve. I would follow Amber around the halls in between classes, always careful to hang back far enough to not be seen. And some days I would walk a block behind her all the way to her home, then stand across the street and watch her bedroom window until the sun went down and the lights in the entire house went out.

Just the memory of how obsessed I'd been with her made my face grow hot, especially with Kent giving me shit over her. And he never even knew the extent of my obsession. I never told a soul. But the jokes and looks from Kent and Jessica were right on the money, and I knew it. No matter how hard I'd worked over the last ten years, no matter how much sweat I'd put into the business to put me on the

Fortune 500 list before I turned thirty, I hadn't been able to stop thinking about Amber.

I'd tried to convince myself early on, after she was accepted at a college in another state, that my feelings for her would fade. That they were silly fantasies about a childish crush and I didn't have time for any of that. But the night of the graduation party changed everything. That kiss in the dim light of the bowling alley parking lot was seared onto my brain, and as much as I hated to admit it, into my heart. I eventually had to acknowledge that it had been way more than a silly crush all along.

The only thing I could think to do at this point was avoid Kent's goofy looks and change the conversation. So I tried to be polite with Jessica's friends at the table—girls whose names sounded vaguely familiar but faces I still couldn't place. I fell into an inane conversation about the weather in a city I pretended to live in, but barely anything that was said registered with me. My mind was elsewhere.

"Hey, Jessie!" a high-pitched voice screamed halfway across the crowded room.

I looked up at two women who were walking toward Jessica, one with her head turned to speak with someone. The one facing forward was Christie Jorgensen, former prom queen, who was dressed like she was trying to resurrect her title. She had on a floor-length gown that was covered in silver sequins, much too extravagant for this type of event.

My heart leapt into my throat when the woman walking with Christie turned around to face our table. It was her, Amber Vaughn, and she immediately took my breath away. She didn't look like she'd aged a day since the last time I saw her. My knees grew weak at the memory of my hands wrapped around her waist and my lips on hers.

Her long, dark hair still looked slightly tousled, like it had back then. Throughout high school, she always looked like she'd just woken up from a nap, or had two hands gripping her hair while a cock slammed into her from behind. At least that's what I'd always pictured, anyway.

And here I was again, imagining one of my hands pulling her head back while the other gripped her round ass and my cock slid between her shaved pussy lips. With every step she took closer to the table, I pictured myself slamming into her, her ass jiggling and the deep moans that escaped from her throat in between her screams of my name.

By the time Amber reached the table I had pulled the knot on my tie a good two inches looser and unbuttoned my collar just so I could breathe. I was glad that the

table shielded my thickening cock for now, but I had to make sure things didn't get out of hand. Not yet, at least. Not until I was alone with her.

Christie and Jessica had no problem catching up on their lives since graduation. The second they started talking, a non-stop barrage of squeals and exaggerated laughs assaulted my ears. But apart from saying hello to Jessica and Kent, Amber didn't say a word. Her deep, blue eyes seemed to be avoiding mine, but after a minute of darting around the table, they finally rested on me.

"Damon," she said in that deep voice of hers that always melted into me like warm butter. "You look incredible. How are you?"

I was starting to wonder how bad I'd looked in high school if everyone kept saying how great I looked now.

I wasn't positive, but it seemed like she'd come alone. There was no ring on her finger, which was apparently *de rigueur* for the other women of her age, at least at this reunion. I wondered if she was still living in the town we grew up in or if she'd moved on to someplace a little more sophisticated.

I'd promised myself that I would stop thinking about business during this week off. Everyone at work told me I needed to take a vacation and relax or else I might burn out. It was pointed out by my office assistant that I hadn't taken a vacation in over six years. She was wrong. She'd only been with me for six years. I hadn't ever taken a vacation.

But the possibility of seeing Amber again ... that was enough to convince me. So I blocked the time out of my calendar and booked a hotel, all the while wondering if she would be here. Wondering what it would be like to look into those incredible eyes of hers one more time.

The moment they met mine I knew I'd made the right decision. And this time I wasn't going to let Amber Vaughn get away.

## Chapter 2

### Amber

What the hell am I doing back here?

I never thought I'd come back to this idiotic place. When I left for college, I couldn't pack my bags fast enough, and every time I came back to town for the holidays, I barely left my parents' house. I just couldn't bear the thought of running into any of these people again. Especially one person in particular. And yet here I was, wading through a crowd of fake smiles and fake conversations. At least that's the way it felt.

I wasn't interested in hearing any of the big stories these people were doling out. I didn't particularly want to get to know what any of them were doing. And I especially didn't want any of these people to know a thing about my life now. Nothing real anyway.

But somehow Christie managed to talk me into keeping her company at this stupid reunion. I wondered if anyone would recognize me. I had a whole life worked out in my head that I'd created to throw them off the track if anyone started asking questions. Not that I had anything to hide; I just had no interest in being the old Amber Vaughn anymore. But maybe the problem was, I didn't really want to be the new Amber either.

I'd been a total bookworm back in high school. I probably would still qualify as one since I usually averaged about two or three books a week. I hadn't changed much in the looks category since high school, though. The main difference being that I cared a lot more about what I wore now. In high school, even though I had a pretty face and a nice body, I tended to hide it underneath plain clothes with no makeup. I was always scared of boys back then and tried not to attract too much attention.

But romance was still a scary prospect for me. In the years since I'd left school I'd been involved with a few guys, but just one serious relationship. Of course, because it was such a huge fear of mine, he cheated on me and I was humiliated. I swore off men after that and I certainly wasn't planning on finding anyone at a silly high school reunion.

But my mind kept wandering to Damon. I had to admit I'd wondered on more than one occasion what became of him. When Christie begged me to come with her, he was the only person I thought it would be nice to see, even though that

thought also terrified me.

Getting involved with a man was the last thing I wanted or needed at this point in my life, though. I had a decent job, plenty of hobbies, and for once in my life, I felt satisfied. The one thing that was missing was passion and excitement, but I did a good job of convincing myself that I didn't really need it. I got enough from the books I read with their tall, dark, and handsome men whisking women off to a secluded castle in the countryside. Especially if the woman's dress was somehow ripped off of her in the process. As far as I was concerned, that was all I needed to keep me company.

Christie peered around at the crowd. It was still astounding to me that I'd wound up best friends with the prom queen. No one in the entire school could believe it was true. Actually, none of them knew who I was, so whenever Christie would mention my name, the common response was 'Amber who?' It never bothered me, though. I mostly hung out with Christie in her parents' basement, watching horror movies and listening to her dad's old records. When we were at school it was like we existed in different dimensions.

Christie was obviously much more outgoing than I was. While she scanned the room for people to get reacquainted with, I kept my eyes lowered and tried to make myself as invisible as possible.

"Where's the bar? I really need a drink," I said, my voice sounding more sullen than I'd intended.

"Shh...I'm cock-gazing," Christie said, her eyes scanning the room.

"Oh brother. You're seriously cruising our old senior class? There's nothing here you haven't seen before, Christie. It's all the same boring people telling the same lies to make themselves feel better about the bad choices they've made."

"Yeah, you're right," Christie said, falling back down onto her heels with a sigh. "I guess I was just hoping for some hot high school reunion sex. Maybe in the gym? Under the bleachers?" she said with a laugh.

"You'll probably wind up in the men's room bent over the toilet."

"Actually, that doesn't sound half bad." Christie smiled and grabbed my arm, then gave me a playful shake. "You need to relax, Amber. This could be fun. Get rid of that scrunched up forehead and the scowl you've got on your face and at least pretend like you want to talk to someone. Do you think they have wine here?"

"Oh, they better." If I didn't get a drink in me soon, I was going to sneak outside and sit in the car for the rest of the night.

Christie stood on her toes again, peering off into the crowd.

"See anything?"

"No ..." she said, holding onto my wrist to keep from falling over. "It looks like maybe ... oh wait! There's Jessica and Kent! Let's go see them first." Christie pulled on my hand but my legs wouldn't move. I looked up in the direction she was pulling me and I saw Jessica and Kent, but I also saw someone else. Damon Andrews.

"Is that Damon with them?" she asked. "Damon Andrews? I always had a crush on him."

"Really?" I asked. "You never told me that."

"Well, he was a little different. Not really the football team types I would normally date. But I always thought he was so hot. You know, that strong, silent type. The type that would throw you around a little once they got you into bed. Plus, I knew you had a major thing for him and I never wanted to hone in on your big crush."

I glared at Christie, but what she said was true. I'd always had a thing for Damon Andrews. Especially after the night of the graduation party. The way he towered over me in that dark parking lot, pressing me up against the wall and taking control.

He had always been so shy and reserved. All throughout high school I would see him sitting on top of a cafeteria table with his back against the wall reading some deep, philosophical book while everyone in the room kept their distance. He was always the odd guy out.

But that night, when he pulled my body up against his and his mouth pressed into mine, he turned my world on its side. I can still remember exactly how he tasted, and some nights when I'm lying in bed, alone in the dark, that kiss still haunts me.

It had been so long, so I wasn't sure how I'd feel if I actually did see him here. But when Christie said his name, all the feelings from that night outside the bowling alley came flooding back.

"Good Lord, what happened to him? He looks amazing." I couldn't stop Christie from dragging me across the room anymore so I just gave up and walked with her. I kept turning and looking behind me, though, because I didn't want to see those eyes of Damon's. I was afraid of what they'd do to me. Even after all these year.

From all the way across the room it was obvious how much he'd changed. Damon had been tall and quiet and good-looking in high school. A little goofy too,

which I'd always liked. But now ... now he was gorgeous.

"Are you sure that's him?" I asked, still trying futilely to hide myself and pretend I wasn't interested.

"It has to be. He and Kent were best friends. Wow, that lanky body of his really filled out."

I glanced up again and took a better look. His shoulders were wide and strong under the tailored suit he wore. And he had an air of confidence now that was striking. He was standing back, still keeping to the outskirts of the conversation, just like in high school. But now he looked so much more comfortable, like he'd grown into his own skin. It was almost as if he were commanding that corner of the room without doing or saying a thing.

The closer I got to the table the more intense the feeling between my legs became. And even as terrified as I was about the feelings inside me, I knew I had to talk to him. But when I looked closer, I saw that Damon was talking to one of the girls at the table.

"Who's he talking to?" Christie asked. "Ugh, it looks like Maggie Dayton."

I recognized Maggie, too. She'd always been one of the most popular girls in high school. I hated how being back here brought out those ridiculous feelings. We weren't in high school anymore and there were no 'popular' girls in real life, but seeing the way Maggie swooned over Damon made my blood boil. I didn't want any of these people to be here anymore. I wished it could just be me and Damon, alone.

"Yeah, it's her all right," Christie said with a sigh.

"Maybe we should go find a drink first," I said, stopping her in her tracks.

"Oh, come on. She's not that bad. Besides, we're all adults now. None of these people are the same assholes they were in high school."

"How do you know that?" I asked.

"I don't. I'm just hoping. Look, you know you want to see him."

"What?" I said, trying to act like I had no idea what she was talking about, but feeling a tell-tale blush start to creep across my face.

"Don't give me that. You've had a crush on Damon Andrews since we were in grade school."

"No, I have not."

Christie folded her arms and laughed. "And who exactly are you trying to convince, with that red face and those big, innocent eyes? Come on, now's your chance. You hardly ever come back to town and you're never going to be in the

same room with these people again ... including him. Besides, what do you have to lose?"

Christie was right. I needed to take a chance. I didn't know any of these people anymore, so who cared what they thought. Especially Maggie Dayton. I was going to walk right up to that table and I was going to talk to Damon.

"But what if he doesn't remember me?"

"If he doesn't remember the old you, he's definitely going to notice the new you. You look fabulous, Amber. You've got a body that doesn't quit, every inch of it defying gravity. And that dress tells no lies. You're going to knock him dead. Maggie doesn't stand a chance."

I hesitated for just a minute longer, trying to come up with at least one solid argument for why I should disappear with a bottle of cognac, but the feeling inside me propelled me forward. From where we were standing, I could see Damon's fierce, dark eyes; the darkest eyes I'd ever seen in my life. Back in high school and ever since. And every fiber of my being wanted to look into them while they were on me. The way they burned into me when he looked down at me that night.

"I'll go say hello after he's done talking to her."

"No, you're going *now*," Christie said. She grabbed my hand again and pulled me toward the table, yelling from halfway across the room at Jessica and Kent.

I could feel my legs shaking as I approached the table where Damon stood, and it was a full minute before I could make my eyes look up at his. But when I did, the rest of the world fell away. Every single sound and person that surrounded the two of us was gone, and all that was left were those dark eyes of his, and the smile that was slowly spreading across his handsome face.

## Chapter 3

### Damon

I wasn't really interested in talking to Maggie Dayton but she kept asking me questions, and although I'd stopped giving a damn about hurting anyone's feelings a long time ago, I felt a strange compulsion to be polite at this reunion. She kept asking questions about my career and even went so far as to ask how much I made last year. I just fed her one line after the other, though. Sort of a reverse pick-up-artist act, if you will. I told her I was pleased with my earnings, especially after working in the custodial department of a large marketing firm for five years and finally getting a fifty cent an hour raise. She didn't look too happy after that and I was secretly beaming on the inside.

When Amber showed up at the table, Maggie might as well have become invisible. I couldn't take my eyes off of Amber's hypnotic blue eyes and I could barely breathe as my eyes followed the dark strands of her hair as they curled around each of her breasts. She wasn't dressed anywhere near as over the top as the woman next to her, but what she had on showed off her incredible body in ways that blew my mind.

I brushed past Maggie to give Amber a hug, and as I did, I saw in the corner of my eye that she gave Amber a glare. I wondered what that was about for a split second, but when my body came within a few inches of Amber's, the rest of the world fell away.

She looked surprised at first, and I didn't blame her. We hadn't been very good friends in high school, definitely not good enough to warrant a hug after a ten-year absence. But those feelings that had flooded my body the night we kissed were back in full force and I wasn't going to let this opportunity pass me by. This time I was prepared to do anything it took to make Amber mine. I wasn't going to hide in a corner with headphones drowning out the world or worry if anyone was laughing. After seducing God knows how many women—in the hundreds, at least—I knew I had the confidence now, and was planning on using every ounce of it tonight.

My hands slipped around Amber's waist and I heard her breath suck in sharply as I pulled her into me. I felt her hands land gingerly on my shoulders, but within seconds they were wrapped around my neck, her fingers grazing the hair on the back of my head. It was just like we were back in that parking lot and my entire

body tingled with anticipation.

"You're the one that looks incredible, Amber," I said in a low voice into her ear. "You don't look a day older than you did the last time I saw you." I pulled back, but let my hands linger on her waist. She didn't move away from me either, and for a long moment we stared into each other's eyes. "You remember that night, don't you?" I wasn't going to hold anything back. I was out for the kill.

"Yes, of course I remember," she whispered up to me. But the spell was suddenly broken when Amber looked back at the table and realized that everyone could hear what she was saying. "I ... uh ... thank you, Damon. I suppose I try to take care of myself." She pulled her hands down off my shoulders and took a step back. I waited another couple of beats—allowing myself to tower over her for a long moment—before I took my hands off of her waist and stepped back myself. I'd completely forgotten that Maggie Dayton was still sitting at the table behind me and I backed into her.

When I turned around I saw the glare she was giving Amber again. "Very practical dress, Amber. Something you could wear for work, then out to a club, or to take out the garbage." I recognized that tone very well. It was the catty side of Maggie leaping out and it was directed right at Amber. Apparently Maggie thought she had a chance with me, although where she got that idea I have no idea.

"Yeah, I don't think I'm dressed very well for tonight," Amber said with a pink tinge on her cheeks. "It was a last minute decision. Christie—"

"I wouldn't take no for an answer," the prom queen piped up. "I couldn't come back here without my best friend."

I watched the way Amber smiled at the floor. She was always so shy and down to earth. She could have been wearing a t-shirt and jeans and those silly athletic sneakers she'd always worn back in the day and I'd still find her irresistible.

The small talk between Christie and Jessica continued and before long the subject of careers came up again.

"Damon, you look like you've done well for yourself," Christie purred across the table. "What do you do?"

I'd completely forgotten the story I'd given Maggie not fifteen minutes before and told the group that I owned a small marketing firm. It wasn't a complete lie, since I did own one. What I neglected to mention was that it was part of the second largest internet tech conglomerate in the world.

"Oh really?" said that catty voice just behind me and to my right. "So you own it now?" I turned my head and saw the look on Maggie's face, and it was not a

happy one.

She stood up quickly and grabbed her purse off the table.

"Are you leaving so soon?" I asked, in a slightly mocking tone. I was suddenly enjoying myself too much to hold back. "It was great catching up. Don't be a stranger."

Maggie turned that glare on me this time and scowled, her cheeks turning a bright red at being obviously lied to and rejected.

"Yes, it was nice seeing you all again."

She huffed away and it took a bit of effort not to laugh out loud. But the second my eyes landed on Amber again, Maggie was forgotten.

"What's up with her?" I heard Christie ask, then a flurry of whispers passed back and forth between her and Jessica. But none of that crap interested me in the least. The world slipped away when I heard that sultry voice and saw Amber's perfect lips move again.

"The past ten years have been really good to you, Damon."

Her voice reminded me of one you'd hear from a classic movie star, like in the black and white movies I would watch late at night after my date for the evening finally left and I was alone. Amber's was smooth and deep, and incredibly sexy. I'd forgotten until I heard it again how much it used to turn me on.

"Well, I try," I said, raising an eyebrow and giving her a playful smirk. I couldn't help but notice the way her eyes roamed over my jacket, then lower, down the length of my dark pants, pausing on the way back up at my cock. I knew by the tingles I felt that it was still partially erect, and much more visible through the fabric of these pants. Her face flushed when she glanced back up into my eyes, realizing she'd been caught checking out my package.

"Did you come with a husband? Boyfriend? Date?" I asked, cutting to the chase. With that look she'd just given me I was banking on a very early night for the two of us.

"I'm here with Christie."

I paused for a moment as I thought about all of the times I hadn't seen Amber with a guy. And there were a lot. "You're *with* Christie"?

"Oh, it's not like that," she said, laughing. "I'm not *with* anyone. I'm a happily single woman."

"Okay, you had me worried there for a moment. Not that you and Christie wouldn't be a great couple. It's just that I would've never thought ..."

"You can say it, a lot of people back then used to think I was a lesbian. The

flannel, the short haircut— "

"The not being interested in men part as well," Damon added.

"Hey! I liked men. I didn't like boys."

"To be honest, when I look around at what there was to pick from in our class, I don't blame you at all. I always respected you for that, you know?"

"You did?" Amber smiled, then looked a little uncomfortable again, then made a quick change in the conversation back to a lighthearted joke. "Anyway, Christie and I would be a terrible couple. I don't even know how we were friends in high school or how we've stayed friends all these years."

"They do say that opposites attract."

"Sometimes they do." Amber's big, beautiful eyes stayed on mine for another long moment while she almost swayed in place. She suddenly seemed so shy and mysterious, and those were some of the qualities that had drawn me to her years ago. Underneath her shyness I could always feel that there were some hidden secrets. Secrets that I now had every intention of uncovering.

"Are you here with someone?" Amber finally asked, her voice barely above a whisper.

"Nope, single as well."

"That's surprising," she said, looking down at the floor.

"Why's that?"

Before she could answer, the gym doors swung open. The crowd silenced as someone made an announcement regarding the band that would be playing but I couldn't hear any of it. I wasn't really interested in the reunion anymore anyway. I'd already found what I came for.

I turned to Amber. "Shall we go in? Or ..."

"Or what? Do you want to get out of here?"

"The thought had crossed my mind," I said with a sly smile. I could barely wait to get her alone. My mind was reeling with all of the things I planned to do with her. Images of her tied up and blindfolded being at the top of the list. But very close behind was watching her face while I made her come. That I couldn't wait to see.

"Maybe we should at least make an appearance in there. Have a drink ... take a look around?" By the end of her sentence, her statement came out as more of a question. Almost as if she were asking my permission. The tone in her voice and the way she looked up at me sent a throbbing need straight to my cock. But I didn't want to rush her, and I had to admit a drink sounded good.

"Okay, one drink. Then you're mine."

Amber's eyes flared and I swear she stopped breathing for a full minute before a smile curled up in the corner of her mouth. "Okay."

I grabbed her hand and we headed in together. I kept her close by my side, guiding her through the crowd. My instinct was to protect what was mine, and Amber now fell squarely in that category.

We stepped inside the old gym that was now transformed into a ballroom. The lights were set low, dropping from the ceiling and covered in rings of glittering metal. It made the room, and the light in Amber's eyes, practically glow.

We passed right by tables brimming with food platters and another with a fountain of chocolate. It wasn't the most extravagant fountain I'd ever seen, but the fact that they'd added one at this small-town high school reunion was a nice touch. Amber definitely seemed impressed.

As we wandered through the crowd, I wondered if the school had even put any of this together. It occurred to me that it was most likely the work of a graduate who had stayed local; someone who wanted to impress everyone with their hefty donation. The thought made me want to laugh. Sure, it was a nice reception for a small town like this, but in my world this was child's play.

And I couldn't wait to show Amber my world.

Especially when I watched her sparkling eyes scan the room. She was spectacular. And I couldn't wait to see her under even more impressive lights than these.

Neither of us were even remotely hungry so we headed straight for the bar at the back of the room. A stage had been set up on the left where a band played random covers that sounded familiar but held little interest to me. Amber looked like she was really enjoying herself. What I enjoyed more than anything else was watching her reaction to the surroundings. I couldn't wait to impress her with all the surprises I had in store.

When we reached the bar I grabbed two flutes of champagne and turned to hand one to Amber, standing close to her while she took her first sip.

I watched the tightness in her shoulders melt away with that simple act. I imagined all of the tension she had bundled up inside unwinding slowly with what I had in store for her. I couldn't stop my mind from wandering to her soft body moving underneath mine as I entered her and made her scream my name. My cock twitched and started to harden again with that thought.

*No. Not here. Not yet.* I thought to myself as I took a long drink from my glass.

"It's good," she said, keeping contact with my eyes.

"If you like this, I can't wait to show you what's in my cellar."

"Wine cellar?"

"Yes," I said, smiling at my own private joke. "Among other things."

## Chapter 4

### Amber

Damon grabbed two more glasses of champagne off the bar and handed me my second. I'd only planned on having one drink, but now that I was with Damon, I honestly didn't care about anything.

I hadn't planned on staying long. In fact, I really did think I'd wind up hiding in Christie's car for the majority of the evening. But now, with Damon looking down at me and standing so close, I wanted to stay much longer, as long as I was with him.

With each sip of champagne I became more and more relaxed. I hadn't realized it, but I'd really been on edge earlier. First, the anticipation of seeing everyone, then Maggie Dayton fawning all over Damon and simultaneously giving me a dig over my dress. I knew it was silly, but it made me feel kind of inadequate. But all of that seemed like hours ago.

"Where are you staying tonight?"

I was caught off guard by the question. I knew he wanted to leave soon but my mind hadn't quite gone that far yet. It hadn't even occurred to me that Damon would wonder where I—or both of us—would be sleeping.

He seemed to notice my hesitation to answer. "What I mean is, do you still live here in town? Or are you at a hotel? I'm at the Lakeshore near the promenade."

"So you're out of town now?" I asked, avoiding the original question.

"Yes, out of town."

I was starting to like this game of his. The seductive question and short answers that kept both players on their toes. He sure played it well. "What about that wine cellar of yours, then?"

"It's there. In my house. Are you interested in seeing it?" Damon's eyes sparkled with anticipation while he waited for my answer. I was starting to feel woefully out of my league.

"You still haven't answered my question."

"I still live here. So I'm staying at my place ... here in town." I could feel my cheeks flushing.

"Well, we've had our drink," Damon said. I could feel his hot breath on my neck as his face inched closer to mine.

"You want to leave? Right now?" I was a little embarrassed with the way my

voice cracked, but everything about him was intimidating. I couldn't believe this was the same Damon Andrews. He had barely touched me and my panties were soaking wet. And things had been dry as the Sahara down there for so long I'd forgotten what that even felt like. I closed my eyes and believed that his voice alone could probably make me come. Then I thought about his fingers running down my spine and his hands grabbing my ass; thoughts I'd had more than once over the last ten years. When I opened my eyes again he was staring down at me, his lips just inches from mine.

Suddenly memories came flooding back to me. Memories of his intensity and the way my body used to tingle all over whenever he was near. I remembered one time in particular, watching him when he was reading in the cafeteria. For the most part he held the cover down and I couldn't see it, but there was one moment when he moved the book up and I saw the name.

It was called *The Story of O*. I didn't know anything about it then, but ran across it years later when I was in college. When I devoured the book in one sitting, I couldn't help but think about him. While I read, I pictured Damon doing every one of the things that were written about in that book, and I imagined that he was doing them to me.

And looking up at him in that moment, I blushed when I realized that's what I'd wanted for years. Almost as if I'd been waiting for him.

A screech in the PA system cut through the buzz of the crowd and made me jump. It was a bit of a relief, though. I had no idea what to think of Damon. Of what he wanted with me. As I downed the remainder of my glass, I wondered if this was going to be a one-night thing. I thought maybe I could do that—something casual. He lived in another town, so the chances of this going anywhere were pretty much nonexistent. And for some reason that thought gave me more courage. I didn't have to worry where this was going, or if he would eventually hurt me like all the other guys. I decided I could just let myself have fun for once.

A blonde woman was helped up onto the stage by one of the band members. She wore a stunning gown that twisted around her with every movement and threatened to split at the seams more than once. After she hoisted herself up, she walked over to the microphone that had been dropped on the floor, picked it up, and tapped it to see if it was on. The dull thud echoed throughout the room.

"Hello, fellow Jaguars!"

Applause rang out from the crowd, with some of the former football players and cheerleaders giving a roar of approval. It felt like a pep rally all over again.

"Thank you all for coming out tonight. It's so wonderful to see everyone again. I'm not very good at speeches so I thought I would let the pictures do the talking for me. I thought it'd be nice for us to remember what brought us here today, so I made a slide show that'll hopefully bring back some memories. Thanks everyone. Keep drinking and eating, and go Jaguars!"

Another cheer from the crowd, then the lights dimmed as a screen lowered from the rafters and the slide show started up. The band on stage continued on with slower versions of the top-forty-from-ten-years-ago covers they'd been playing.

Damon gave me an alarmed look and shook his head and I couldn't help myself from busting out laughing.

He took my glass and set them both down on the bar, then grabbed my hand. "You want to skip school with me?"

I smiled and that was all he needed. Damon pulled me through the darkened room toward the exit, weaving his way through the crowd.

Just before we slipped through the doors, I turned and watched as the first slide appeared on the screen. It was an image of the woman who had been on stage with her friends, of course. The chances of either of us showing up in any of those pictures was close to zero, so there was no point at all in staying. Especially not with the way Damon was making me feel.

I hadn't felt anything even close to what he was bringing up in me since ... well, since high school.

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Things were getting interesting very quickly. I'd gone from dreading setting foot in that damned reunion to thanking my lucky stars that Christie made me come with her, all in a matter of hours. And now I was giggling while escaping through the parking lot with a man I barely knew, but simultaneously felt like I'd known all my life.

I wasn't used to making these kinds of rash decisions, although I supposed Damon was the one that had actually made this one for me when he grabbed my hand and led me out. My lack of an answer to his question was clearly taken as agreeing to flee the party with him, which was oddly comforting. I didn't want to admit it, but I secretly liked the way he took charge, and I wondered how far that controlling attitude extended.

The comfort and overwhelming bliss that surrounded me as he wrapped his

fingers around mine was too good to break away from, even though it was reaching a scary level of intimacy for me. Still, it didn't matter where Damon was headed at that moment; if he was taking me, I was coming along. I was going to close my eyes and let him lead me.

His grip was sturdy and strong, with just enough pressure that I knew he was in complete control.

"I can't believe we're doing this," I said, starting to pant. I wasn't out of breath because we'd been walking quickly, although for each long stride of his, I took two quick steps. I was breathing heavy because of the excitement and exhilaration of feeling free. Normally, I would have sat through something like that god-awful slide show out of politeness, but I felt like such a bad kid running out the way we did. It felt like the two of us were in on something together. Our great escape.

"You better believe it. There isn't enough money in the world to make me sit through something like that. I have no interest in reliving those awful high school years."

We came to an incredibly shiny, black car with tinted windows and I felt like I was in some kind of a movie when Damon opened the passenger side door and held it open for me. I paused for a moment before I climbed inside, turning and looking up at him in the moonlight. I was already starting to feel things I didn't want to feel for him and the look in his eyes scared me.

"Trust me, we made the right decision."

"You seem awfully sure of yourself." I turned and ducked down into the soft leather seat of the luxury car. I watched him walk around the front and wondered what the hell happened to him. I realize that I didn't know him very well back in high school, but now he was like a completely different person. He'd become the kind of man I'd always dreamt about. It was as if he'd walked straight out of one of those romance novels I read every night.

"It happens a lot."

"What's that?" I asked.

"Being sure of myself. It's what I do now."

"Oh," I said, taking a hard gulp.

I sat there and wondered how sure Damon was about me. I wondered what kind of plans he had for me when he got me back to his hotel. He pulled a phone out of his pocket and texted someone, then started the car.

I rubbed my legs together under my dress, the friction causing them to clamp together tightly. I was dripping wet and could feel the excitement traveling up and

down my thighs. Every single word that came out of his mouth made me want to hop right in his lap and all I could do was hope that he couldn't see how aroused I was.

As the car pulled out of the parking lot, I looked at the side-view mirror and watched my old high school drift off into the distance. I couldn't help but be happy about this adventure, but silly thoughts kept spinning around in my mind. It had been so long since I'd been naked in front of a man and I was afraid I wouldn't measure up. I had no idea what kinds of women Damon dated, but something told me he was a hot commodity.

"You're awfully quiet over there."

I continued to look out the window so that I could have an excuse to avoid his gaze.

"Just checking out the scenery." I realized too late that I was gripping the sides of the leather chair and when I let go my palms were covered in sweat.

"What scenery are you checking out? It's pitch-black out there. Is everything okay?"

"Yes, everything's fine."

"By the looks of those sweaty palms I'd say everything isn't fine. Am I making you nervous, Amber?"

I didn't want to ruin everything, the moment or this night, but I suddenly felt like things were going way too fast.

"I just ... I don't want you to get the wrong idea."

"Wrong idea about what?"

I bit my lip and continued to look out the window. I wanted to explain, but I felt like no matter what I said I'd come off as a tease. I didn't know why I couldn't just let things happen. Why I couldn't just close my eyes and let him take the lead. I wanted to so badly, but once my brain started in with its monkey antics again, my adventurous side shut right down.

I knew it was just stupid fear. And the thing I was suddenly afraid of the most was how much I wanted to be with him.

"Will you look at me?"

I let out a deep sigh and turned my head to meet Damon's eyes.

"What's the matter? Did I say something wrong?"

"No, it's not that. It's just ... this is all happening so fast. Hopping into your car and heading straight to your hotel. I don't do things like this."

He smiled and gently put his hand on my thigh, which sent a bolt of lightning

straight to the wet space between my legs. I sucked in my breath and gripped the seat again. All I could feel was the tingling sensation where his hand was touching me. That and my heart just about pounding out of my chest.

"Relax. We're going to my place. That's all. We won't do anything you don't want. I promise. Do you always worry so much or is this a special occurrence?"

I laughed nervously and took a deep breath when his hand slid off my thigh. "It's pretty special. I haven't been out with a guy in quite a while."

"That's surprising. You're funny, incredibly beautiful, smart. What's stopping you?"

What's always stopped me? I didn't want my life to sound as pathetic as I knew it did, so I lied. "I've got a lot on my plate right now. You know, juggling a lot of different things. Too many hobbies, too much work." I almost cringed at what was coming out of my mouth. I felt like one of those people at the reunion, yammering on and on about nothing real. What I really wanted was to hear more about what he thought of me. Funny, beautiful, smart? It almost knocked the wind out of me to hear him say those words.

"What about you?" I asked. "You said you're single too. How come?"

"Hold that thought. We're almost there."

"We're almost to the hotel?" I said, looking out the window.

"We're almost to our next stop."

"What do you mean next stop. We're not going to your place?"

The car turned off of the freeway and onto the exit for the airport.

"Wait, I thought you said you were staying on the promenade. We're headed toward the airport."

"I've got a surprise for you."

"What?"

He turned into the airport parking lot and passed multiple cars that were unloading at the curb.

"What's the surprise?"

That word put me a little on edge, especially since I wasn't a fan of flying, or anything having to do with airports in general.

"Just keep your pants on," Damon said with a sexy grin. "We're almost there."

We headed past the parking lot and turned down a side lane that took us to the back of the airport. Damon flashed something to a guard in a small booth and a gate went up.

We drove right onto the blacktop where the massive airplanes were parked, one

even taxiing next to them toward the runway. Whatever reason they were headed in that direction, I hoped it didn't have anything to do with flying. The odds were probably against me, though. Damon didn't seem like the type to take a joy ride on an airport runway.

Damon calmly wove his way down marked lanes, weaving around the mammoth silver jets and luggage trollies. Another security attendant stopped him, checked his plates, then waved him through to another runway. This one had a sleek, silver jet waiting on it with its engine running. Damon drove up to the airstairs and turned the key, cutting off the engine. "Here we are."

"What do you mean? What are we doing here? Are you a *pilot*?"

He smiled and raised an eyebrow, like he had a lot of secrets, this one being just the tip of the iceberg. "No, but it *is* my jet. Come on, let's go."

He got out of the car before I could respond. Just about everything that came out of his mouth now put me in a temporary state of shock. He walked around the car and opened my door, then held out his arm.

I pulled myself together and stepped out onto the airport blacktop. "Wait, you own a jet? Are you serious?"

"I own a lot of things."

He turned and led me to the stairs that were attached to the jet, but stopped short when my feet refused to take another step.

"Wait a second," I said, sounding angrier than I'd intended. "You're going to need to explain this to me."

Damon sighed. He turned to me as another plane took off in the distance.

"Look, I'm sorry I didn't tell you earlier, but I wasn't interested in letting anyone at the reunion in on my private life. I have a lot of money, Amber."

"Oh," I said, trying to comprehend how much money he'd have to have to own his own jet.

"Come inside with me, please," Damon said, taking my hand again. "We'll be much more comfortable in there."

"Speak for yourself," I said under my breath. I wanted to ask more questions. Instead, I followed Damon up the stairs and stepped inside the first private jet I'd ever encountered. And when I did, I started to understand just how rich Damon was.

Everything was stark and perfect. White walls and carpet with plush furniture upholstered in black leather. The cabin of the jet was larger and more expensive than my entire apartment. There was a massive, flat-screen TV that took up an

entire wall and a mirrored bar in the corner with top-shelf alcohol; bottles of aged scotch that cost triple my monthly income.

Dumbfounded, I ran my fingers across the soft leather seats. Then I wandered past them and into what looked like another room. I couldn't speak. It was a master bedroom with a sunken Jacuzzi and a full bathroom.

This had to be a joke. This couldn't possibly be his. They were breaking in, that was it. Or this was a company jet and he had arranged this all for a laugh.

I felt Damon's hands on my shoulders and his breath on my neck.

"Are you messing with me? This really can't be yours."

Damon turned me around and looked into my eyes. "This *is* my private jet, Amber. I'm not lying. The people on this plane work for me. Come on, let's take a seat in the main cabin so the pilot can take off. He walked me back to one of the leather couches and sat us both down, then stretched out and reclined his legs on an ottoman in front of him. A flight attendant came out and took our drink orders, then left to tell the pilot we were ready to take off.

"I'm sorry I didn't tell you about any of this earlier. I hope you understand. My life is very private. I don't trust just anyone with the personal details."

"I do understand, Damon. This has all taken me off guard. It's just ... it's so hard to believe. I've never known anyone who owned a private jet before. And to think it belongs to you. To shy, quiet Damon Andrews."

"I started my own tech company after I left college. We worked on a lot of applications for the mobile market in the very beginning so now we have a reputation for quality. And I make sure we keep everything up to those standards. It's just a matter of having been in the right place at the right time. And not to mention having the right product. Now there are multiple branches that handle marketing and advertising—"

"Ah, so that's where the small marketing business story came from."

"Yeah, it wasn't a total lie," Damon said, flashing the sexiest smile I'd seen on him tonight. He seemed to be much more in his element here. Relaxed and even more confident. Which made him even more sexy. "I won't bore you by going into the specifics," he continued, "but right now I'm the head of one of the top tech firms in the world. My company has brought in billions for the last three years. But enough about business. This is my week off and that's the last thing I want to talk about."

"Okay," I said, looking around the cabin. I wanted to run my fingers over everything. It all looked so soft and clean. I kicked my shoes off and pushed my

toes through the thick pile. Even the carpet was luxurious.

After what Damon had just told me, I honestly didn't know what to do or say. I felt even more inadequate than when I was comparing myself to, what I thought were, women in my financial bracket. Now that I knew everyone in Damon's life must be not only attractive, but also incredibly wealthy, I felt like I didn't belong anywhere near him.

"I feel silly now," I said. "I know that's not a very sexy thing to say but it's true."

He sighed, picking up a martini glass the flight attendant had set on the table in front of us. He handed it to me, then picked up his own. "Don't get weird on me now. You're the only one I feel like I can trust from my old life. I'm still the same person, Amber. I'm still the same guy who kissed you in the bowling alley parking lot. And I've thought about that kiss for years."

"Really?"

"Yes, really," Damon said with a soft smile. "I can't tell you how much you've been on my mind. You never really left. Not in all these years."

I couldn't stop my head from swimming. I watched his perfect lips move as he formed those incredible words, but my mind kept going back to how far out of my league Damon was. I brought the martini glass to my lips and took a sip, letting the cool, comforting liquid fill my stomach.

"I haven't stopped thinking about you either. I hoped you'd be at the reunion, but honestly I was pretty sure you wouldn't show. I was dreading the thing so much."

"Me too. You're the only reason I went. I haven't taken a vacation since I started my company, and I owe this one to you," he said, holding his glass up to me to propose a toast. "To horrible, small-town reunions." I brought my glass up against his and we both laughed.

"And small-minded people that you never want to speak to again," I said.

"Yes, only open minds from now on." Damon looked into my eyes and I had that feeling again. The feeling that he wasn't telling me everything.

Just then the jet lurched forward. I gripped the soft leather in one of my hands and gave Damon a panicked look. "What's going on?"

"We're taking off. It's going to be a four-hour flight, then we'll be at my place."

"Wait, we're flying there? Now?" I jumped up and ran to the window. The lines on the runway started to move by faster and faster and the airport disappeared behind us.

"Yes, we're flying there. Why did you think we were on a plane?" Damon said as he came to my side. "You really should be seated during takeoff."

"I don't like flying, Damon. I don't like flying at all."

"You heard me tell the flight attendant we were ready to take off, didn't you?"

"Yeah, I guess so, but you've told me so many crazy things in the last fifteen minutes that I could barely focus." I turned around and looked up at him. "I guess I was so preoccupied with how out of my league you are that I forgot we were even on a plane."

He held me firmly in his hands and his strong, dominating grasp seemed to help calm me. "I'm not out of your league, Amber. That's ridiculous. Let's go back to the couch."

Damon kept his arm around me while we made our way back, then held my head on his shoulder as the jet continued to pick up speed. He pressed a button and called the flight attendant, then said something to her about a sedative. When she returned he handed me a little pill. "Take this, it will help you relax."

"I don't know, Damon. I'm not used to taking—"

"Look at me." I did as I was told and Damon reached down with one hand and held my chin, then brought his lips to mine. His soft skin touched me gently at first, but eventually Damon wrapped his hands around my head and pressed his lips firmly into mine, sliding his tongue into my mouth and taking my breath away. The kiss seemed to go on for a long time, and when he pulled back I realized the plane was already off the ground.