
Chapter 1

Ava stood in front of her father's massive living room window and stared out at the pouring rain with a bottle of vodka in one hand and her phone in the other. A flash of lightning drew her eyes away from her phone and up to the heavens. It was barely noon, but the clouds were so dark, it felt like evening already. A second later, the entire mansion seemed to shake with the rumbling thunder. The storm matched her mood. "April Fool's Day," she muttered as she toasted the storm, took another swig of the vodka and put her forehead against the glass. "I'm the fool." Shutting her eyes, she tried to block out the incident from two hours ago, but it wouldn't leave her alone. It just kept replaying behind her closed eyelids.

"AVA?" her father, Johnathan, called out from the hallway.

"Shit," Ava muttered, shoving her vape pen under her pillow and waving the smoke away with both hands.

"We're leaving, are you up here?" her father asked as he opened her bedroom door without knocking.

She froze mid wave, put on a huge, fake smile and said, "Hi, Daddy." When she exhaled all the way, a little plume of smoke rose up past her eyes.

Frustration and anger warred for prominence on his face. He held his hand out. "Give it to me."

Crossing her arms, Ava said, "I'm nineteen. I can vape if I want to."

"Not if there's weed in it."

"It's THC," she muttered.

"Do you want me to reduce the limit on your credit card?" he asked, hand still held out.

Ava played with the hem of her shirt with both hands and said, "I'll give it to you if you take me with you."

Sighing, he let his hand drop. "We've been over this again and again, Ava. Your mother and I—"

"Stepmother!" Ava interrupted loudly.

Her father glared at her. "We've discussed it, and you're not going. You start school again in less than a week, and we'll be gone for three months."

"It's college. I could take a term off and make it up in the summer. I want to go to France with you."

"Take a term off?" he asked incredulously. "You failed two of the four courses you took last term!"

She shrugged. "I'll re-take them next year, and I'll be ready for the challenge after a relaxing vacation to France. Please, Daddy? You guys are always traveling, and you never take me."

He shook his head. "There's a reason we never take you. You'd spend all three months drinking and smoking your way throughout France and sleeping with every guy you meet in a club. You're staying home and going to school. Hand it over." He held out his hand again.

Suddenly pissed, she grabbed the pen from under her pillow and threw it at her father. "Maybe if your horrible wife wasn't such a cunt, I wouldn't go to the clubs!" she yelled.

He calmly picked the vape pen up off the floor and said with disdain, "That attitude right there is why you're not coming with us." He turned to leave but then called back over his shoulder, "If I hear from even one staff member that you're not going to school and keeping yourself out of trouble, I

will cut you off entirely until your mother and I get home. And if you don't pass all of your classes this term, I'll be done paying for your tuition."

Her bedroom door shut with a click, and she chucked one of her pillows at it before breaking down into tears.

SHE OPENED her eyes and looked at the storm. "Fuck them," she muttered, taking another long swallow of straight vodka.

"Miss Ava," a gently scolding voice said from behind her.

"Hey, Sofia," Ava responded without turning around, and held the bottle closer to her body. She knew her father's housekeeper would take it eventually, but she was hoping to get a couple more sips first. Sofia had been more of a mother to her over the past three years than her bitch stepmother, Savanah, had ever been.

"This is no good, Miss Ava," Sofia said in her comforting thick Spanish accent. "Your papa—"

"Fuck him," Ava muttered.

Sofia made a tutting noise and gently rubbed Ava's back. "You no mean that, Miss Ava."

"The step-monster is gone; it's just Ava now. Remember?" She took another long swallow of the vodka.

Sofia tutted again and put a hand on the end of the bottle to tilt it down.

"Yes, mija, I remember." Sofia's arm went around Ava's shoulders, and she pulled her into a hug while taking the bottle out of her hand. Ava started crying again, and Sofia patted her back with one hand while sticking the bottle of vodka in her apron pocket with the other. "I remember."

Once Ava was down to sniffles again, Sofia said, "Come, mija, help me in the kitchen. We make enchiladas."

Ava wiped her face and shook her head. "No, I'm not good company right now. I'm going to go upstairs and take a nap." Ava hugged the older woman tightly. "But thank you for offering."

When Ava let go, Sofia held her shoulders for a moment and said seriously, "No drinking, mija. This is no good."

"Okay, Sofia. For you, I'll try not to."

"Thank you."

Ava stumbled, so Sofia put an arm around her waist and helped her to walk up the long staircase and down the hall to her bedroom. Once Ava was on the bed, Sofia kissed her forehead and said, "You sleep now, mija. I bring up dinner later, yes?"

"Yes," Ava mumbled and turned over onto her side, in the hopes that the room would stop spinning.

Sofia left, and Ava had to sit up, to keep the room from tilting and making her stomach feel like she was riding a roller coaster. Feeling tired when she sat up and ill when she lay down made her even grumpier, and thoughts of ways to spite her father started rolling through her mind. She would find a way to pass all her classes, even if she had to pay someone else to write her essays and take her tests.

Huffing, she grabbed her laptop off her side table and opened up her favorite porn site, because nothing helped her forget about her unhappiness quicker than rubbing one off. She often wondered if she was some sort of sex addict or nymphomaniac, because she never went a day without bringing herself to climax at least once or twice, and that was on top of her prevalent random hookups with her fellow classmates.

She looked at the categories at the top of the site and tried to decide what she was in the mood for today. Her tastes were eclectic when it came to porn. Things had to be pretty extreme to turn her off. She'd watch gay porn for either gender, gangbang porn, bondage porn, outdoor porn, age play porn, medical porn, interracial porn, and even regular old missionary hetero porn. She liked it all, but her all-time favorite was spanking porn. She had a special affinity for dominant guys, or at least the idea of a dominant guy, because most of the guys she'd fucked were either pushovers or jerks.

While she was trying to decide which video to watch, a pop up ad flashed on her screen. Scowling at it, she tried to close it, but thanks to the vodka, her fingers weren't working the way they normally did, and she accidentally hit the 'show me more' button instead of the close button.

"Damn it," she muttered as several things popped up on her screen. Each one she tried to close opened new sites. With a scowl on her face, she tried pulling up the task manager to shut the stupid ad sites down, but before she could do it, her screen went blue, and then shut off entirely.

Grunting unhappily, she pushed the button to turn it on again.

"Fuck!" She almost hurled the laptop against the floor when it gave her a frozen blue screen instead of turning on, but she didn't want to lose her bookmarks. It had taken her countless hours to wade through porn sites to find her favorites, and she had a multitude of pornographic clips that she'd bought and saved to the computer as well.

Frowning at the dead laptop, she shoved it to the side and grabbed her phone to look up computer repair shops in her area. There was one relatively close to her father's house, but it only had a three-star rating. There was another one closer to her college campus that had a five-star rating, so she clicked that one. 'The Tech Guys' website even mentioned a discount for Northern Oregon University students, and they were currently open.

Ava got up, weaving her way to the bathroom to clean her face as best she could. Once she considered herself presentable, she went to the kitchen and had Sofia make her a cup of coffee to go. While Sofia made some light protests about Ava leaving the house drunk, Ava ordered a Lyft.

It didn't matter how many times Ava used Lyft, it never failed to make her grin, because she knew how much her bitch of a stepmother hated it. Her father had a driver on staff who would

take Ava anywhere she wanted to go, so she'd never gotten her license, but since turning eighteen, Ava refused to use the driver. Why make use of the staff when she could embarrass her step-mother by using what Savannah called 'disgusting pseudo-taxis for the poor'?

As soon as the Lyft showed up, Sofia turned a disapproving gaze at Ava and said, "No, Miss Ava. No more drink today."

Ava gave the housekeeper the most innocent expression she could come up with and said, "I'm not going to a club, Sofia." She held up her laptop and said, "My laptop broke and I need to get it fixed before school starts next week."

Sofia didn't look convinced so Ava lied. "It has all my essays on it and all the research sites I go to are bookmarked." A small twinge of guilt made Ava look down at her coffee. Her essays were all on Google drive, so she could access them from any computer. She didn't do much research, because she had better things to do with her time, and she didn't really care if she passed her classes. Or at least she hadn't cared before, but now that her father had made an ultimatum, she was going to have to care just to prove him wrong.

"You wait until tomorrow, mija," Sofia said gently.

Ava hated it when Sofia used that sweet tone of voice, especially when Ava was doing something questionable.

"I would, but it might take a couple of days for them to fix it, and it's already Wednesday. School starts Monday, and I don't know if they're open on the weekends." Which was also a small lie, because she knew the computer shop was open seven days a week.

Sighing, Sofia looked out the window at the rain and said, "Wear a coat."

"I will," Ava replied, gave the older woman a quick kiss on the cheek and then went to the little closet off the foyer, grabbed a light jacket, and held it over her head when she dashed out into the pouring rain to the little Honda that was waiting for her.

BY THE TIME the Lyft had made it out of the curvy roads where her father lived, Ava had almost puked twice. She rolled the window down halfway, and when the driver protested, she fished a couple of hundreds out of her purse and handed them over.

"Do you want rain in your car, or puke?" she muttered, leaning the side of her face on the glass part of the half-open window.

The driver grumbled, but he took the money and let her keep it open.

By the time they'd reached the outskirts of the city, even the rain and fresh air hitting her face wasn't helping.

"Pull over," she said urgently and opened the car door before the driver had even come to a complete stop. She retched in the street right beside the curb.

"Get out," the driver said when she'd finished puking.

"Sorry," she muttered, wiping her mouth with the back of her hand. The rain wasn't quite as bad as it had been, but it was still coming down, so she wrapped her laptop up in her jacket, flung her purse over her shoulder and climbed out.

The Lyft pulled away immediately, and Ava looked around. Half a block up, there was a little café with an overhang to keep the rain away from the entrance. She walked over to it, and once she was out of the rain, she got her phone out and looked up the way to the computer repair shop again. It was only ten blocks away, so she decided to walk. It would help sober her up. She wasn't exactly dressed for the weather in her tee shirt, capri pants, and flats, but it would have to do.

During her walk, the rain got worse, and by the time she was close to her destination, she felt like she'd stepped into the shower with her clothes on. But on the upside, she didn't feel nauseated anymore, and she was more steady on her feet. When she finally saw the sign for 'The Tech Guys', she quickened her pace. Just

before walking in, she grabbed a stick of gum from her purse and shoved it in her mouth to get rid of any lingering puke smell.

A light electronic buzz sounded when she walked through the door. She didn't see anyone behind the counter, so she glanced around at the shelves full of used and refurbished computers and game systems for sale and went to stand by the cash register. "Hello?" she called out, focusing on the open doorway behind the counter that went to a back area.

"Be right there," a male voice answered. A few seconds later, a young man who appeared to be about her age emerged from the back with a professional smile.

The words that came to Ava's mind when she saw him were 'gaming nerd'. His skin was so pale, it almost looked transparent, as though he'd never been out in the sun. His hair was dyed black, with a fringe of bangs covering a portion of his face, he had guyliner on, and his nails were painted black. His skinny jeans were black, his tee shirt was black with a large image from the game Days Gone on it, and he had several piercings in his ears and one in his nose.

The guy's professional smile faltered when he saw her drenched form. He started to look her up and down, but his eyes got stuck on her breasts and just stayed there.

Looking down at herself, she realized the rain had completely soaked her light pink shirt, leaving the fabric virtually see through, and she wasn't wearing a bra. Unlike most women who might have taken their jacket off the laptop and covered themselves with it, Ava decided to use her body to her advantage. She doubted her laptop was going to be fixed today, she was still horny, and gaming nerds were the easiest to seduce. Most of them couldn't believe their luck when a tiny blonde girl offered herself to them, and she was rarely turned down.

Straightening her shoulders, she stuck her chest out and raised both of her arms to run her fingers through her hair.

"Gosh, I got so *wet* out there in the rain," she said in her best dumb blonde voice.

The guy's eyes practically popped out of their sockets as he stared at her chest.

"You wouldn't happen to have a towel, would you?" she asked.

As if realizing for the first time that he'd been staring at her breasts, his eyes darted to hers, and a pink blush settled on his pale cheeks. "A towel? Yeah, sure. I have one. Hold on a second." He dashed back behind the wall again, and Ava smirked. Nerds were an easy mark.

He came back holding two hand towels. "Here you go."

"Thank you." She made sure her hand brushed his while taking them. Then she shook one out and vigorously rubbed her hair with it, using both hands, and making her boobs jiggle for him. Once her hair was somewhat dry, she then blotted at her face, hoping her makeup wasn't a huge disaster. She set the wet towel on the counter and gave him a grateful smile. "Much better, thank you."

"Yeah, of course."

She could tell he was trying valiantly to keep his eyes focused on her face. They darted down to her chest every once in a while, but he was doing a better job than most of keeping eye contact.

Smirking, she pulled her laptop out from her jacket and said, "My laptop stopped working about an hour ago. I think maybe I got a virus. I saw on your website that you give discounts to NOU students, so I decided to come here first. Could you take a look at it for me?"

"Yeah, you bet," he said enthusiastically, taking the machine out of her hand. His eyes went to the front door and he said hesitantly, "Did you want to maybe come in the back with me, and I can take a look at it right now? It's been dead today because of the storm, and because people are still out of town for spring break. You're only my fourth customer."

"That would be fantastic. Thank you so much." She held out her hand. "I'm Ava."

He shook it. "Mike. It's nice to meet you."

"You too."

He let go and gestured for her to walk around the counter and follow him. "This way."

The back room had three large tables with computer parts strewn all over them, along with tools and equipment for fixing them, and two working computers. There were two rolling office chairs and three old metal stools that had seen better days scattered around the room. Mike pulled one of the rolling chairs from the middle table over to the table where he'd obviously been sitting and playing some underwater adventure game that Ava didn't recognize right away.

"Have a seat," he said, indicating the chair he'd just pulled over.

"Thanks."

He sat as well, saved and shut down his game, and then plugged the laptop into another computer, and opened it up. He started typing things on his computer, his fingers flying over the keyboard typing in commands so fast that Ava couldn't keep up. Watching him made her think of a hacker, and suddenly the idea of paying someone to hack into the school system to change her grades flitted through her mind. She filed that thought away for later.

For the next couple of minutes, she sat quietly watching him work, but her attention waned quickly as he went back and forth from the laptop to the computer typing stuff in. She looked around the room and noticed some pictures on the wall. They were family photos of a much younger Mike with people who appeared to be his parents.

"How long have you been working here?" Ava asked, bored now that his focus was off her.

Mike's eyes stayed on the computer as he said, "It's my dad's

shop, so I've been coming here since I was five, but I started getting paid to work here the summer I turned fifteen."

"And now it's your fulltime job?" she asked.

"Hold on," he mumbled, sitting up and looking intently at her screen. "Oh, this is a nasty virus you've picked up," he said. He typed in a few more commands and then leaned back, focusing on her again. "It's running a full scan in safe mode. It'll take a while. Fifteen minutes if we're lucky, an hour or more if we're not."

Ava smiled, because that meant she had time to seduce him and find out if she could use him. She leaned toward him and said, "Great, that gives me time to get to know you. Do you work here full time?" she asked. "Or are you just helping out during spring break?"

He hesitated and then said, "I'm working here full time right now."

"Right now, but you have plans for something else?" she guessed.

"I went to Willamette University down in Salem for two years, but I'm taking this year off." His eyes went to the pictures on the wall.

"Why?"

"To help my family." His eyes went back to her, and he changed the focus of their conversation to her with a forced smile. "What about you? You're going to Northern Oregon University?"

"I'm a freshman this year. Undeclared. I have no idea what I want to do, so I'm trying a little bit of everything. What were you taking at Willamette University?"

"Computer science."

"I guess that should have been obvious," she answered with a smile, "seeing as how this is your family business."

He shook his head. "I don't want to fix computers for a living; I want to create graphics for games. It's a competitive field, but

my professor seems to think I'm good enough to have a shot. At least, that's what he thought last year."

"It doesn't sound to me like you wanted to take a year off. Was it a financial decision?"

"No, I won a scholarship, so tuition is covered." He looked at the photos again and said, "My mom got sick last summer. Breast cancer. She didn't want me to take a year off, but I..."

Very suddenly, all thoughts of seducing him or using him went away, and Ava really felt like having another drink. She quietly finished his thought for him when he paused. "...you can't go live your life as if nothing's wrong when you know she's suffering."

His eyes snapped to hers, and he slowly nodded.

"My mom had breast cancer too," Ava said. "She died when I was ten."

Mike scooted his chair over so they were side by side and grasped her hand in comfort. "I'm so sorry." Then he scowled, putting his other hand on her forearm. "You're freezing."

She hadn't felt particularly cold until he pointed it out. Between the alcohol and the brisk walk, she'd felt warm enough, but now that she'd been sitting still for a while and the alcohol had mostly worn off, she noticed the chill in the air.

"Hang tight," he said and walked over to a corner of the room where a backpack was sitting. He opened it, pulled out a grey and black hoodie with a Willamette University logo on it, and brought it back to her. "Here, put this on."

Ava always loved it when men gave her their jackets or sweaters to wear. She was small, so their clothes tended to dwarf her. Sometimes she purposely didn't wear a jacket when it was cool out, specifically so that a guy she liked would hand over his coat. But she hadn't planned this one, and right now she simply felt grateful for the offer.

"Thanks."

She started to pull it on, but he said, "You should take your

tee shirt off first." Then he seemed to realize what he'd said and appeared flustered. "No, I mean..." He shook his head. "I mean, I'm going to turn around first," which he did as he said it, "and then you should take your wet shirt off before putting the hoodie on, because you'll warm up a lot faster that way."

Yanking the soggy shirt off her head, she set it on the floor and quickly pulled the dry hoodie on. She hugged the cotton fabric to her body and said, "Okay."

He turned around and sat back down next to her. To her surprise, he wrapped an arm around her shoulders and pulled her into a one-armed hug. "Body heat will also help you warm up," he said as he started rubbing his hand up and down her upper arm.

Leaning against his solid warm frame somehow made her body realize how cold it had been, and shivers started running down her spine.

"Full body contact would be better," he said. "You could sit in my lap. I swear this isn't some kind of line or anything sexual. It's just pretty cold outside, and I don't know how long you were out there without a coat, but you've already been in here for ten minutes, so you should probably warm up as quickly as possible."

"I'll get your pants wet," she protested.

He shrugged. "So what? You'll get warm."

With a frown, she shook her head. "Your hoodie is long enough to be a dress on me. I'll take the capris off, too."

"You don't have to..."

But she was already pulling away from his arms and standing. She had to pull up the sleeves of the hoodie to get her hands out, and she quickly unsnapped the pants, shoved them down, and stepped out of them. She toed off her flats and then sat herself in his lap.

"Uh... Okay," he said, one arm going around her back automatically.

Situating herself, she pulled her knees up to her chest, and

pushed the hoodie down over them so that her entire body other than her head and feet were encased in his sweatshirt. Then she leaned her head against his chest and sighed with contentment even though her shivers were visibly getting worse by the second.

His other arm tentatively went around her legs, and he pulled her body against his torso to share heat.

Over the next few moments, her shivers slowly died down as his warmth seeped into her. The warmer she got, the more tired she became. But she generally associated being tired with being horny, because getting off was usually the only way she could fall asleep. "You smell good," she muttered, once the shivers were entirely gone, moving her nose to his neck and inhaling.

"Um, thanks? Are you feeling warmer now? You're not shivering anymore."

She nodded and pressed herself against him even further, wrapping her arms around his shoulders as her arousal came back full force. Being in only her underwear and his shirt seemed fortuitous. She kissed his neck, only to have him pull back.

"What are you doing?" he asked, nudging her away from his torso.

Shifting her body, she turned so that she was facing him and put her legs down so that she was straddling his lap. "Do you know what site I was on when that stupid ad popped up? Pornhub," she answered before giving him a chance to respond.

His eyes opened wide again.

She put her hands on his chest and trailed her fingers across his pecs, trying to find his nipples through his shirt as she spoke. "But the laptop died before I could get off, so now I'm desperately horny." She rubbed her fingernails across his nipples and looked him in the eyes. "We've got time to kill while the laptop does its thing, so how about a quickie? You could stay here in the chair, and I'll do all the work."

"Are you... are you being serious right now?" he asked.

"Absolutely," she said, reaching down and pulling the hoodie

off her head in one smooth motion. She dropped it to the floor on the opposite side of his chair, away from the wet clothes.

He gasped, staring at her naked breasts. She took his hand, guided it up to her boob, and pressed it there.

"Do you want to?" she asked. "I'm on the pill, and I've got condoms in my purse."

His head nodded, but then he glanced at the doorway to the front and said, "Just let me lock the front door."

"Okay," she agreed and got off his lap. He practically ran to lock the front door, and she smirked while pulling a couple of condoms out of her purse.